

DEVIANT

the renegades

Kickstarter Manuscript Preview



Deviant: The Renegades Manuscript Preview #1

Introduction

A nondescript sedan drives slowly along the block. The driver keeps her eye on the street. The two other occupants — both men — have no interest in the traffic. They're watching the pedestrians and shops as the car rolls by.

A movement catches the eye of one of the men, and he gestures to his colleagues. Someone wearing heavy, shapeless clothing appears from behind a small group of people and heads off quickly away from the car. The weather is warm, so why wear such heavy clothing? Head down, with a ball cap pulled low, it's trying to avoid recognition, which piques the men's interest.

The car stops for just a moment, so the men can step out. The driver pops the roomy trunk. The modified springs keep it from automatically rising, but it's ready for quick access when the men need it. She keeps the engine running so they can leave the area rapidly when they've completed the job. No point waiting for police to arrive; too much paperwork.

Though the shapeless individual never looks around, it picks up the pace as if it knows they're following it. The men increase their speed while giving every appearance of being relaxed and uninterested in the individual, betraying professional training.

The shapeless individual heads down an alleyway. The men reach the entrance and pause before they're silhouetted against the street. They're not stupid, but they do have a job to do. With practiced movements, they release clips on the holsters on their belts. The man on the left draws a taser, the one on the right a pistol. Covering multiple scenarios.

The taser-wielder moves first, hugging the wall of the alley, maintaining a low tactical approach. The dumpsters and garbage will break up his outline and conceal him. The shapeless individual has made a tactical error.

He stops short of a dumpster and gestures for his partner to move forward. After a moment's inactivity he glances around. His partner isn't there, but the shapeless thing is. Beneath the heavy coat sickly neon-esque light glows, revealing something metallic held in place by inflamed, dying flesh.

The police finally investigate the car three days later, after shop owners complain about the smell coming from the trunk. They find enough parts to piece together most of three individuals — two men and a woman — missing several square feet of skin. Two individuals watch the police from nearby. One talks on her cellphone while the other scrutinizes the crowd of onlookers.

The shapeless individual watches the scene streamed live via an unsecured webcam placed conveniently in one of the shop windows. The flesh graft itches where it meets the implants. Incompatible donors, it won't last long, but it distracts her body from rejecting the metal, which would kill her.

Let them keep sending people. They'll find the same reception waiting for them. The only way she'll ever go back is when she uncovers their location and burns the place to the ground.

Welcome to **Deviant: The Renegades**, a game about anger and revenge. It's about the horror of changing against your will, of your body's betrayal as it twists and warps away from your

humanity. Even those Deviants who chose to undergo their transformation — the Divergence — didn't really know what to expect. Because of this, **Deviant** is a game of sorrow, regret, and escape. It's about the catharsis of retribution or the comfort of loyalty. Of the anger at wrongdoings, and the acceptance of what is. While Deviants loyal to their conspiracy's cause may console themselves through the pain by accepting — or even embracing — the goals and methods of the conspiracies that hunt their kind, Renegades harbor a burning need for vengeance. The Deviant's suffering is someone's fault, and that someone should be accountable. Some heartless assholes lied to you. Some pieces of shit stripped away your humanity and divorced you forever from a life free of pain, suffering, or anything approaching normal.

Deviant: The Renegades is about destroying those who wreck lives, who dare to use people as tools, who sow human misery in their wake. Fuck them and their literal dehumanizing of their victims. Fuck them and their pursuit of power.

It's time to make them pay.

Shrouded in Darkness

The **Chronicles of Darkness** is a game of modern horror. The **Chronicles** take place in a world recognizably like our own, but a little less inviting. The world is a little greyer, the people a little colder and less welcoming. The similarities to our world are thin veneer, barely covering the rot beneath the surface. Scratch away that veneer, even for a moment, and see the darkness.

Everyone has brushed against the supernatural hiding within that darkness, though few admit it. The chill of a ghost's passing, the stranger who appears at the periphery of vision, the feeling of someone watching you when you know you're alone. People disappear without a trace all too frequently. Their loved ones go through the motions of searching for them, but they don't hold out hope. Few return, and rarer still are those who come back the same as when they left.

Humans rarely speak of what their blood and bones know must exist in the world. Sometimes, safely behind locked doors, windows securely bolted, and lights burning brightly, people hesitantly whisper about what they encountered in the darkness. Few people talk about it because they never know who may be listening and taking pleasure in the fear and suffering of others, and the power this brings.

Supernatural beings aren't the only ones who seek occult power. Humans pursue it like moths to a flame. Deviants come from these dalliances with things poorly understood and better left alone. While some are people who wanted to empower themselves, more frequently they're the victims of another's experimentations, or the unlucky who were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Many paths lead to Divergence. Progenitors of Deviants use sorcerous rituals, experimental surgeries, or exposure to strange or ancient artifacts. These Progenitors use whatever works, and inflict pain, misery and suffering on victims to discover what does work. Whatever the process, the result is one of the Remade and no longer a human. Something that touches on and draws against the darkness in ways that are more than human. Unfortunately, these changes are never seamless. They leave lasting scars.

Divergent and Hunted

To be one of the Remade is to never be free of harassment and pursuit. Every Deviant is a valuable resource, a scientific curiosity to study and try to replicate, a tool to achieve someone else's goals, or a weapon to leverage power over others. Unfortunately, Remade rarely begin in positions to choose how to spend their lives. Other people desire the power that the transformed

possess and they can and will bring tremendous resources to bear to leash the Deviant to their will. Many Deviants chafe at this control, refuse to submit, fight against their chains. These Broken refuse to accept the title, break free and take back control of their lives. Few conspiracies allow their prizes their freedom for long, constantly hunting them and others to satisfy the lust for power. Renegade Deviants believe the only true way to freedom is to burn it all down and ensure no one lives to come after them any longer.

Conspiracies

Within certain circles, the existence of the Broken is well known, as is the potential power they bring to those who control them. These conspiracies have many goals and methods — wealth, scientific curiosity, religious fervor, political power, and countless others — but all of them regard the Remade as tools. Few conspiracies view themselves as evil, but all are selfish in putting their own interests over those of others. Some acknowledge the suffering they inflict on the transformed, but even these believe their goals justify the pain.

The ways in which the conspiracies use their tools are as varied as the conspiracies themselves. Some recruit Deviants with promises of aid and support in return for service. The conspiracy may keep these Deviants on a long leash, allowing considerable latitude when not ‘on mission’. Or they might contain the Remade within a guilted cage, where comfort and luxuries are plentiful, but freedom is unacceptable. Many Deviants don’t know any life outside the conspiracies and accept their lot as the only option.

The work of many conspiracies leads them to attempt to make Deviants of their own, that they better understand, and control. In fact, most of the terminology used to describe and classify the Remade came from conspiracies that flourished in the time of Darwin in the 19th century. The rise of scientific classification and understanding helped these new conspiracies codify what they hunted. Over time, even the less scientifically-focused conspiracies adopted much of the language, in part to communicate with other conspiracies they encountered, but also to add another layer of camouflage over their ancient roots, and hide within the scientific zeitgeist of the time.

The desire to transform humans and create new Deviants doesn’t extend to every conspiracy. Many lack the knowledge or resources to be Progenitors, and instead benefit from the labors of others. Importantly, the conspiracies who hunt for a given Deviant may have nothing to do with her condition. She may have escaped one group only to run afoul of another. This isn’t even rare. For a conspiracy that is adept at generating Remade, the cost of hunting and containing a replaceable resource may outweigh the benefit, or they need to silence the Renegade.

Divergence

Being Remade sets a Deviant apart from humanity. The processes for transforming humans into Broken are myriad. What one Progenitor accomplishes through cutting edge gene recombination and surgery, another achieves via ritual sacrifice on an altar to an ancient being. This understandably results in such a breadth of possible deviations that even the conspiracies who would hunt and capture as many transformed as possible don’t recognize some individuals as their prey. Whatever the process, every Deviant shares one absolute commonality. Every one has a broken soul.

The moment of Divergence, as conspiracies call the point separating Baseline human from Remade, breaks the soul. Learning that souls do indeed exist might be a surprise to the less

spiritual Progenitors. But having a soul isn't a matter of faith, it is simply fact. It preserves the sense of self and connects all humanity together on some level. Regardless of whether the Progenitor used scientific or spiritual means on the Remade, breaking the soul is key to the Divergence. Whether this fuels the Deviant's powers — called **Variations** — or whether those Variations tear the soul asunder is unknown and possibly unknowable. For most Progenitors, it's irrelevant. The Divergence worked, and the transformed's soul breaks. Who cares which came first? What's important is that processes that don't achieve this breaking result in a failed — often dead — subject.

Even a successful procedure isn't always a triumph. Sometimes too much power flows when the soul cracks, consuming the victim in her own power like aggressive, malignant supernatural cancers. Other times the Divergence's mundane trappings fester and destroy the transformed — infected implants, complete supernatural possession rather than a controllable portion of demonic essence, or just complete system shock shutting down the body beyond recovery. Even the Broken who survive often kill themselves if they have the chance, reacting in horror to what they have become. Once the Divergence happens, it's permanent.

Deviants

That every Deviant has something wrong with her isn't a metaphor. It's not a poetic reference to some aspect of the human condition. At the core of her being, regardless of coercion, voluntarily accepting the change, or being a victim of circumstance, the broken soul sets her forever apart.

Individual Remade tend to think of their existence in terms of how it came about. For each of them, this process and time marks the point when they became more and less than human.

Genotypal Deviants are **Born** into their condition, through accident or deliberate intervention from conception to gestation. **Epimorphs** agreed to undergo the process, **Volunteers** who fell victim to the honeyed words of their Progenitors. In contrast, **Autourgiacs** sought out the change. How aware these **Elect** were of the results is questionable, regardless of their intent. The **Exomorphs** were victims of someone else's choice. Many of these **Unwilling** are the result of Progenitors still perfecting their process, or those building controllable — and often expendable — soldiers to their causes. Finally, **Pathological** Remade are victims of circumstance, **Accidents** literally in the wrong place at the wrong time. The conspiracies often have no idea what process changed these Broken but find a use for them regardless.

Regardless of its origin, the Divergence provides some advantage over the rest of humanity. The Deviant gains powers and abilities beyond what humans can do or experience. These **Variations** are why the conspiracies expend so much time and energy to control the Remade. Whether forced or voluntary, a transformed's service is power for the conspiracy to achieve its goals. Unfortunately, Variations invariably come with **Scars** that inflict pain and suffering on the unfortunate Remade, a constant reminder of the price she paid.

Though each Deviant is unique, and few Remade have enough ongoing contact with others of their kind to discover similarities and differences, the conspiracies have studied, enslaved, and classified them for centuries. These divisions, called **Clades**, focus on how the Remade manifest their powers, rather than how they came to be. The conspiracies generally agree that Remade fall into five main Clades. The **Cephalists** are those Deviants whose minds opened through the Divergence to manifest incredible abilities. The Variations of these **Psychics** aren't necessarily all mind tricks, and can manifest as physical enhancements. The **Chimerics** combine biological material from something other than human to create something incredible. Progenitors frequently

turn to the animal kingdom for inspiration for these **Hybrids**, but mixing elements of plants, or other mysterious donors isn't unknown. Deviants whose abilities derive from inanimate foreign structures within their bodies are **Invasives**, often labelled **Cyborgs** although their powers could come from technological marvels, magical jewels, or even alien artifacts discovered among meteoric wreckage. In contrast, **Coactives** directly channel energy as their source of power. These **Infused** belong to this Clade whether they harness natural energies known to science, or esoteric energies human researchers can't clearly quantify or explain. Finally, the **Mutants'** powers are clearly biological in origin, but inconsistent with other Clades. The bodies of these **Grotesques** defied the circumstances of Divergence but nevertheless changed, albeit in unexpected ways.

Renegade and Devoted

The Divergence leaves a gap within each Remade. While it creates the wellspring for the Deviant's powers, the damage it does fundamentally separates the Broken from the rest of humanity. Baseline humans experience a sense of self-identity and free will. A Deviant replaces this with a desperate yearning to define herself by how she relates to others, either with loyalty or opposition. She can no longer rest or exist comfortably with herself; she must act to seek external validation to temporarily ease this pain. This divorce from humanity forces the transformed to choose a side and take a stand, even if for no better reason than to maintain her sanity against the horrors she faces.

Some Deviants find solace in service to the conspiracies. The blind loyalty of these **Devoted** allows them to overlook the damage they cause. As long as they remain a part of something larger, working alongside people they care about, these Remade find peace.

Conversely, the **Renegades** have thrown off their bonds and escaped the conspiracies. Though their lives usually become a cycle of pursuit and escape, their conviction to remain free and fight the conspiracies gives them just as much relief as service does to their opposites. Much as she might wish otherwise, a Renegade soon discovers that this fight defines her existence. Even if she wins and destroys the conspiracy — or at least eliminates its ability to pursue her — she can't sit idly by and settle into a peaceful life.

Deviants who refuse to follow their rebellious or compliant drives stagnate and cut themselves off from their remaining tenuous links to humanity. These unfortunate individuals undergo a process the conspiracies call **Instability**, wherein their Scars fester and grow until the Deviant dies a painful, lingering death.

How to Use This Book

Deviant: The Renegades is a Storytelling game of transformation and revenge. This book includes all the rules you'll need to take a group of Remade characters from their Divergence to their revenge, but you can find expanded rules in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Deviant also includes the **Web of Pain Chronicle**. The various conspiracies that hunt and control the Remade to service their goals are never discrete entities. At some point, they all connect. Two friends may end up working for different conspiracies; though they keep those aspects of their lives secret, eventually they recognize commonalities and create a loose connection. The connection might be stronger, with the CEO of a corporate conspiracy leading a parallel life as the grand magus of one with sorcerous roots. Whatever the connections, the conspiracies extend their grasping tendrils into the world, where they inevitably find each other.

Within this web, as the Remade expose one conspiracy, they discover another, grander structure pulling the strings of their existence.

Chapters

Chapter 1: Origins and Clades introduces the various ways Deviants become Remade and how the conspiracies classify and divide them.

Chapter 2: Setting reveals the world in which Deviants live. Here we examine the Divergence's effects, how the Broken meet their daily needs, and how they take the fight to the conspiracies.

Chapter 3: Renegades provides rules and game systems to make Remade characters, their powers and the burdens they carry as a result of their Divergences.

Chapter 4: Storytelling System presents all the core rules necessary to run a game of **Deviant: The Renegades**.

Chapter 5: Antagonists covers the people and organizations who hunt the transformed, and who the Deviants hunt in return. This chapter provides systems for creating your own conspiracies, and how they react to the actions of the characters.

Chapter 6: Settings and Sample Conspiracies tours the world, examining several locations in how the conspiracies and Broken struggle against each other, and one another.

Chapter 7: Storytelling gives tips on running successful games of **Deviant**, and explores the game's niche of transformation and revenge.

The **Appendices** provide lists of the equipment, Conditions, and Tilts that are likely to come into play in **Deviant**.

Deviant, the Storytelling Game

You probably already know what a Storytelling game is, but if you don't, here are the basics.

In **Deviant**, you and your friends tell stories of a core cast of characters transformed to be both more and less than human, and forever separated from Baseline life. These characters escaped the clutches of their creators only to find many other conspiracies want to hunt and capture the characters to control their power. This desperate fight for revenge and survival takes place within the Chronicles of Darkness, a grim version of our own world. Roleplaying games are like ongoing comic books or TV dramas, like *Orphan Black* or *The Gifted*. Each gaming session (called a "chapter"), which usually lasts between two and six hours, is like a weekly episode or single issue, building into distinct storylines as you play.

The ideal group size for **Deviant** is around two to five players. One person takes on the role of Storyteller, while the others play the role of one main character each. Each player makes the decisions for her character, when he'll use his power, how he views his fractured existence, and precisely how he enacts revenge on those who transformed him. The Storyteller is responsible for portraying characters who don't belong to specific players, and presenting fictional situations that challenge the other players' characters. These characters and situations help or oppose the core cast, and may be recurring antagonists or one-off challenges that cause unique kinds of trouble.

The Storyteller aims to create scenes where the players must make decisions fraught with conflict and danger. The Storyteller narrates a situation. Then the other players say how their characters respond. The Storyteller's most important question is, "What do you do now?"

When a character's response has an element of risk or uncertainty, the outcome is determined by rolling ten-sided dice. Basically, you add a few numbers on your character sheet and roll that many dice. You'll find out whether your action works, or fails and gets your character into more trouble. While having characters succeed in their actions is enjoyable, more drama and fun can come from when things don't go well, or as expected. In TV series and comic books, the most interesting episodes are often those where so much goes wrong for the characters until they overcome their challenges and find a way to succeed despite the obstacles.

Importantly, the Storyteller isn't trying to make the characters fail, and should ensure they have chances to overcome their setbacks. The Storyteller's job is to provide challenge and conflict and danger, so that when the characters succeed the players feel a sense of victory and accomplishment.

The Storyteller is responsible for...

- ...bringing the Chronicles of Darkness to life through description.
- ...deciding where scenes start and what's going on.
- ...portraying characters who don't belong to other players.
- ...involving each player and their character in the ongoing story.
- ...putting players' characters in tough spots, encouraging interesting decisions.
- ...facilitating the actions players' characters take, while making sure there are always complications.
- ...making sure that poor dice rolls affect but don't stop the story.

The players are responsible for...

- ...creating their own individual characters and members of the cast.
- ...deciding what actions their characters take.
- ...making decisions that create drama and help keep the story moving.
- ...highlighting their characters' strengths and weaknesses.
- ...confronting the problems the Storyteller introduces.
- ...developing their character's personality and abilities over time, telling a personal story within the overall story of the game.

Everyone is responsible for...

- ...giving other players chances to highlight their characters' abilities and personal stories, whether that's by showing them at their strongest or weakest.
- ...making suggestions about the story and action, while keeping in mind the authority of players over their characters and responsibility of the Storyteller to occasionally make trouble.

Anger and Loneliness

Deviant explores several themes in its presentation. These thematic motifs and the intended mood of the game weave throughout the text, including the mechanics. They inform the assumptions the game makes about the stories you will tell. Reading this book through the lens of these will help provide the fullest enjoyment of the game and your chronicles.

A Divergent Journey

The Remade are transformed from human stock to gain power at the expense of their humanity. Their creators — Progenitors — seek power by harnessing ill-understood processes, channeled through combinations of mystical and scientific methods. Irreversibly altered by the experience, often carrying physical, mental, or emotional scars from the Divergence, Deviants face a new life filled with challenges. Many of the transformed's changes require special care and upkeep. The Remade who neglect this care face sickness, further mutation, or madness.

Theme: Isolation

Even in a crowd, a Remade is always alone. The Divergence severs the Broken from the interconnectedness between every Baseline, brought together by the shared bonds of the human soul. Transformed struggle with the instinctive human ability to make connections with others. Every alliance, every friendship is a challenge. Maintaining connections requires more effort than experienced by even the most socially isolated human. Baselines feel the same way about the Remade. Even a transformed who the human likes, or loves, seems to require so much more effort to be around. This reinforces that the Deviant has lost her place among humanity and further drives her disconnection from society.

Hunters search for every Remade, even those who can pass for normal. Returning to the familiar, to lives from before the Divergence, is a guaranteed path to discovery. Transformed flee to where they don't know anyone, and more importantly, where no one knows them. Spiritually, Deviants need some connection with humanity to prevent further degradation of their soul. The fear and danger this presents can't be overstated. A Remade doesn't know how individuals will react to seeing his transformed flesh. Some respond with pity, others scorn. Additionally, the revelation might gain an ally, but could drive away those he reached out to. Worse, they could whisper, gossip, or report him to authorities, which brings the conspiracies to his location, and forces another, further isolating move.

Mood: Tragic Revenge

Make no mistake, **Deviant** is about revenge. Someone must pay for the Broken condition, even if the Remade himself was a self-Progenitor or a conscious and willing volunteer. The transformed needs to hold someone accountable, even for his own ignorance.

As the conspiracies hunt them, the Remade hunt the shadowy organizations to uncover and disclose their secrets and drag them into the light, to bring pain to those in power and destroy their lives. Broken don't have the luxury of hiding from their past or finding a place of permanent safety. The spiritual damage from the Divergence forces them to confront their personal demons. From the moment of transformation, every Deviant has a choice between following orders and soothing the soul through loyalty to someone else, or striking back and using the conviction of the Remade's anger as a balm for her spiritual pain.

The Web of Pain

Unfortunately, the path to revenge is seldom easy. Burning down all the laboratories, warehouses, and facilities of an organization merely reveals it to be one tendril of a larger group extending many branches across the local region. Destroying these holdings one by one exposes more intermeshed links, feeding each other for the benefit of the greater conspiracy. And even when the Broken manages to grind all these tentacles into bloody smears she discovers another conspiracy hidden behind the façade, secretly pulling the strings of its smaller offshoot. Even though these tendrils interlink and tangle across one another, all of them seek to control the Remade, to break her spirit and turn an enemy into a weapon and exploit her in any one of a thousand ways.

This is the **Web of Pain**, where even the most insular, well-hidden conspiracy has at least a few connections to its peers. Total secrecy brings potentially fatal ignorance of competitors seeking the same resource is a certain path to submission or destruction. The conspiracies within the Chronicles of Darkness exist as a vast, tangled web of personal and organizational connections. It is a conspiracy of conspiracies, where each controls the center of its own node and spins its threads to reinforce its position, or weaken and devour its fellows. Unfortunately for Renegades with a singularity of purpose who think they've completed their job with the destruction of their Progenitors, there's always a bigger threat along the web, or a hungry young conspiracy eager to fill the void left by the Deviant's efforts.

Inspirational Material

Modern entertainment is full of stories about shadowy organizations and the people who fight them. It's similarly filled with characters filled with power that comes with a price. Finding the Divergence in countless sources of inspiration only takes a little effort. Often, it takes no effort at all.

Television

Dark Angel: A mass breakout of Chimeric children from the military conspiracy that created and enslaved them. Having hidden from scrutiny for years, Max, now an adult, works to gain revenge against her abusers.

Orphan Black: The Genotypal characters unravel layer upon layer upon layer of conspiracy in their struggle to free themselves from the ones who created them.

Stranger Things and *Stranger Things 2*: Shadowy conspiracies, Cephalist children — or are they Coactive? — the hunt for those who escape, and how they pursue revenge. These series incorporate everything you need for **Deviant**.

Movies

Bladerunner: What are replicants if not a form of Genotypal Mutants? Roy Batty leads the Renegades. More than human, they've broken free from their corporate leashes, but can never outrun their fatal Scars. If Deckard is a replicant, he's Devoted and kept ignorant of his condition.

Memento: A man's memory disorder and thirst for vengeance against his wife's murderer drives him to frame innocent men so that he can bask in a moment of bloody revenge that he won't remember. A significant inspiration for Conviction.

Robocop: A fatally-injured human Remade as an Invasive, complete with Scars of inhuman appearance and implanting behavioral limitations. Officer Murphy's arc runs from unwitting Devoted through to Renegade, and finally manages to find middle-ground as a Guardian.

Books

Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: Dr Jekyll triggers his own Divergence through chemical cocktails intended to suppress his darker urges. Instead, he unleashes the monstrous Mr. Hyde, who becomes increasingly dominant. Jekyll's Scar begins as needing the cocktail to access his Variations, but over time the Scar shifts to requiring the chemicals to maintain any trace of his Jekyll self at all.

Games

Bioshock: A broken world where genetic tampering gives rise to fantastic powers, and all it costs is your sanity. Powerful men fight for control of the source of the power, whatever the cost to those around them.

Lexicon

Accidents: Alternate name for Pathological Deviants.

Acclimation: A measure of how acclimatized a Deviant is to her condition.

Adaptation: Ways in which Deviants can manipulate their Variations and Scars, determined by Clade.

Autourgics: Deviants who sought out the Divergence.

Baseline: A human who hasn't undergone the Divergence.

Born: Alternate name for Genotypal Deviants.

Broken: Alternate name for Deviants.

Cephalists: Also known as Psychics, a Clade of Deviants who employ psychic powers unleashed by the trauma of Divergence.

Chimeric: Also known as Hybrids, a Clade of Remade comprising Deviants who combine human and other — often animal — anatomy.

Clade: A definitional grouping of Deviants, classified by how the Remade's powers manifest. Deviants define themselves by Origin, whereas the conspiracies classify the Remade into Clades.

Coactive: Also known as Infused, the Clade for Deviants who derive their powers from outside energies.

cohort: A group of Renegades and their Loyalty Touchstones, allied against a conspiracy.

conspiracy: an organization that seeks to control Deviants for its own ends. Many conspiracies make Deviants, but some must acquire Remade from their competitors.

Conviction: A measure of the Deviant's drivers toward revenge — most common among Renegades.

Cyborgs: Another name for the Clade known as Invasives.

Deviant: A human who has undergone the Divergence, suffering a broken soul and gaining Variances and Scars. See also Broken, Remade, and transformed.

Devoted: A Deviant who serves a conspiracy, led by Loyalty to her society.

Divergence, the: The moment a person becomes Remade; also, the nonhuman aspects of a Deviant.

Elect: Alternate name for Autourgic Deviants.

Epimorphs: Deviants who volunteered but didn't know they what they were really signing up for.

Exomorphs: Deviants who were victims forced into the Divergence against their will.

Faltering: When a Deviant suffers an integrity crisis from working against her Conviction or Loyalty.

Feral: A Deviant with no Touchstones, mutated beyond all recognition.

Form: A variation to the normal Deviant Origins and Clades.

Genotypal: Deviants born into their condition, through accident or deliberate intervention.

Grotesques: Another name for the Clade known as Mutants.

Guardian: A Renegade who has achieved a precarious state of balance between her Loyalty and Conviction.

Hybrids: Another name for the Clade known as Chimerics.

Infused: Another name for the Clade known as Coactives.

Instability: A setback to a Deviant's stability.

Invasive: Also known as Cyborgs, a Clade of Deviants who derive their powers through non-living, foreign objects implanted within their flesh.

Loyalty: A measure of the Remade's drivers toward protecting those she loves — most common among Devoted.

Magnitude: A measure of the strength of a Deviant's Variations or Scars.

Manticore: A Remade animal.

Mutants: Also known as Grotesques, a Clade of Deviants whose bodies rejected the changes forced upon them, instead changing in unexpected ways.

Nemesis: A Devoted who has achieved a precarious state of balance between her Conviction and Loyalty.

Origin: The circumstances under which a Deviant came to Divergence.

Pathological: Deviants who underwent the Divergence through accident or circumstance.

Progenitor: Someone directly responsible for a Deviant's Divergence.

Psychics: Another name for the Clade known as Cephalists.

Remade: Alternate name for Deviants.

Renegade: A Deviant who resists the control of her conspiracy and seeks retribution against her abusers.

Scar: A Deviant's supernatural disability.

Stability: A measure of how far a Deviant's mutations have twisted through isolation from humanity.

transformed: Alternate name for Deviants.

Unwilling: Alternate name for Exomorph Deviants.

Variation: A Deviant's supernatural ability.

Volunteers: Alternate name for Epimorph Deviants.

Wavering: When a Deviant begins to lose touch with her anchors, by either softening her loyalty or conviction to her goals.

Web of Pain: The network of conspiratorial links between conspiracies.

Chapter One: Origins and Clades

For it had come from the large covered vat in that ghoulish corner of crawling black shadows.

— H.P. Lovecraft, “Herbert West — Reanimator”

This chapter is about what they did to you—“you” being a so-called Deviant, newly escaped or otherwise self-defined in the face of forces that would have chosen a place for you. Their mistake is they believed you never had a voice, an influence, a single particle of will to choose your fate. You thrashed at the restraints from the start or bided your time, but you eventually made your true desires known.

Yet, one way or another, the Remade make accommodations for what happened to them, and while hiding out or even serving once’s “creators” may be seen as cowardice, it’s still a natural reaction to what may be an intense trauma or the flowering of some unbreakable-seeming dark tradition. Devotion might seem like the safest or only option. But if anyone wants to escape servitude and fear, the only way forward is to fight and, to the degree one can while preserving one’s own safety, shine a light on what happened. Then, one cannot just be said to be a Deviant, but one’s true self, where no unjust influence overrides one’s will.

Of course, if you did it to yourself, it all gets rather *complicated*.

Origins

A Deviant’s Origin is not just a matter of circumstance, but disposition. Some of the Remade readied themselves for transformation, or at least believed it was a worthwhile price to pay. Others were taken against their will, had Divergence forced upon them by a family legacy, or were transformed by accident. While Clade describes the Remade based on the Variations she manifests, the Origin’s effects are influenced by deep-seated attitudes, and the way the Deviant’s initiation into their kind supports or offended their physical and spiritual autonomy.

Conspiracies have long studied the nature of Deviant Origins. Some scientists wish to eliminate Origin as an influence, to control the manifestation of Variations and Scars precisely. Conspirators want to instill obedience, and remain confounded by Origins which seem to promote defiance, or twist careful conditioning into resentment. Not all conspiracies are so focused on control, however, and believe a subject’s ability to influence their own transformation presents opportunities for further research. Could a carefully conditioned zealot manifest stronger Variations? What about a pretended accident, or torturing a subject so that, in defiance, they develop novel abilities? Established conspiracies may attempt to manipulate Origins in this way, and the latest generation of Deviants may share stories of the strange, excruciating psychological experiments that followed.

Conspiracy literature identifies five major Origins, with formal and informal designations. They are:

- **Autourgics:** The **Elect** wholeheartedly wish to be Remade, to satisfy a sincere personal desire or some ideologically-driven urge. They may not know what they will become, exactly, but understand they will break the confines of human nature and welcome it. They tend to manifest Overt Variations, and often remain deeply entangled in the conspiracy that makes them. In fact, many are senior conspirators themselves, and in a few cases, are their own Progenitors.

Most of the Elect are Devoted — they get what they wanted, even if it comes with a certain degree of trauma. Renegades are usually those who chafe against conspiracy control, or who discover that post-humanity isn't what they believed it would be. Autorgic Renegades are rare, enough so that some other Renegades do not trust them, fearing they might be spies and infiltrators sent by the conspiracy.

- **Epimorphs:** With threats and promises, conspiracies convince **Volunteers** to become Remade. Where the Elect seek transformation for its own sake, Epimorphs agree to it to pursue some secondary goal: money, freedom, or safety for loved ones. Many Volunteers are lied to about what will happen to them, or are desperate enough not to care about the details of a drug study or a mandatory journey to some weird, remote locale. Epimorphs are often Devoted, though not always sincerely so, hunting Renegades for pay and perks. Their tales of Divergence often involve developing deep ties to the conspiracy, and even if they go Renegade, they must deal with the connections they establish from fellow workers, caregivers, and other connections. Volunteers tend to display Subtle Variations.
- **Exomorphs:** Remade intentionally, but against their will, the **Unwilling** usually turn Renegade whenever a safe opportunity presents itself. Conspiracies treat Exomorphs with utter contempt or the grim pity one feels for an enemy who never wanted to be where they are, but who must be put down, nonetheless. Unwilling may be kidnapped, threatened, incapacitated, or even secretly exposed to the means of transformation. At some point, each of them realizes Divergence is taking place, but is unable to escape it. Exomorphs manifest Overt Variations. This may be due to the conspiracy's callousness promoting bolder action, or it may be that Unwilling antipathy leaves Scars. In many ways the archetypal Renegades, they tend to be especially driven to destroy conspiracies, and prevent anyone else from suffering as they did.
- **Genotypal** Deviants owe their conditions to their parents, the circumstances of birth or conception, or some legacy buried within their ancestries. Some of the **Born** always know they are special, and are either the children of Remade, or possess some recessive trait or lineal quality that designates them as "the One Who Will Arise," or some other ominous figure prophesized by science or tradition. In other cases, such origins are kept hidden by parents, or even arrive out of the blue, the result of a long-dead Progenitor's experiments on an ancestor. Genotypal Remade often discover their Variations in adolescence, though this isn't always the case, as a critical trigger might come earlier or later. These circumstances lead to many types of Variations, and a wide variety of attitudes about the conspiracy, where some might be "nobility," and others may have been taken away by caregivers, given new names, and hidden away.
- **Pathological** Deviants are victims of pure circumstance. These **Accidents** opened a strange machine, fell into a pool of otherworldly energy, or unintentionally encountered something so deeply Other that changed them forever. Pathologicals have no clear Progenitors, and no common patterns link them to conspiracies. New organizations might form because of a Pathological's accident, as the curious and ambitious band together, or dormant sects may awaken from minimal activity because the Deviant satisfied a certain prophecy, or activated *that* machine.

**[BEGIN DIAGRAM. WHILE I HAVE LAID THIS OUT AS A SINGLE TAB
TABLE IT SHOULD HAVE LINES GOING BETWEEN EACH ORIGIN WITH
ARROWS—ONE ARROW TO AND FROM EACH TO EACH A LA A COTERIE
DIAGRAM. MEANWHILE, THE ARROW HAS TEXT PARTWAY THROUGH**

WHICH IS THE STEREOTYPE CARRIED BY THE ORIGIN IT IS COMING FROM, TO THE ORIGIN IT IS POINTING TO. THIS STEREOTYPES WILL IMMEDIATELY FOLLOW HERE, AND SHOULD BE INSERTED AS NOTED. FOR MORE INFORMATION, AS DAVE BROOKSHAW.]

Origin Conviction **Loyalty**

Overt Unwilling **Elect**

Accidental

Covert Born **Volunteer**

[NOW THE STEREOTYPE LISTINGS TO GO WITH THOSE ARROWS. NOT FOR INLINE PRINT!!!! THEY GO IN THE DIAGRAM!!!!]

Accidental Stereotypes About:

Born: I could have used a lifetime to cope.

Elect: What do you mean, “on purpose?”

Unwilling: I’m so sorry.

Volunteer: Doesn’t sound like free will to me.

Born Stereotypes

Accidental: First, accept that it isn’t going away.

Elect: Always someone trying to get into the family.

Unwilling: Those who’ve lived it can show you the way.

Volunteer: More than you bargained for, but a lifetime to understand.

Elect Stereotypes

Accidental: Learn what you are, then act.

Born: Don’t take what you’ve got for granted.

Unwilling: Half your pain is in resisting your gifts.

Volunteer: Maybe I should have got paid too.

Unwilling Stereotypes

Accidental: I’m so sorry.

Born: You show me survival is possible.

Elect: Earn my trust. It won’t be easy.

Volunteer: Was it worth it?

Volunteer Stereotypes

Accidental: You deserved better. I mean literally, like a payout.

Born: It’s not who you are, it’s what sacrifices you’ll make, and why.

Elect: You were swindled.

Unwilling: Unfair. Get what's coming to you, with interest.

[END OF STEREOTYPES TO BE INSERTED INTO DIAGRAMS AS NOTED]

[END OF DIAGRAM]

Autourgics: The Elect

Be careful what you wish for.

You're self-made — almost. You looked upon yourself and saw something unfinished. Flesh of clay, too malleable for an incorruptible self. Maybe this transhuman poetry ensnared you, but it's entirely possible you came to be Remade with eyes half-open, with scientifically structured aspirations. Four genetic letters, cybernetic schematics, or weird alchemical formulae danced in your head. Instead of a personal vision, you might have joined the Elect to further a cause: a war to win, a peace to keep, a people to liberate, or destroy. Revenge is a common, potent motive too, and especially good at blinding you to the consequences of being Remade.

In any event, you quested for the power to bond these dreams to your flesh. You sought out your Progenitor. You *wanted* to be Remade — they didn't need to ask. You might have felt fear, but never reluctance. Your Progenitor was eager to help; in the literature of established conspiracies, Autourgics like you, with a strong will to change yourself, bear the torment of Divergence well enough to support truly novel Variations.

Look at what you are now. Look at what you *wanted*.

Nicknames: elective, seeker

Beginnings and Divergences: Consider these origins.

It's our central nervous system that fails us in the end. That's what she thought, after the last novel tryptamine, after she hung from hooks on an ancient oak in a mythic ordeal of her own design, after fucking and debating and drunkenness. After meditation that brought her to a place of gray light, but not as far as that final bliss. She could go no further than her neurons would allow. After all, the "speed of thought" is less than 300 miles per hour. Senses are fragile, the capacity to process their input is weak. But she recognized the quiet ones, the note-takers, from the circles of extreme experiences she moved in. They had means, but no direction, while she knew the exact shape of her perceptual limits. She guided them while they cut, injected, chanted in Tibetan and muttered about stem cells and "psychic capacity." She awoke. She saw the world with better eyes. It was so *ugly*.

Strength — she wanted it more than anything. She worked as hard as anyone else at the gym and on the base's obstacle courses, but hit a wall. Lactic acid in her muscles burned, but her course times never budged past a certain point. She couldn't lift any more, though she wasn't deficient by any standards but her own. She was a crack shot and good with a knife. She earned rank, patches, and eventually, a place in a unit with no patches or uniforms, where she trained to inflict quiet, efficient death on those her country was ashamed to admit they were killing — and where she was third-best, and hated it. But in the deep military, where even nation states are only vaguely present, there's always another, more elite unit. She deciphered their communications, killed their sentries and volunteered. "I'm here for the Invasive protocol," she said. "Give it to me." They made her strong — so strong. So weak, too, when they revealed she was nothing more than a specialized drone, guided by wire to incomprehensible missions. But she was never

afraid of pain. She knew how to work the knife, and dig out the chip. Now she's strong on her own terms.

Nowadays, he appreciates mad science clichés. They really did call him a crackpot, and it really did drive him further from orthodoxy. His interest in psychic research started innocently enough, by analyzing experiments conducted according to the best protocols, whose results nevertheless defied replication. He broke them down and accounted for every conventional bias, until all that was left was desire, tapping into some unknown force. He isolated it, seeking funding from rich eccentrics, and aid from a surprisingly large network of scientists interested in just this sort of thing. None of his allies would go public and risk their reputations, so he was disgraced alone. That sense of isolation firmed his resolve to build the Coactive Device without bothering with normal safety protocols, and use it on himself—he would either kill himself, or prove them wrong. But after the Device's energies changed him, connected him to a vast noetic matrix of thought, he knew his assistants had been guiding him to this breakthrough. He was not the first — just the first to live with the pain.

Going Renegade: Autourgics usually discover the gulf between their aspirations and the reality of their situation immediately. Without well-defined goals, they never would have become Remade. On the other hand, they're often willing to endure great sacrifices for the sake of attaining a "more than human" state, and may serve their conspiracies until it becomes clear that the Remade state doesn't match their aspirations, and its capabilities don't compensate for being controlled.

Most Elect don't take that last step. Divergence may add unanticipated pain to the power they've gained but it *is* power — abilities ordinary people said were impossible to achieve, and foolish to pursue. Thus, most of them are Devoted to their conspiracies. In many cases, they believe themselves to be a conspiracy's master, not its servant, but even though they might be called "the Prime Experiment" or "Prophesied One," they remain ensnared by whatever duties the conspiracy chains them with.

Origin Factor: Autourgics benefit from their strong motivation to become Remade, and gain one Scar-free Magnitude of an Overt Variation. Their desires ensnare them with an extra dot of Loyalty, however. They may feel lingering, even involuntary bonds with those crucial to their transformations, or increased spite toward those who stymied their wills to power.

Character Concepts: self-experimenting scientist, elite athlete, spiritual seeker, transhuman ideologue, patriotic volunteer

Epimorphs: The Volunteers

I thought I knew what I wanted, but I don't anymore. I only know it wasn't this.

Down on your luck. Bored, Desperate. Willing, though not entirely wanting. Conspiracies call people like you "Epimorphs," because even though you don't have an urge to be Remade, your neediness provides fertile soil for whatever they want to grow — or graft, splice, or inject. The method matters less than the psychic factor you present, which might also be imagined as a certain hollowness. That emptiness drove you to accept Divergence, to ask fewer questions than you should have, and subordinate yourself to the conspiracy's needs.

Whether you think about this potential as emptiness or new, raw earth, its origins aren't so poetic. You might have volunteered because of deep debt — your own, or a that of someone you

love. On the flipside, you might be greedy, willing to “join the program” and take its six-figure salary. Conspiracies take Epimorphs from prisons, setting themselves up as ways to reduce convicts’ sentences. (Of course, this arrangement might produce the Unwilling as well, depending on the degree of coercion.) You might be an ex-con unable to find a job, and the conspiracy’s willing to ignore your record. You might have medical bills, gambling debts, a sick friend or relative the conspiracy can cure. You might have hit a dead end, where your personal dreams seem dead, and becoming Remade, while not what you wanted, is a way to begin again. Unlike Autourgics, Divergence isn’t your goal, but what you’re willing to do to renew yourself — or fill that hole in your life.

Nicknames: volunteer, mark (both as in “Mark X,” of an experimental type, and a “mark” in the sense of the victim of a deception.)

Beginnings and Divergences: Who’d be classified as an Epimorph?

Him. He was going to get cancer by his 40s. That’s how his father went out, and how his father’s father died. He made his money early, motivated by early death, but spent it fast, going to specialists who might help him cheat it. The last one ran his genome and showed him the code that would kill him, but told him there was a way to beat it — maybe. She saw him reach for his checkbook and assured him it wouldn’t cost a dime, but he’d have to fill out numerous, complex forms. He didn’t even wait for his lawyer before he signed the form forbidding him from talking to one. Over the next few weeks, he endured the surgeries and injections, the pulsing new organs and masked doctors muttering about “chimeric horizontal gene transfer.” He healed in a haze of drugs, over hours he thought were days. But the new flesh, taken and delicately modified from its animal origins, helps him cast off injury and toxins fast. He’ll never get cancer now. That was a human thing.

Another Volunteer never had the kind of money that would open the door to elite labs. He rode that edge where you couldn’t technically call him homeless. He mostly couch-surfed, and when he couldn’t find a place to stay, relied on meth and willpower to avoid sleeping at all. He was blessed with exceptional intuition. He always knew when a deal would turn bad, or when the cops would come knocking. Eventually, he parleyed it into a career as a psychic, combining his gift with a hustler’s patter. Every dollar went back to meth and gambling debts — his gift tempted him to play, but sometimes he was too high to listen to it. Bookies shook him down, but he knew where he could sell his blood, and wouldn’t you know, one of the technicians there was an old client — one he helped with his real intuitive abilities. The man took him aside, noted his shitty teeth and yellow eyes, and said there’d be a way to leave that all behind. People — an “esoteric society” — would pay him to use his gift, even help him develop it. He used to make up mumbo jumbo, but when the society put him in the circle and chanted, even though they told him it was “psychodrama” to help him build his “cephalist” abilities, he knew they were deadly serious — and they controlled the Presence he felt during the rite. It still watches him, even now.

She got Remade for the bonus. She knew they’d never give her tenure, and student loans pushed her from archeologist to thief, specializing in artifacts demanded by a select circle of collectors. Nobody else wanted to enter the site; after a fellow educated thief never came out of the pit, they offered her a year’s income to follow. She descended, and found the thing: an ancient design, rendered in anachronistic steel, slick with the blue oil it was submerged in. As she climbed back, agony gripped her limbs. She looked in a mirror and screamed at the alien face that greeted her.

“Mutation,” said her contact. They knew it was going to happen. She didn’t stick around for the next offer.

Going Renegade: Few Epimorphs really know what they’re getting into. They volunteered to seal up the holes in their lives, and even if they were told about the changes and sacrifices due, couldn’t anticipate the reality of being Remade, from its physical and psychological demands to the costs imposed by the conspiracies that took them. Some of them rationalize terrible scars and callous demands as the price of doing business, or volunteered for reasons so pressing that any pain is worth it. They stay Devoted.

Epimorphs who rebel see these arrangements as exploitative, no matter what they got in return. At the very least, they know they deserve to be treated with basic dignity. For some, it takes the pain of Divergence to force them to value their own lives. Sometimes they lose everything volunteering won them. They blow their money escaping, or turn their backs on loved ones they wanted to help. Sometimes these factors provide further complications. The conspiracy knows all about the Volunteer’s debtors, and uses them as catspaws, or holds family members hostage.

Origin Factor: Volunteers sought out Divergence, though they didn’t always know their actions would lead to it. Nevertheless, their needs defined why they changed, and those connections linger, giving them an extra dot of Loyalty. That proactive drive also provides one Scar-free Magnitude of a Subtle Variation, as part of them braced for the consequences of their actions.

Character Concepts: super-soldier, street hustler, executive, gambler

Exomorphs: The Unwilling

You had no right.

Strapped in. Injected. Trapped. None of the Remade transform easily, but they changed you against your will. Everyone reacts differently to an experience like that, but it’s never something to shrug off. At the very least, it offends your sense of justice and free will. The conspiracy, and your Progenitors, devise all kinds of lies to rationalize it. Maybe you were slated for death, by the state, criminals or some rival conspiracy, and they say that by saving you in any form they have the right to do whatever they want. Maybe they frame it as punishment for a crime, or a chance to redeem yourself. Maybe they appeal to progress — by taking you, they can help others with cures, technologies, or progress toward some esoteric goal.

Go Renegade. Know that they’re lies, even if the conspiracy believes in them. Especially if they believe in them. Beneath ideologies and rationalizations, it’s about what people do to each other. They’ve wronged you.

But remember: Divergence gives you power. You’re not always sure what that power is, because the conspiracy rarely cared if you knew what they were doing to you. And no matter what they tell you, the power is yours, despite any Scars, and despite how it was given to you.

Nicknames: unwilling, donee (a genteel term used by conspiracies)

Beginnings and Divergences: The stories of three Renegades illustrate what it’s like to be one of the Unwilling.

He was an expert in multiple fields, but not the fields they grant PhDs in. Working with precision manufacturing equipment, biohazards and volatile chemicals required detailed training and honed instincts — things the facility’s “brains” ignored with a single keystroke up in their

offices, while he was exposed on the production floor. Machines rumbled. Substances hissed. He screamed. When he woke up, he wasn't in a hospital, but another wing of the building. So much of him was missing. Through their masks, people he'd never seen assured him they could fix him with "invasive protocols." He realized there was no way it had been an accident — and the smells and feel of his new parts? He knew them from the floor. The adaptive materials of his new flesh, part tissue and part machine, could never have existed without his work. It all belongs to him — and now he's out, he needs to make careful plans for his return, to take it all back.

She had every reason to believe it was the end. She'd killed a lot of people for the Family, to the point where their faces merged into a brutal caricature. Just that sort of face belonged to the man who put a bullet in her leg. The other syndicates had pooled their money to hire him. He laughed about it, because he was going to double even that. "Nobody'll know I didn't make the hit," he said, "because they promised nobody would ever recognize you." Two women came in. One produced the needle. After that came the Blue Room, and a body like quicksilver, atoms malleable and swift, though they could never remake her old face. An "effect of the mutating presence," they said, as if it made sense. They said they owned her now, as if it made sense, too. At least she understood why she'd been picked, beyond the ease of faking her death. They wanted a weapon; she obliged, until she realized the "benefactors" weren't as all-seeing as they pretended.

They called him "Moonchild:" something out of the family's old religion, repurposed for affection. They weren't observant, and he'd only flipped through the books and their strange symbols, since he couldn't read the words. It influenced his art, however, as he added the spirals and seal images to his paintings. The night his family saw his show was the last he saw of them. He was only 16. After they vanished, family debt claimed everything — then unfamiliar relatives claimed him, saying he was "owed" (not owed, *was owed*, like an asset) to the family and the faith, which were the same. Strong cousins dragged him to the altar, and its familiar designs, and they bled him a long time, until he saw the auras he painted. When he met other Renegades, they called it "a Coactive Divergence," but he just took solace in wings of smokeless flame, propelling him to safety. But the family, the faith, was bigger than he dreamed. They're still looking for him.

Going Renegade: A lucky few Exomorphs escape the conspiracy almost immediately after being remade. This usually happens when their Progenitors see their work as the fulfilment of some prophecy where the act of Divergence is success enough, or when they believe that somehow, the Unwilling will be grateful. Most conspiracies harbor no such illusions. They confine their subjects to remote labs, estates and ritual spaces, or let them loose with strict controls in place. They might hold family and loved ones as hostages, implant tracking devices, or send along a team of monitors.

Devoted follow the rules and get used to the routines they impose. Many become dispirited, but few possess true loyalty. Renegades would be the majority, if enough of them survived rebellion.

Origin Factor: The Unwilling gain one Scar-free Magnitude of an Overt Variation — power from a less than cautious Divergence, and the anger that accompanies how it was done. Exomorphs also start with an extra dot of Conviction, in defiance of what their conspiracy did to them.

Character Concepts: street kid, fugitive, gangster, industrial worker

Genotypals: The Born

I knew. There were no words in the beginning, but I always knew.

Did they know? Your parents? The doctors? The priests? That affects how you were treated. Some families might have hidden you, so you either moved constantly and learned to use a new name whenever you did, or you grew up in isolation, staring at cabin or basement walls. Others treated you as nobility or a messiah, tempering discipline with worship. You weren't so much raised as trained for your role.

Not everyone Remade in the womb (or in some stranger pre-birth environment) enjoyed family ties. You might have been raised by scientists or monks, revered or treated as an experiment. If you were lucky, they gave you a name instead of a title or number. In most cases, you couldn't help but develop a bond with whoever raised you, even if it conflicted with how you should feel, because of how they treated you. This doesn't necessarily impose lingering affection. Fury burns away unwanted attachments.

Nicknames: born, germlines

Beginnings and Divergences: Three Remade and their heritages may have elements that speak to you.

She was born into flickering hospital fluorescence like so many others, but this was no hospital, and she knew no other illumination until she escaped. Life was all corridors with rails, recycled air, and white walls, yellowing like old teeth as she grew up. They didn't give her a name until she killed one of the staff for finding her makeshift cloth doll. The power cracked the tiled floor and burst the lights; they bricked up that wing and gave her a new room. It was an accident; she was angry. After that, staff brought her clothes and colored pencils and construction paper, showed her old movies and told her their names. She never killed anyone who wore hospital scrubs again, but they made her practice on animals, then sick-looking people who didn't speak her language. Her power crackled up, red deeper than fire, and they broke. She didn't have enough empathy for them, until the other girl came. People in suits and armor and guns put them in a room together. The girl could speak without speaking. She told her things she heard in the others' heads: "Exposing the coactive and cephalist candidates is the next logical step." And together, they noticed the armed people and the once-people in charge were *not* wearing hospital scrubs.

He grew up wandering the old corridors of a doddering great estate, one whose residents had forgotten about more rooms than they inhabited. There was gray light within, and gray outside, among misty wood and coast. Townspeople brought what the family needed, and volunteered a few of their own as servants. He knew it was a dated custom from television and the internet, both supplied via an antenna cluster installed once he'd exhausted the library — one smaller than it looked, since so many books had rotted. That's how he discovered his diet of live, hunted flesh was unusual. By the time he was grown, they had to restock the woods with deer. He ate, and studied, and grew stronger, and hungrier. As for his parents, one father never spoke to him, and the other cleaned his face of blood and comforted him, but never smiled. They knew how hungry he'd become. The day he stalked the one who'd raised him, he wept the whole time, but the compulsion was too strong. And when he cornered the father who loved him, his other father arrived from behind, and before locking the door on both, said his first and only words: "There are worse things than you in this world."

Their Mom and Dad knew how to do a little of everything, and their child learned fast enough to keep up. To be a new person, one had to pick up new skills and habits. They learned how to answer to a new name as if they'd been born with it, and even though masquerading as a boy or girl never captured who they really were, they pretended to be whatever their parents asked. The trick was to never be too clever, to know a lot but not so much of anything that anyone would pay attention to them. "You've got to lose your fair share," Dad said, and he was right, because otherwise, there were a few things they would always win at. Always. They saw the puppet strings on people, and knew you could pluck them with words, gestures — even a well-timed glance. That's how they ended their first fight; when one of their bullies couldn't explain why he'd crushed the other's windpipe, it was time to leave town, get new names, and learn new things. By their teenage years, they could recognize the sturdy cars tailing them, and people who tried to hard not to notice them. When the conspiracy closed in, and Mom and Dad vanished into black truck, they decided to get very unfair indeed.

Going Renegade: Becoming a Renegade might have meant rejecting family, or escaping a strange lifelong environment — and dealing with the world everyone else knows, and you don't. Their Variations and Scars mean something special, as they either grew up with them, or treated their manifestations as life stages. Genotypals are more likely to manifest their Scars and Variations in childhood. Young Renegades tend to leave... messily. They destroy facilities and hurt people. And their close ties to Progenitors and conspirators works both ways. They're hunted by vengeful parents and minders determined to recover the project of a generation. Born Devoted keep these family ties, and stand among the Renegades' most driven enemies.

Origin Factor: Genotypals' bodies and minds adapted to their states from birth, so they gain one Scar-free Magnitude of a Subtle Variation. The Born gain an extra dot of Conviction, won in the effort to assert themselves in the face of lifelong control.

Character Concepts: cult messiah, escaped experiment, identity thief, student

Pathologicals: The Accidents

My eyes were never meant to be opened, but I see it. I see you.

Responsibility. The conspiracy will say anything to pass it on to you. They might call it "unknown potential." They accuse you of trespassing, opening their machines, being in the wrong place at the wrong time. They didn't mean to make you what you are, but now they want to own you, though they might frame it as medical care, a job, compensation with strings attached. Your Progenitor never meant to Remake you, and may not even know how it you came to be, though they're hardly blameless — they opened doors to dangerous forces with little regard for the consequences. And if you really did do it to yourself? Your experiment is their path to power.

You sense their urge to confine and control you, but you know that beneath their confidence and titles and resources, there's fear. They don't exactly know what you're capable of, or what you *know* you're capable of. They might send people to test you by attacking you and the people you care about, or they might recruit people close to you to observe your behavior, and watch for your growing abilities.

Nicknames: accidents, unfortunates

Beginnings and Divergences: Anyone can become a Pathological. The following stories represent only a fraction of the ways in which you might be accidentally Remade.

In sarcastic moments, she thinks the worst thing about her Divergence was the embarrassment. She was a very, very good thief, and should have known about the complications of stealing from such a wealthy mark. She carefully researched him, tracking his auction purchases and the people with losing bids, who'd be eager for another chance to get the artifacts. Defeating his security was easy enough, and she knew the layout, including the location of walk-in vault, unusual for a private citizen. It was open. The hospital bed stood inside, the most valuable item atop its disturbed sheets. She grabbed it immediately, before seeing the layer of fine ash coating the walls — and she burned. But she had a will the target, the victim, never had. She contained the fire, locking its coactive energies in her heart, but not before burning the rest of the mansion down. The police investigating the fire are trying too hard, and know too much. They're on her heels, and she *never* leaves evidence at the scene.

She was the one you went to whenever you needed something fixed. Mechanical, electronic — it didn't matter. She always had the parts, hoarded in bins. Her stash came from recycling centers, junkyards, and the occasional unattended loading dock. A friend told her about a lab clearing out its equipment, and after she cut open the fence, she found a treasure trove: a weird mix of vacuum tubes and next-generation circuit boards. She climbed inside something that looked like a weird MRI machine and pried a panel open, but there were no magnetic coils. There were stones, and symbols that twisted when she looked at them. She ran, and when the nausea and bleeding hit the next day, she suspected radiation poisoning. But she knew when she was being followed, using the same intuition that had helped her evade a hundred junkyard guards — and more. She saw their faces, and in their eyes, she saw her image, from an old picture. Maybe the sickness will never stop, but she's looking for her face in other people's minds now, and seeing where they go, and hearing-but-not the phrase “cephalist awakening.”

“You can't teach an old god new tricks.” Her boyfriend, that smug asshole, was basically right, though he didn't mean to do anything more than denigrate her interest in esoterica. It was an obscure stone circle, a long-fallow field in England where the roads had withered and died before cars existed. You needed to hike to get there. Old men had said people once pricked their thumbs and made wishes over these squat, knee-high rocks. The old men died, but anthropologists kept the tapes of their stories, and she listened to them. Her boyfriend was tired from the hike, angry and hungry. When the local gang came out of a stand of trees, he decided to shout and shove, and one of them pushed back. A trip, and his head dashed against the stone, so much more blood than from a pricked thumb, and she wanted to kill them, and the old god had no sense of context, she guessed. Someone had pulled some magic lever hard, and the wish must have been granted like the twitch of a muscle, and she killed them all, so easily. But they keep coming, those people from the stone circle: cousins and scientists and robed madwomen, and some are as fast and lethal as her.

Going Renegade: Accidental Remade are almost always Renegade by default. No conspiracy expects them, and some of them form only after the Divergence, when they become aware of the Pathological. This doesn't mean every one of them approaches the Renegade life with conviction. They're among the Remade most likely to isolate themselves in remote wild places and urban wastelands. They need solitude to protect themselves from the conspiracy and explore their Variations.

Confused by unguided Divergences, some Pathologicals surrender to conspiracies immediately. Seeking guidance and protection, they make desperate deals and soon find themselves among the Devoted. The longer they're in, the more they realize that their own, initial fear and confusion set the conspiracy's trap for them. Self-hatred is common.

Origin Factor: Due to their diverse histories, Pathologicals gain one Scar-free Magnitude of any Variation (Subtle or Overt) and an additional dot of either Loyalty or Conviction. However, as no precautions were taken to help them withstand their Divergence, they begin the chronicle with one additional medium Instability (p. XX).

Character Concepts: homemaker, maintenance worker, security guard, lab technician, thief

Clades

Origins are how you went into the Divergence; Clades are how you broke. Which of the five Clades a Deviant belongs to depends on how her mind and body adapted to the process that fractured her soul.

While individuals within each Clade transformed along similar pathways, every one of them is unique and carried specific variances into their transformation. The Divergence brought the inevitable conclusion that the human subject would be altered into something inherently inhuman, either through dying or breaking and accepting becoming one of the Remade. While the outcome was unavoidable, the specifics were never certain. Despite any similarities that may exist in appearance, function, or powers of Broken within the same Clade, every transformed is unique. Each survived the Divergence in their own way and came into their Variations and Scars as individuals. No one within a Clade need have consistency or predictability with their peers.

Every Deviant has three **Adaptations** — two as a function of their Clade, plus Stubborn Resolve (p. XX), which is universal to all Remade. However dissimilar various Broken are, the Adaptations denote shared experience in surviving the horrors. For some Remade, the fact that others share their Adaptations is the only comfort they have in knowing they're not alone.

Cephalists: The minds of these *Psychics* lashed out at the trauma of their Divergence, reshaping themselves as their souls cracked and giving them power over the world through sheer mental will, beyond anything a Baseline would understand.

Chimerics: Also known as *Hybrids*, these Remade combine human and foreign species to try and gain the best of both worlds. Hybrids may incorporate animal organs, plant genes, hastily attached limbs, or play host to voracious pathogens and parasites to merge human and other and see what results.

Coactives: The *Infused* blend the intangible with the solidity of human flesh. The precise power bound to the Broken that shattered her soul could be nearly anything. One harnesses deadly levels of electricity or radiation while another channels angelic light or demonic darkness. The intangible source is irrelevant to belonging to this Clade, only that the human controls it.

Invasives: The *Cyborgs* gained power as their flesh grew around invasive, inanimate matter, taking it in and incorporating it to be one with the human. Some Invasives benefit from shiny technological marvels, while others make do with tarnished jury-rigged devices, but gadgets aren't the sole province of this Clade. Magical artifacts, alien devices, and other exotic materials bonded with human meat also mark Invasives.

Mutants: Something in the genome of the *Grotesques* rebelled at the horror of the Divergence, rejecting whatever was trying to force change by responding with a change of their own. As the Mutant's soul cracks, his body becomes something more, something with the ability to refuse the alternative insult to his flesh.

Classifying the Unclassifiable

Conspiracies focus on Clades because it gives some predictability to the Divergence, but this is far from perfect. It may be somewhat logical to think that slicing open a subject and surgically implanting mechanical parts produces an Invasive, but the victim's body may reject the cold metal and latch onto the warm electricity inside the machines, becoming Coactive, instead. Or some quirk of genetics may force her body to violently destroy the foreign substances and rewire her Mutant physiology to be inimical to all machines. The stimulus of the Divergence is impersonal, while the response of Clade is nothing but personal.

Clades are not truly random, as statistical clusters do exist. The individual subject is important but not the only factor. Divergences appear to follow certain trends based on the events that brought about the rupture of a Broken's soul. As an example, overcharging energy supplies — even with ephemeral energies poorly understood by science — while performing procedures may help skew results towards producing Coactives. Implanting living biological material is best-suited to achieving a Chimeric result, just as grafting machines to human flesh most often gives an Invasive, when it delivers anything at all.

Progenitors who work under controlled conditions tend to have some level of repeatability to their methods, or at least try to limit the variables as much as possible to channel the results down the pathway they desire. To help deliver the control they so desperately crave, conspiracies specializing in producing certain Clades may use psychological profiling and genetic screening to identify those subjects with similar characteristics to what has previously yielded favorable results. What worked to make one subject of given background and health characteristics may work on another.

Despite these efforts, the Divergence is more art than science and any method can just as easily result in psychic Cephalists or genetic Mutants, instead. Overall, Progenitors know every population has its outliers and statistical anomalies. Sometimes, accidents just happen. Ignorant bystanders or isolated observers in the right place at the right time can undergo the Divergence as readily as carefully prepared subjects. In the end, which Clade a Deviant joins depends largely on the physical, mental, and spiritual state of the transformed herself.

Cephalists: The Psychics

My will over all.

Cephalists embody the supremacy of human will over the world. Their mental faculties are open to possibilities — and terrors — that Baseline humans will never experience. Conspiracies crave Cephalists for their unique ability to apply themselves with a focus other Deviants can't match. Many Psychics find some kind of home within the conspiracies, and not always at the bottom of the pile. The transformed can never forget they are tools to achieve the conspiracy's goals, but among the Broken, Devoted Cephalists are among those who most frequently climb the ranks and achieve power — and inflict the misery they avoid on their own kind. This perceived betrayal draws the ire of many Renegade Psychics whom the conspiracies would force into

service. Being enslaved by their own only inflames the fires of hatred and their drive for revenge, and makes the traitors targets for the Renegade's own focused power.

Mental Supremacy

Cephalists are the dominance of the human mind in controlling the world. Where other Deviants adapted to the trauma of Divergence, accepting and incorporating whatever the Progenitor did to the character, each Cephalist refused through sheer stubborn defiance and will so powerful it fractured their soul. With this break came the power to back up the refusal, rejecting the intended changes. For many Psychics, this is a source of personal pride — proof that they were either able to thwart their Progenitor's plan or to guide the course of their Divergence, however subconsciously.

Because of this, Cephalists often project some degree of superiority over the Baselines around them, and even their fellow Broken. Though her post-Divergence existence may be no more comfortable or pleasant than any other Deviant's, the Psychic insists that she triumphed over her tormentors once, which fuels her belief that she can do so again.

This self-assurance is skin deep. A Cephalist may not admit her trauma, and she might not show visible signs of it, but the damage is nevertheless there. The rage is there. The sense of alienation from everyone is there. The fear that she might be victimized again — either by those responsible for her transformation or others who seek to dictate how she uses her powers — is always there. Whether she hates those who inflicted the Divergence upon her or desperately seeks their approval, the Psychic is not a whole person. She is a survivor, a victim of an experience, a trauma, she would not wish on anyone (well, almost anyone).

Intellectual Property

Conspiracies see Psychics as tools of control and power, particularly those whose Variations let them command others. Corporate and political conspiracies gain advantage by knowing their opponents' next move, or understanding how they'll react to the conspiracy's actions. Cult-like conspiracies use Cephalists to draw in flocks of people to donate financial and other resources. That they feel compelled to worship a being of unearthly attraction is a carefully-nurtured bonus. Loyal transformed can live a luxurious life inside the gilded cage of these conspiracies, as long as they don't start buying into their own legends.

Cephalists' power is a double-edged sword for conspiracies, who often take extra precautions to ensure they're in control of the Psychic, not the other way around. Cautious conspiracies build multiple layers of failsafes in case the Broken try to think for themselves, but Cephalists can focus their will towards a task unlike anyone else — given enough time they'll apply this advantage to picking apart obstacles designed by lesser minds.

Simple destruction is too gentle a revenge for most Cephalists. These Deviants can and will devote their focus to determining how to undermine the conspiracies agenda and turn it to their own ends. Devoted simply gloat in the knowledge that they are the spiders at the center of these webs, whereas Renegades can either take the opportunity to subvert the conspiracy under their own rule, or simply escape and try their chances on the outside.

The Cephalist Character

Many Cephalists favor Social Attributes as primary, with their Variations demonstrating a tendency towards manipulating and controlling others. This is partly why conspiracies expend

considerable resources towards acquiring Cephalists, and how these Remade thrive in such environments. Secondary Attributes are divided equally between Mental and Physical, depending on what Variations the character displays. A Psychic is just as likely to be able to mentally reinforce her strength and speed as she is to be able to boost her thinking to genius levels and calculate as quickly as a computer.

Merits: Cephalists tend to focus on Mental Merits that demonstrate the power of their minds or their success in retaining a sliver of their Baseline humanity. Bleeding Heart, Good Samaritan, Hypervigilance, Indomitable, Investigative Prodigy, Multilingual, Patient, and Shared Suffering are all common Merits. Psychics rarely have Physical Merits, and Social Merits are usually limited to those that keep the Deviant one step ahead of the conspiracies, such as Anonymity or Safe Place.

Scars: Cephalists typically manifest Scars that affect their minds, thoughts, and self-control. Scars that weaken the body at the expense of their minds are also common. Controlled Scars are commonplace, but Persistent Scars also appear frequently. Addictive Variation, Amnesia, Concentration, Hemophilia, Murderous Urge, Perilous Variation, Thin Skin, and Tribulation are common Scars.

Adaptations: *Stubborn Resolve, Focus, Iron Will* (p. XX)

[RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Cephalists→**Chimerics:** Do you dominate nature, or does it dominate you?

Cephalists→**Coactives:** We both have power, but I rely solely on myself.

Cephalists→**Invasives:** You're tough but all matter breaks.

Cephalists→**Mutants:** So, you had an allergic reaction to the Divergence, and I'm supposed to be impressed?

[END RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Chimerics: The Hybrids

Listen to your instincts.

Survival of the fittest; kill or be killed. All life follows these rules, whether plant, animal, or something in between. The amalgamation of nature's savagery with human know-how is what many conspiracies crave. Overcoming human frailties and limitations with the best nature — or things beyond nature — has to offer. Where humans have weak skin and nails, animals have claws and armored scales. Where humans die from lack of food, plants make their own nourishment from sunlight and trace elements. Evolution is too slow for Chimerics, incorporating the best of other life into themselves aiming for perfect recombination, but where perfection is elusive, they want to fail fast and move onto the next iteration.

Unfortunately for frustrated Progenitor and discarded Remade alike, the human body rejects many of nature's advantages, or assimilates them imperfectly. The most successful Hybrids discover their own ways to combine humanity with whatever else they carry. They overcome the frailties inherent in both their donors and their Divergence and achieve greatness as better than human.

Gutter Mongrels

Many Chimerics cannot help but advertise their patronage with obvious displays. Even the most precise combination of human and other tends to show traces of the source. A cat-like Chimeric may have strangely oval pupils and yellow eyes, while a Hybrid combining plant and human may have a sickly green tint to his skin. These tells are even more apparent around the transformed's Variations. Form follows function for Hybrids. Keen hearing requires oversized or strangely shaped ears. Detecting minute traces of scent needs extended nasal passages.

Chimerics also often possess twisted additions or painful conglomerations of features. Bones, muscles and joints all behave differently between humans and animals. Few are lucky enough for all their limbs and hide to be perfectly even. Scars that take the form of asymmetric limbs, with perhaps one human and one animal leg, or parts of each combined in each limb, are common. This mismatching inevitably requires uncomfortable, and sometimes painful, effort for the Broken to overcome the limitations and obtain a semblance of functionality.

Not all betray their nature so physically. Many instead exhibit the habits and behaviors of their donor species. A prey Hybrid animal may still fear its natural predators, even though the Chimeric is too large for them to be a threat. Or a cat Hybrid might exhibit a feline's standoffishness and fastidiousness. Such mismatched nature may come across as quirks, albeit strange ones, but others attract far more attention than a mere raised eyebrow would suggest.

Chimerics invariably learn to ignore their suffering when they need to, and may excel at blending in with each of their parent species — both socially and, if necessary, mentally and physically. Animals are creatures of instinct and reaction, not cool reason. Evolution engineered their brains to understand and harness their gifts, while the human brain and body must find harmony between detailed planning and unthinking action. Plants are even more remote to humanity, operating on timescales related to weather patterns and light cycles. And for those Hybrids gifted with genetics from other, stranger, sources, working out how to satisfy both halves is a constant struggle.

This war between human and inhuman keenly highlights the cost of Divergence for Chimerics. Never will they be alone with themselves, as the war between nature and nurture rages forever in their shattered souls. Understanding urges and needs is difficult enough for much of humanity. Trying to reconcile those needs with those of a myriad of genetic donors can be too much for many.

The Menagerie

Harnessing animal instinct and ability to human will is the story of human history. This is what matters to conspiracies when it comes to Chimerics, with the added advantage of having non-human abilities with human ability to reason and follow orders. This is a key hypocrisy of conspiracies exploiting Chimerics. The conspiracies benefit from the transformed's more-than-human abilities, while treating them as little more than animals.

Few Chimerics rise to positions of power within conspiracies. Conspiracies treat even the most loyal Devoted as second-class citizens, simply resources to be used and discarded if they break. Humans control animals by asserting dominance and never allowing the beast to realize its claws and fangs are more than a match for the fleshy ape. Such it is within the conspiracies. Constant reinforcement of the Chimeric's lowly status forges control. Beyond the need for control, many conspiracies do consider Chimerics to be subhuman, deserving of no better treatment than animals.

The Chimeric Character

Chimerics typically favor Physical Attributes as their primary choice, with Mental and Social Attributes being equally preferred as a secondary choice, depending on what foreign genetics are in the character's makeup.

Merits: Chimerics favor Merits that represent gifts from their inhuman donors. Physical Merits could include Fleet of Foot, Hardy, Iron Stamina, and Seizing the Edge. Likely Mental Merits are Direction Sense, Fight, Flight, Freeze, Hypervigilance, and Tolerance for Biology. Social Merits aren't usually a focus for Chimerics, but many can instinctively find a Safe Place, and their exotic genetics lend themselves well to Striking Looks. Voice of the Wild is also a common choice for Chimeric characters.

Scars: Chimeric Scars frequently manifest as physical deformities or animalistic traits and instincts that are noticeably different from human norms. Persistent Scars dominate in this Clade, reflecting permanent physiological and psychological changes. Alternate Persona, Conspicuous Appearance, Murderous Urge, Native Environment, Phobia, Relentless Variation, and Thin Skin are all common among Chimerics.

Adaptations: *Stubborn Resolve, Untamed, Adrenaline Surge* (p. XX)

[BEGIN RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Chimerics→**Cephalists:** Human thought is such a limited experience.

Chimerics→**Coactives:** What whispers to you at night?

Chimerics→**Invasives:** We both know what it is to have alien within.

Chimerics→**Mutants:** You adapt, we endure.

[END RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Coactives: The Infused

Power of the unseen.

Everything is energy, if you look closely enough. On the smallest level, matter is just vibrating strings of energy given solid form. This physicality traps energy for the briefest of moments before it escapes once again. This applies whether the energy is something within human understanding or not. The binding of the soul to crude flesh to empower life counts as energy beyond scientific knowledge. Energy can be neither created nor destroyed. It can only transform from one state to another, but this doesn't explain magic that creates fire or lightning from nothingness, or how ephemeral 'Essence' forms from the resonance of something simply existing. Coactive Deviants can come from the human surrendering to the power and accepting any of these energies, or those even more esoteric and unknown—possibly even unknowable. The energy source doesn't matter to the Clade, what matters is that the Infused burn with the power of the universe, that sears flesh and bone in its need to explode into the world.

Much like energy, Coactives weren't destroyed by their Divergence, but were transformed into something else. When exposed to the source of her future power, the Broken didn't burn and die like other humans would; instead something inside her reached out and embraced it, welcomed it, and harnessed it for her own use. The effort cracked her soul, but surely this was a small price to pay for what replaced it?

Burning Brightest

To be Coactive is to feel bursting with potential. The power inside them may be something known to science, a product of the truths underlying strange, inhuman realms, or follow principles beyond human understanding, but every cell within the transformed's body resonates with it. The Infused constantly know their immense power yearns to be free, to change the world through its action. The transformed must beware, though, for the greatest consequence is usually the emptiness and regret she quickly feels after such release.

Coactives learn to release the power in somewhat controlled bursts, lest it burn their flesh and boil away their blood on its outward trajectory. The power doesn't want to be restrained, and it doesn't want to be slowly vented like a pressure valve. It wants all or nothing, and the Coactive who gives into what her power wants can reshape or destroy the world, but may destroy herself in the process.

This forms the quandary of the Coactive's existence. Her energies always want to flow and move. Overfilled reserves of mundane power want to explode outwards, and surly ethereal beings cooped by the Infused to borrow and channel their powers are most belligerent and impossible to drown out when energized. The Coactive's existence is a study of contradictions. She constantly wants to revel in her power but knows the pain that comes with her greatest displays. When she uses her power, she craves more despite the agony. Her broken soul needs the energy to feel whole, even if just for a while.

Harnessed Power

Conspiracies want Coactives the same way nations want nuclear deterrents. By having the biggest, most powerful, and most destructive weapons, they can keep their enemies at bay — for a time, at least.

The human body can only store energy by consuming and processing food. Everyone knows this. Also, by any strictly mundane scientific measure, vibes and other such energies don't exist. The conspiracies know better. They know that humans are the best instruments for detecting, studying, and storing impossible energies. They also know that the right Remade can harness incredible reserves of normal energy, in amounts that would injure or kill a normal being. The conspiracies don't know the exact paths or reasons that the human body can be adapted in these ways, but they are very interested in finding out. Harnessing, controlling, and projecting such power is humanity's future, and the conspiracies are determined to be at the forefront of this future.

The Coactive Character

Coactives embody the irresistible lure of humans to power, like moths to the flame. The Coactive character often has Social Attributes as primary, to better talk his way out of trouble. This is especially true for those Broken who have difficulty controlling their powers.

Merits: Coactives prefer Mental and Social Merits. Physical Merits are rarer, though destructive Merits such as Demolisher are suitable, as are those that represent the Deviant's supercharged body, such as Fleet of Foot. Mentally, her awareness of the flow of energy lends itself well to Area of Expertise or Direction Sense. The Coactive's energetic allure make networking Social Merits such as Allies, Contacts, Fast-Talking, and Status common, while their volatility reinforces Air of Menace and Armed and Extremely Dangerous. Stabilizer is an often critical Supernatural Merit for Infused.

Scars: Coactives typically exhibit Scars related to energy, self-control, or lack thereof. Involuntary Scars are particularly common among the Infused, although Controlled and Persistent Scars still occur with some frequency. Alternate Persona, Involuntary Stimulus, Misfortune, Perilous Variation, Power Build-Up, Power Failure, and Unstable Variation are all common in Coactives.

Adaptations: *Stubborn Resolve, Consume, Living Conduit* (p. XX)

[BEGIN RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Coactives→Cephalists: Your laser to my bonfire, both are useful.

Coactives→Chimerics: The natural world is only the smallest part of existence.

Coactives→Invasives: Doesn't that matter slow you down?

Coactives→Mutants: Flesh burns no matter its form.

[END RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Invasives: The Cyborgs

More than human.

Humanity is a tool-using species, taking advantage of other creatures from the ability to fashion and use tools. Humans have always looked to objects and devices to simplify or improve existence, or to make sense of the darkness and mysteries surrounding them. Humans wield tools to overcome obstacles, kill enemies and opponents, or display faith, ritual, and otherworldly power. Humans express their control over the world through tools.

Invasive are conduits for the tool to instead use the human. The objects, items, and substances within the cyborgs need the flesh bond to impact the world. For some cyborgs this is straightforward — a mechanical arm or leg replaces her original and functions as if it was always part of her body, perhaps with a few additional features. For other Invasives, the item is more esoteric, the function less obvious. A magic jewel can only fashion objects out of nothing when fed a steady supply of fresh blood, and where better to find this than a living subject? The mysterious liquid found beneath the ocean alters probability at random and can only be controlled by a living brain.

Optional Extras

Simply put, Invasives are the products of incorporating foreign bodies into their physical beings. These additions may be mechanical, organic, or mystical in origin, but without them the transformed is merely human. However, simply adding items to the human body is far from a sufficiently transgressive act to trigger the Divergence. Human traditions of piercings, scarification, and body modification are as old as culture; humanity has never shied away from modifying the body in the pursuit of aesthetics or function.

Once constructed, Cyborgs are forever separated from humanity. Unlike Baseline prosthetics and replacement parts, which provide a minimal function to the impaired person, Invasives subsume their foreign parts. The breaking of the Remade's soul binds the inanimate object to his flesh, forcing function as if it were an inseparable part of his body — which it now is.

This doesn't mean an Invasive can simply go back to his previous life by removing the offending additions; the Divergence bonds organic and inorganic. This doesn't stop some Invasives from

trying, as the reality of their transformation sets in and the pain becomes unbearable. Unfortunately for the Cyborgs, the alterations to their bodies are highly resistant to removal or even permanent damage and impairment. The substances themselves impart a robustness to the Broken.

To survive, Invasives must learn to live with the horror of knowing that something alien is now physically part of them. Few have the luxury of ignoring their implants and simply living their lives. All too often, their Scars carry a price of maintenance for the implant, some special procedure or condition needed to keep the unpleasant side effects at bay. Even cyborgs with easy-to-tend augmentations rarely lead the quiet life. The constant searching of the conspiracies and the rage inside the Remade call out for her to use the tools, before the tools start to use her.

Materiel Assets

[‘MATERIEL’ IS THE CORRECT SPELLING IN THE HEADING ABOVE — WE’RE RELATING THIS TO A MILITARISTIC FEEL.]

Most conspiracies hunt Invasives because they want what’s inside them. Some created the machinery bonded to the Cyborgs, while others just know it exists and want it for their own purposes. Unfortunately for Invasives, conspiracies often see the human element as an inconvenient accessory for what they really want. To the conspiracy, the human host is interchangeable, and if the Deviant won’t cooperate, they will provide a new vessel. Conspiracies generally only learn that some inanimate objects required something unique from the specific host after it is too late for the Remade they tore it from.

The materials bonded to Invasives make them a valuable resource, but the durability all Invasives share is what makes them useful tools. A loyal Cyborg can execute the conspiracy’s commands despite considerable resistance, wading through dangers and harm to achieve the mission goal. Invasives can succeed where other transformed fall short. The price of so much damage is temporary reduction of capability, so mission planners consider how much the Cyborg’s Variations need to come into play for mission success.

This ability to withstand incredible damage before stopping often makes capture of Invasives difficult. Capturing a Cyborg involves hitting hard, and hitting fast. The conspiracy looks to overwhelm the Broken’s defenses and wound her weaker human flesh, knowing whatever foreign substance is inside her will shield her from debilitating injury at the cost of its own function. Without the human, it can’t affect the world, so it works to keep the human as intact as possible. Conspiracies need to be careful to find the balance between just enough devastating violence and too much. However, conspiracies are often satisfied with their intriguing new toy even if the host dies. After all, they can (almost) always find another one to take her place.

The Invasive Character

Invasives tend towards Physical Attributes as primary. Surviving the integration of foreign objects into their body means Invasives tend to either have high or low Stamina, with few exhibiting average human endurance. High Stamina Invasives conquered the procedures, but at a cost to other areas of their physique, while those with low Stamina barely survived the process, but gained new capabilities at the cost of their health.

Merits: Some Invasives demonstrate a broad spectrum of Merits, in keeping with the Clade’s Variations. Mental Merits often grant broad utility, such as Investigative Aide, Language,

Patient, and Professional Training. Physical Merits frequently reflect the Cyborg's durability and utility with tools, such as Crack Driver, Demolisher, Hardy, Iron Stamina, and Quick Draw. Invasives prize, but often lack, Social Merits, especially ones that represent human connections who can aid them, such as Allies, Contacts, Lifeline, Mentor, and Retainer.

Scars: Invasives carry Scars related to their bodies and the procedures they endured. No particular activation method dominates here, but Scars often reflect the limits of the Cyborg's implants. Cooldown, Depletion, Involuntary Stimulus, Maintenance, Power Build-Up, Power Failure, and Subliminal Conditioning are common

Adaptations: *Stubborn Resolve, Redundancy, Overclock* (p. XX)

[BEGIN RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Invasives→**Cephalists:** You only get one shot, make it count.

Invasives→**Chimerics:** How can living material be less compatible?

Invasives→**Coactives:** You only took part of what was offered.

Invasives→**Mutants:** So malleable, so fragile.

[END RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Mutants: The Grotesques

Adapt and survive.

Every Mutant is a miracle, a statistical anomaly that, by rights, should have died as a result of the Divergence. Somehow, they didn't. Their body rejected the cybernetic implant, or transplanted organ, or infusion of exotic energy as though allergic to it. Then it went a step further, transforming into something that would never suffer another such incursion. Unfortunately, this aggressive immune response still splintered the Grotesque's soul.

The Mutant can endure almost any environment, for a time. Grotesques only rarely encounter situations that they can't adapt to overcome. If a Mutant doesn't have what it takes to thrive at that moment, she can change herself and triumph. If the Grotesque needs some advantage to save the day — or tear down a conspiracy — she will adapt and make it happen. These changes carry a cost — always a cost — but many Mutants are willing to pay this price if it advances their cause.

Welcome to the Freak-show

Mutants embody humanity's adaptability to overcome any situation, including the Divergence. Regardless of whether the Remade was willing and prepared for the transformation, something within her genome refused to obey. Her body changed to survive, developing its own way of coping, and rejecting what was on offer.

Most Progenitors agree that this surprising immunity has roots in some quirk in the Grotesque's DNA, but they argue vociferously over whether it would have occurred in the face of a different Divergence trigger. In short, no one knows with certainty whether the Mutant's genes would have reacted the same way to a nanotech injection as it did to the implantation of a unicorn's heart, or even whether the heart of a lion would have succeeded where the unicorn's heart did not. Genetics might predispose a person to mutation, but it is equally reliant on the much less

likely possibility that she is exposed to a Divergence-triggering stimulus that will unlock this potential.

Inhuman Resources

The very adaptability that refused compliance is what conspiracies want with Mutants. Every loyal Grotesque is a wildcard giving power to the conspiracy. Rivals may plan for attacks from many fronts, but they can never fully prepare for the Mutant dedicated to the conspiracy's disruption or destruction. This unpredictable power makes Renegade Mutants just as terrifying to the conspiracies they've betrayed. Even Mutants who have worked within a conspiracy for years as Devoted could return for vengeance from any direction and despite the obstacles placed in their way.

This risk and uncertainty prompts smart conspiracies to approach identified Mutants carefully. Recruiters would rather proffer the carrot than the stick, enticing the Remade to join on her own terms, and under what she at least believes is her own free will. The cost of keeping a Grotesque onside and at ease is usually far less than forcing her to comply. Among several conspiracies, Mutant assets enjoy a freedom unmatched by other Clades, and coexist with the organization as a valued freelancer or consultant rather than a slave. The main question is how long can the Mutant turn a blind eye to the treatment and propagation of other Broken in the conspiracy's clutches before her maladjusted conscience realizes the truth of her 'business partners'?

The Mutant Character

Mutants don't display any preference towards which Attributes are primary. Attribute priorities and Merit choices for Grotesques are entirely individual and based on the character's background and needs.

Merits: Mutants often choose Merits that exemplify diversity and utility. Broad Merits that provide advantages in a range of situations are common choices. Many Mutants choose Physical Merits such as Fleet of Foot or Iron Stamina. With Mental Merits, Mutants often display Hypervigilance to know what's coming. Similarly, Grotesques often favor loose social networks to keep them informed and help them out when needed; Contacts and Fast-Talking are common. Additionally, as masters of their own fate, many Mutants retain their humanity more readily than other Remade, making Bleeding Heart and Blood on My Hands common Merits.

Scars: Mutant Scars are just as varied as the Mutants themselves. While no true pattern exists, Mutants sometimes demonstrate mental or physical conditions that can often be hidden or explained away as genetic diseases. Bane, Conspicuous Appearance, Fragility, Glitch, Hemophilia, Murderous Urge, and Thin Skin are common Scars.

Adaptations: *Stubborn Resolve, Unpredictable, Forced Growth* (p. XX)

[BEGIN RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Mutants→Cephalists: Why stop at just the mind?

Mutants→Chimerics: All the tricks of nature and still less than I.

Mutants→Coactives: Your extra power isn't worth the cost.

Mutants→Invasives: You accepted it, now make it work for you.

[END RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAM TEXT]

Adaptations

Every Deviant has three Adaptations — Stubborn Resolve, plus two others based on their Clade. Calling upon an Adaptation is a reflexive action.

Universal Adaptation

- **Stubborn Resolve:** Forcing any Deviant to act contrary to a Touchstone, even by supernatural means, is difficult. Once per chapter, if the character is acting in support of a Touchstone (pursuing a Conviction one or helping a Loyalty) and is trying to avoid being persuaded or mind-controlled away from acting on that Touchstone, she may increase any Resistance Attribute by the Loyalty or Conviction rating for purposes of not being persuaded or controlled for the rest of that scene.

Cephalist Adaptations

- **Focus:** Once per chapter, the Cephalist can increase the potency of her power through sheer will. The character increases the Magnitude of one of her Variations by one for the remainder of the scene. She can push this further by spending one point of Willpower per additional level of Magnitude added to the Variation. This is an exception to the normal limit of spending one point of Willpower per turn.
- **Iron Will:** The Cephalist may spend a point of Willpower to use a once-per-scene or once-per-chapter Variation or Adaptation that he has already used during the current scene/chapter. This is an exception to the normal limit of spending one point of Willpower per turn.

Chimeric Adaptations

- **Untamed:** Chimerics have an unmatched endurance when it comes to survival, ignoring pain and suffering to reach their goals. Once per chapter, a Chimeric character can reduce the Magnitude of one of her Scars by two. She may push this further by spending one point of Willpower per additional reduction in Magnitude. The Chimeric retains full access to the entangled Variations, even if this reduces the Scar's Magnitude to 0.
- **Adrenaline Surge:** The Chimeric may choose to suffer a point of bashing damage to use a once-per-scene Variation or Adaptation that she has already used during the current scene. She may choose to suffer a point of lethal damage to use a once-per-chapter Variation or Adaptation that she has already used during the current chapter. Any damage she suffers from this Adaptation cannot be healed by supernatural powers, including Variations (such as Healing Touch and Rapid Healing).

Coactive Adaptations

- **Consume:** The flame that burns twice as bright burns half as long. Coactive characters can increase their output at personal risk. Once per chapter, a Coactive character can increase the Magnitude of one of his Variations by one for the remainder of the scene. He can push this Variation further by accepting one point of lethal damage per additional Magnitude. Any damage caused by this Adaptation cannot be healed more quickly through Variations or other supernatural means.
- **Living Conduit:** The Coactive may spend a point of Willpower to use a once-per-scene or once-per-chapter Variation or Adaptation that he has already used during the current

scene/chapter. This is an exception to the normal limit of spending one point of Willpower per turn.

Invasive Adaptations

- **Redundancy:** The extra equipment Invasives carry within gives their bodies additional ability to withstand punishment. Once per chapter, an Invasive character can reduce the Magnitude of one or more Variations (to a minimum of 0) to heal the same amount of lethal or bashing damage. Variations damaged this way ‘heal’ at the rate of one Magnitude per day.
- **Overclock:** The Invasive may choose to suffer a point of bashing damage to use a once-per-scene Variation or Adaptation that she has already used during the current scene. She may choose to suffer a point of lethal damage to use a once-per-chapter Variation or Adaptation that she has already used during the current chapter. Any damage she suffers from this Adaptation cannot be healed by supernatural powers, including Variations (such as Healing Touch and Rapid Healing) and Adaptations (such as Redundancy).

Mutant Adaptations

- **Unpredictable:** Mutants are terrifyingly adaptable, capable of manifesting new abilities at a moment’s notice. Once per chapter, a Mutant character may exchange one of her Variations for a Universal Variation of up to half its Magnitude (rounded up) until the end of the scene. The activation method and entangled Scar remain the same. This exchange cannot be terminated before the end of the scene, nor can a temporary Variation be swapped out for another temporary Variation.
- **Forced Growth:** The Mutant may choose to suffer a minor Instability to use a once-per-scene or once-per-chapter Variation or Adaptation that he has already used during the current scene/chapter.

Chapter Two: Setting

Mr. Owen suggested to me that the production of monsters... presents an analogy to the production of species.

— Charles Darwin

What is the difference between a person and an object? How can some of us look upon our fellow human beings and think of them as merely *things*, as subjects to be twisted or tormented or manipulated without regard for their feelings? How can any of us treat another sapient entity with such callous disregard as to suborn their very existence, viewing them solely as tools or gross, raw matter to be shaped and sculpted as we see fit? History is littered with the grim wreckage of man's inhumanity towards man. Are we a fundamentally broken species, to visit such cruelty upon ourselves over and over again?

Deviants are the manifestation of this fault-line through humanity, split asunder by the transgression of Divergence. Each of the Broken has stepped beyond the limits of what it is to be human — or has been forced to. Many of the Remade are victims, transformed into monstrosities against their will. Yet whether this violation of the sanctity of flesh and soul was voluntary or not, those who go Renegade burn with the need to lash out, to fight back, and to prove they are more than just objects to be toyed with or controlled by others.

Divergence

If the evolution of life is a tree of many boughs, then Divergence is the sickly offshoot cracked from humanity's branch. Divergence is a process neither natural nor gentle. Those who travel down that jagged fork are changed, Remade into something new and different, and they suffer for it. The Progenitors and conspiracies who inflict Divergence have a hundred different names for it, and perform it through uncounted methodologies and means, but most do not realize the common thread that binds all Deviants together. Divergence breaks its victims and sets them apart from Baseline humanity.

A man screams as gleaming scalpels descend upon his flesh. They cut a new truth into the very fabric of his being, a gospel of altered blood and lymph. He wakes in a fluid-filled glass prison, and his body no longer heeds petty notions of constancy from moment to moment. Bone shivers and meat flows in response to his horrified thoughts. From without, inscrutable faces watch and analyze and iterate. He is not the first, and he will not be the last. He is just raw material.

A woman sits in rapture, the cult's fevered prayers writhing around her. The words and thoughts coalesce as a carmine chrysalis around her. When she tears free, dripping with crimson ooze, she is changed. Shapes swarm beneath her skin, clicking with clockwork malice. Unexpected pain wracks her tortured body, and her scream calls a legion of brass locusts forth from invisible spaces. The cultists exult but she, privy now to the true whispers of the brass hive, oh, she *regrets*.

The researchers douse the test subjects in a humming tank of carefully-harvested infinity, a genie's lamp of impossibilities that scours at their young minds. Sterile white rooms, unending tests and abusive attempts at discipline define the children's existence, but none of the expected psychic phenomena manifest. The program is disbanded and covered up, the children released into orphanages where no-one believes their tale. Years later, an adult lashes out in anger and

self-loathing. The dimensional energies, still coursing through his now-mature nervous system, flow with his feelings. Glass shatters and brains blister.

These, and countless others like them, are moments of Divergence. They are the catalysts by which the Remade are broken and shaped into something new. Divergence is the chrysalis that takes the caterpillar, tortures it into screaming liquefied substrate, then rebuilds it as a warped mirror to the ghastly ambitions of a Progenitor.

Unnatural Selection

The different strains of Divergence vary hugely. Each corresponds to the intent, talent, and means of a Progenitor, the particular human responsible for inflicting such a transmogrification upon the Remade. For almost every single Broken, Divergence traces back to a single such person; the one who flipped the switch, or cut with the scalpel, or uttered the fateful prayer.

Divergence is often the culmination of an obsessive attempt to realize a Progenitor's ambition through the raw material of the human species. Such a Progenitor usually uses others as the test subjects for his grim work, although desperation or principles drive some to rely on their own flesh, blood, or psyche as the canvas for their artistry. Occasionally, a Progenitor stumbles into his role when pursuing an entirely different goal — creating a Remade when attempting to heal a sick patient, or ritually sacrificing a victim at a moment of entirely accidental occult significance. A rare few Progenitors and Broken are entirely unwitting actors, caught up in Divergences forged from sheer happenstance and ill luck.

Although the transformed share underlying traits, the different methodologies and implementations of Divergence do matter. A military laboratory that threads invasive nanotechnology through subjects' nervous systems, a cult that carves the mad jabbering of the Void Testament into the skin and tongue of ritual sacrifices, and the carefully-managed insertion of psychic-active DNA into newborns at a hospital, can each wreak enough change upon their subjects to create true Deviants. The subject's willingness can also shape the outcome of Divergence. The rich and powerful might seek out a Progenitor for cutting-edge experimental treatments, but the victims of Divergence more often come from among the forgotten, the unwitting, or those whose absence goes unremarked.

Because Progenitors often toy with unreliable, experimental, or misunderstood methodologies, Divergence is frequently a one-off achievement. Unstable genetic code, volatile chemicals, or even the unseen alignment of eldritch auras, can all cause catastrophic failure in attempts to reproduce the results. Even Progenitors who achieve repeat Divergence and have the means to assemble a production line process face failures, irregularities, and complications that they will struggle to predict or understand. These failures come with a body count, either during Divergence or shortly thereafter, as individuals fail to survive Divergence or cannot cope with the enormity of what has happened to them. The greatest variables are always the human beings involved — Progenitors and victims alike.

Splintered Souls

Given the difficulties of replication and the wide variety of forms that Deviants take, Divergence outwardly has no rhyme nor reason connecting its many manifestations. Despite this, Remade pupated through wildly different procedures do, in fact, share certain traits. They are prone towards incredible, sometimes irrational stubbornness and determination. They suffer a breakdown in their ability to understand and relate with others, manifesting as obsessive focus

and vengefulness. The wider the gulf yawns between the Broken and humanity, the worse the effects of Divergence grow. The link that binds these traits together is this: Divergence does not just twist mind or flesh or bone. It rends the very soul.

Most Progenitors are unaware of the soul's existence, let alone that Divergence wounds it. Nestling within almost every human being is a blazing pearl of spiritual identity, a symbiotic energy anchored in the flesh and thoughts and sweat and disappointment of the bearer's life. A soul is both ember and anchor, a gobbet of awareness woven into the human's sense of self. Even those who discover the soul's existence possess few answers as to how a soul takes root, where souls come from, and to what bleak or scintillating destination they pass after death. The soul is the ineffable mystery at the heart of Divergence.

A human who has her soul wrenched from her withers away into a hollowed-out shell, deprived of drive and sense. Divergence, though, does not tear the soul entirely from its tethers. Instead, the process cracks the soul, fracturing it, and this damage separates the Remade from the merely altered. Once a Progenitor transforms his victim into something *other*, he damages the spiritual connection with the soul that is part of being human. The soul breaks, and from the crack flows power. It is not clear whether this raw energy of the soul spills forth because of such a wound, or if Divergence stokes the embers to such intensity that it invariably breaks the Deviant's soul as a side-effect.

The contained energy of a Deviant's soul washes forth into the alterations that have forced Divergence and gives unpredictable, unreliable power to those very changes. Where a Progenitor's reach has exceeded his grasp, it is this raw energy from the soul that makes his impossible intentions real and functional. The constant state of conflicting power is a self-amplifying process, a feedback loop that serves as the unstable foundation upon which the Broken exists.

Two-Tone World

The soul's wound manifests in a change to how the Deviant perceives herself and others. The power spilling from her spiritual injury fills her with purpose and drive, a need to act and lash out. The Remade finds she cannot settle easily into a neutral state, let herself go with the flow, or allow events to wash around her. Instead the Deviant, feeling the push of the river, *pushes back*. Fighting against the tide eases the tumultuous currents of her splintered soul.

It's easy for a Deviant to feel alienated and isolated after her Divergence. The Variations and Scars she bears grind at her psyche with the repulsive understanding that she is no longer fully human. Her own body and mind have been rendered unsafe, violated, and changed. For the Broken whose limbs are now cold and unfeeling chrome, or who can turn her skin to gnashing and hungry mouths, or who now labors under crippling addictions to improbable substances, she is caught in a horror movie where she is both monster and victim. Baseline humans will struggle to understand her experiences, at best, and may just flee in terror from the more outwardly disturbing manifestations of Divergence.

The Deviant's injured soul means that she cannot easily internalize the anger and fear stemming from this betrayal by her body and mind. Instead, she turns that fury outwards. Anger comes easily to the transformed. Having been mutilated and re-sculpted in ways she cannot come to terms with, the Remade's rage locks on to those she blames for her current state. Most Broken

develop an obsessive hatred or bitterness towards their Progenitor, or towards another human being whom they blame for the events that led to Divergence.

The damage to the Remade's soul changes her perception of the world around her. She loses any instinctive sense of bonding with her peer groups. She breaks the world down into those who are for her, and those who are against. She discards nuances as too forgiving for the intense emotions that fuel the Deviant's changed sense of self. Anyone holding the middle ground or trying to stay neutral is clearly just dissembling because they're really in the against camp — they just don't want to admit it.

Trust and friendship do not come easily to the Remade, but those bonds she does forge are incredibly strong, and her loyalty to them is a vital anchor. Whether born of old ties, desperate need, or hard-won acceptance, her loyalties are what keep her obsession with vengeance from becoming all-consuming and allow her to keep sight of the wider world. Most Deviants have many enemies and few friends, but it is these few who remind the Deviant of who she once was, giving her something to fight for rather than just against.

If a Deviant slips away from humanity, if she lets those threads snap and allows isolation to become a great chasm between herself and other people, the wound upon her soul becomes more unstable. It cracks further, breaks, and floods her with more of its volatile power. As her mind becomes alienated from the rest of the species, so does her body. The Variations and Scars of Divergence grow in intensity. Unchecked, this power blazes bright before it consumes her utterly.

Scar Tissue

The Deviant's cracked soul also manifests through one or more Scars, the outward signs of the power that flows through her. Scars are like chains that shackle the Deviant in some way — a cruel price for changes that the Remade likely never desired in the first place.

Sometimes, a Scar is a simple expression of monstrous nature, an appalling display of inhuman flesh or an unsettling manner that further drives the wedge between the Remade and other humans. It may be a cruel hunger or compulsion that the Broken must satisfy lest she face crippling privation, or a burden that drains her of time or energy. Some Scars are minor nuisances, but others can maim or kill the Deviant or anyone unlucky enough to be around her. Divergence without Scars would not be Divergence at all, but rather would be a pure act of genesis that yet remains beyond the grasp of humanity.

Every transformed bears at least a single Scar. Cruelly, the intensity of the Scarring that the Deviant bears is commensurate to the depth of the changes wrought upon her. The most potent of Deviants labor under a mass of Scars, each a horrific manacle of compelled behavior or alien phenomena that prevents her from living and acting as she desires.

As manifestations of the soul's state, Scars grow worse as a Deviant loses control over her unstable nature and becomes alienated from humanity. They gouge fresh tracks through the Remade's life, erupting with new and nightmarish complications. In turn, the Deviant's Variations grow more intense, marrying her isolation with strength and the drive to lash out. Twisted by her Scars and empowered by her Variations, the Deviant risks falling into a cycle of feedback that will end with her death as Divergence entirely consumes her.

Variation

When a Deviant emerges from the chrysalis of Divergence, she bears changes that mark her split from Baseline humanity termed Variations. While Scars are the manifestations of the Deviant's wounded soul, Variations are the more direct outcomes of the process used to induce Divergence, whether intentional or accidental. When a man is fused with the essence of a mosquito through some violent abuse of science, his increasingly insectoid appearance and appetite for fresh blood are his Scars, but the incredible strength and resilience that he now possesses are his Variations.

Selective Pressure

The intended purpose of most Divergences is to induce one or more Variations. A cracked soul and twisted Scars are usually unfortunate side-effects, the necessary cost of painting a nightmarish masterpiece of Variations upon the fabric of the victim. In many of these cases, the changes wrought upon the transformed are intended to meet the creator's specific purposes. An intelligence agency's off-the-books program of genetic tampering refines latent psychic potential with the aim of creating Deviants who can pry the secrets of rivals loose with remote viewing. A secure corporate lab modifies infiltrators capable of mimicking both mental and physical traits of targets for industrial espionage missions.

Depending on the control the Progenitor possesses over the Divergence process, a Deviant could end up with anything from a shopping list of hand-picked Variations tailored perfectly to her intended application, to whatever best approximation is available within the restrictions of the chosen methodology. When all a Progenitor has available is a hammer, she tends to treat all her problems like nails.

Not every Progenitor triggers Divergence for practical reasons. Some alter the Remade from a Baseline human state just to see if they can, or to prove a point, or for other aesthetic or philosophical purposes. The Deviant made by a government program to serve as a super-soldier has the benefit of retroviral-cocktail Variations that make him tougher, stronger, and faster; the poor victim of a mad occultist who treats her chimeric creations as a form of artistic expression, though, finds himself with a seemingly random patchwork of bestial traits assembled on a whim. The researcher who dunks convicted prisoners into a tank of extra-dimensional slime just to see what happens is delighted when the only survivor begins to exude poisonous sludge from her skin. That discovery might one day help create other Remade with that specific Variation in mind — but this first victim is more a scientific curiosity than a finely-honed tool.

Then there are the Divergences that have no apparent oversight or directing purpose at all, the accidents and whims of cruel happenstance. Human action still has its place in this process, but it is unwitting and subconscious. An executioner flips the switch with no notion of the unusual occult confluences centered around the electric chair that day. The prisoner whose mind suddenly courses with stygian energy gains eldritch Variations shaped as much by her regret and guilt as by the jabbering specters that now swim through her mind. In such cases, it is often the transformed who invents a rationale behind or link between the Variations she has gained, to make some sort of sense of what has happened.

Emergence

With some methods, Divergence is a brutal and revelatory arrival — a car-crash of change through the Deviant's life. She is traumatized, violated, rent apart, and Broken. Her new life shears away from her old. Once the blood has stopped flowing or the eldritch machines ceased their shrieking, she is left indelibly marked. Perhaps fleshy wings curl around her, impossible to

ignore and reacting reflexively to her thoughts. Maybe she can see the pulsing surges of vivid electrical ghosts all around, whether in the nervous systems of her captors or the crackling circuits of her holding cell. Perhaps she speaks, and those near her immediately buckle and fold to her will. For such a Deviant, the presence and nature of her Variations are immediate. It may take some time to control them and learn their limits, let alone truly understand them, but the break between Baseline and Remade is sudden, extreme, and clear.

Not every Divergence happens so swiftly. Even during intentional Divergences, the process can be lengthy and sustained. A series of alchemical treatments intended to turn the ritualist's prisoner into a guardian invunche has to be applied day after day over months. The changes are gradual in that gloomy cell, with one Variation after another slowly twisting the horrified captive's flesh with accompanying Scars. The volunteer for WellBeing International's new prosthetic replacement program goes in for repeated surgery across a year, each visit replacing another of her failing organs with a cutting-edge NewYou™ synthetic node. After the fourth surgery, when they network the various nodes via a hub installed at the base of her skull and start interweaving her consciousness with their own shackled-AI administrator, her soul fractures and she becomes Remade, but the ensuing visits continue to build up her integrated Variations. She slowly becomes more aware of her enhanced mental processing power, and only realizes there is an intelligent, artificial cohabitant of her consciousness months after leaving the GetWell™ clinic.

For victims who are unaware they are undergoing Divergence at all, its slithering influence can be a nightmarish transformation that is nonsensical in its emergence. The insistent insurgence of the Deviant's own mind or body against him gnaws at his perception, before supplanting his former reality entirely. The young man who was adopted as a child after the 'orphanage' burned down doesn't just wake up one day to find he has the arm of a monstrous lizard. Something, some flash-point or catalyst, triggers the defiled scripture hidden in his blood, and then the changes creep up on him. One day, the skin of his arm starts to itch and peel. The scabs never seem to quite heal, a keratin canker that thickens and hardens as the weeks pass. Fingernails lengthen. His vision blurs and changes. Peering into the mirror one day, he recoils in shock as he sees the shape of his pupils is changing. He does his best to hide it, stops going to work, stops meeting his friends. Weeks pass; there's a knock at his door, and severe-looking men in black suits outside. They breach the apartment, rush in and corner him. Panicking, he scuttles up the wall to hang from the ceiling on the scaled pads of his hands and feet. If he thinks rationally, he could make a break for it out the window and down the building's flank. Instead he hisses, gripped by fear and confusion, as the men raise their tasers and drop him from his perch with an overwhelming jolt of electricity.

Adaptation

It would be a stretch to call them fortunate, but those Remade who pupate under the yoke of powerful conspiracies or goal-obsessed Progenitors are the most likely to experience a rigorous regimen or program to awaken, understand, and control their Variations. A Deviant created through invasive cybernetic enhancement may have a literal instruction manual scrolling in front of her vision when she recovers from the anesthetic, projected via the heads-up display of her new mechanical eyes. The would-be monster-hunter who has turned his body chemistry into a veritable cauldron leafs through alchemical texts detailing the precise elixirs needed to trigger specific reactions in his blood. The sacrificial victim reborn in the pit of flies has a constant

humming whisper in her head, a buzz that recites the syllables she must repeat to warp flesh and shatter bone in those whose death the droning song desires.

Even with an instructor or guide to help the newly transformed, adaptation to Variations can take time. Like the freshly-emerged butterfly gingerly flapping its fragile wings, Variations can leave the Remade with a confusing new set of sensory inputs, changing parts of her body or psyche so that years of ingrained reflex and memory no longer apply. She finds that she does not know her strength; vat-grown muscle implants let her tear the door off a car by mistake, or new psychic talent slips from her control and scours the minds of her instructors. Variations based around movement can be particularly dangerous for the new Deviant as she learns the extent of her capabilities.

The transformed may end up without any instruction or explanation of her new Variations at all. She escapes her creators, yearning for freedom or fleeing her scheduled termination. She never knows her Progenitor at all, or has Diverged due to seemingly random circumstances. Such a Deviant must fend for herself when it comes to exploring and understanding the changes wrought upon her. Some Remade in this situation keep their cool and slowly feel out the extent of their capabilities, learning carefully. A Deviant with machine empathy might be freaked out the first time she finds that a lock reacts directly to her angry curses at it to *just damn open* but, once she has established that she isn't hallucinating, she carefully catalogs which machines will easily fold to her will, which ones are trickier, and just how simple a device has to be before she can't affect it at all.

Some go the other way. They lose their shit, freak out, panic, or retreat into denial. This can be extremely dangerous for the Deviant and for anyone unfortunate enough to be nearby. A pyrokinetic who refuses to admit that she can conjure flames ends up burning down a school when she is provoked into a rage. She avoids confronting the power her Variation has given her until it's too late, never learning how to control and limit it.

Those Renegade Deviants who survive the early days after Divergence aren't always successful in coming to terms with their Variations. In some cases, a transformed explores just enough of her power to be able to achieve basic control but flinches back from embracing it out of fear, or the hope that it's all just a bad dream that will go away. Some Variations simply remain hidden; the Deviant adapts to the strength of his intrusively-rebuilt prosthetic limbs, but doesn't realize there are additional subsystems built into them. Faced with unknown limitations, a Remade may end up seeking out others who do have knowledge — kidnapping a Progenitor or the agents of the conspiracy that pursues him and forcing them to give up what they know, or looking for experts at the cutting edge of the fields that led to the Divergence. Sometimes, unexpected patrons bring their attention to bear on the Deviant. A whistle-blower from the corporation who wants to help the Broken get revenge leaks scientific data to him, or a voice in the song on the radio whispers secrets in brief moments of crackling static.

Not every Variation *can* be adapted to. Some unlucky victims are burdened by Variations that they simply have no control over, or Scars that twist the potential benefits of their powers with bitter consequences. Deviants with involuntary powers are the most likely to descend into a spiral of madness and self-destruction. Even those who flee contact with other human beings to avoid causing harm are only agitating the problem, as their wounded souls grow inflamed by the isolation and pour more power into the Variations and Scars that have caused the situation in the first place.

And therein lies the rub. Variations are born of the methodology that causes Divergence, but they are linked to the splintered soul that afflicts the Deviant with her Scars. As a Deviant grows more unstable and begins to lose control of herself, so her Variations strengthen — or entirely new ones spring forth. A vicious feedback loop forms, gifting the Deviant with even more power to lash out at the world and her enemies, pushing her further from humanity, and cracking her soul even more. Variations may seem like gifts, but their infliction is an unfair exchange, never truly balancing the Scars and the suffering that comes with them. Worse, it is the power of Variation that brings Deviants to the attention of the true beneficiaries of Divergence — the conspiracies worming through the fabric of society, spinning webs of pain and control.

Conspiracy

A secret history of the world lurks in the scribbled marginalia of discarded chronicles and secure archives, in the cold smiles that mask unspeakable sacrifices, in the places that are hidden not because they are concealed but because society has been trained not to look. It's a history of power, and the unfettered craving thereof, of desperation and the lengths it will drive humans to, and of doors that should have remained closed. It is built on occult atrocities and scientific blasphemies. There is no single author of this history, for it is an account of the innumerable conspiracies that have sought to control and direct the progress of humanity. It is amid the grinding gears of these conspiracies that the Remade are caught, crushed, and recreated anew.

Incubators and Parasites

Uncounted conspiracies pepper the fabric of human society. Some last for hours, born from opportunity or burning emotion and collapsing just as swiftly. Some persist for millennia, the ancient sinews of civilization. Their formation seems to be a part of human nature. Put three people in a room together, and two will conspire against the third.

The majority of mundane conspiracies have nothing to do with Deviants, of course. The lines between those conspiracies that create, pursue, or persecute the transformed and those unaware that Divergence is even possible are not drawn according to size, or scope, or means, or wealth. They are carved instead by opportunity, chance, and ambition. One corporation might throw untold millions of dollars at a genetic research program without success, where another stumbles into results through raw luck or a moment of brilliance on the part of a Progenitor. Intelligence agencies suffer institutional senility on the topic as they spin off blacker-than-black research operations, or firewall the knowledge of psychic and esoteric possibilities into deniable projects. Then, when these schemes implode or go off the leash or are shut down in a cover-up, everyone involved who understood what was going on is dead or on the run, and so the cycle starts up again. Corrupt cops sell criminals who cross them to grinning doctors with razor smiles. Mad cultists witness Divergence and think it's divinity bleeding into the world. A cabal of respectable musicians carefully record strange music that rewrites the very mind of victims who hear it.

Conspiracies hoard what information on Divergence they may come across. Once a conspiracy whets its appetite with the discovery of the Remade, it learns to look more closely for the signs of Deviants and Progenitors, and hunts for sources on Divergence according to the methodologies and philosophies that it adheres to. A conspiracy's influence can be far-reaching, worming through society into other schemes and plots, and so actions that seem far removed from a conspiracy's heart can feed back to it with remarkable speed. For a Deviant, this can lead to a state of paranoia. The eyes of the conspiracy she escapes are everywhere, their agents waiting for a single slip-up to reveal her presence.

The secretive nature of the world of conspiracies leaves many with a woefully incomplete understanding of Divergence. Some conspiracies only encounter one or two Clades of Deviant, and think these are the only ones that exist or matter. Conspiracies quite willing to believe in Psychics may scoff at the idea of Coactive Divergence as delusional nonsense. Others attempt to interpret all Broken through the lens of their particular ideology or scientific models, or wildly misunderstand what a Remade *is*, thinking them alien infiltrators or hidden demons or some sort of supernatural disease that must be rooted out. A conspiracy may even hide the existence or nature of its Deviant creations from some of its own members.

Some conspiracies hunt Deviants, hoping to exploit the power of Variations. Hunters who prefer the carrot to the stick lure the Broken in with promises and a veneer of kindness, aiming to acquire a Devoted servant. Dealing with a Deviant is always risky, though, and so the mask is usually paper-thin. Lack of compliance is met with force. A Remade taken by force can still be worked on, coerced, cajoled, brainwashed — and if she can't be persuaded by any means, the conspiracy can still benefit. Intractable Deviants are an opportunity for study, analysis and dissection, after all.

Recruitment is not the only possible motive. Some organizations fear the damage and destabilization a Deviant can inflict on society's fabric. A Broken cohort's machinations can crash through the finely laid plans of a conspiracy's existing schemes. A specific type of transformed may offend religious or philosophical sensibilities, the conspirators declaring them abominations worthy only of annihilation. Particular Clades can become targets, as a cybernetic research division goes after invasively-created Deviants to pry their plating loose and peer at the cutting-edge work of rival companies. Sometimes hapless Remade are mistaken for the agents of a rival in a war between conspiracies, caught in the crossfire of a power struggle where they need to pick a side or take cover.

What is almost always lacking on the part of a conspiracy is any sense that a Deviant is a person. Conspirators see Remade as an opportunity, a tool, a threat, a chance for discovery, or just raw material to be rendered down. Even the Devoted servants of a conspiracy are usually on the leash of Baseline conspirators, not agents of their own destiny. The conspiracy where Remade rule outright is a rarity indeed — and even then, the very nature of their damaged souls affords no guarantee they will treat other Deviants with more humanity than a Baseline conspirator would.

Splicing and Evolution

Engineering Divergence directly is difficult, even for the most powerful conspiracies. Few would-be Progenitors are successful, and Deviants are a rarity. No shared libraries of knowledge exist, only the hard-won scraps gleaned from tangling with other organizations or from the bodies of the Remade. Conspiracies with a greater purpose will often lavish promising lines of research with all the resources they can muster, going to great lengths indeed to secure success. Just as often, though, entirely new conspiracies grow up around a successful Progenitor. The biotech firm doesn't start out as a conspiracy to genetically engineer monstrosities. That comes after a lab project goes off the rails under an over-ambitious doctor's supervision, and soon enough, threads from the top to the bottom of the company and beyond. In these cases, Divergence comes first and the purpose comes afterwards, shaped by the capabilities of the Remade thus created.

Where Divergence is successful, the form that it takes can seem wildly at odds with the nature of the conspiracy. The Deviants spawned from a cult's schemes aren't necessarily horrors of

demon-infested flesh. A sect could rebuild a wounded adherent with limbs of gleaming steel and nerves of squirming wires, albeit with hot metal quenched in spinal fluid and computer code written with infernal ciphers. The old conspiracy in a new tech company maintains ancient rural traditions. Every midwinter there's a 'team-building exercise' out in the woods where bloody rites initiate a new haruspex. The chosen executive lives for a year in a secure compound, forced to read omens and portents for the company's stock market prospects as his instability grows wilder and psychosis consumes his mind entirely.

Outbreak and Containment

A vigilant conspiracy does everything it can to confine and control the Deviants it possesses. There's no universal means for doing so, but some precautions are relatively common. Conspiracies usually hold untrustworthy or uncooperative Deviants in the most secure available location, and hide their existence from wider awareness. Experiments and tests occur under watchful supervision. Conspirators often purge Deviants who grow too powerful or are deemed too difficult to control. More cooperative Deviants might earn limited freedom, but on a leash — tagged and tracked, watched, given only limited resources, conditioned to obey, or otherwise hobbled in their ability to act independently.

Any precaution is only as good as the human element involved, of course. Plans go awry and errors of judgment creep in. Underneath the concrete scab of a city's surface, a series of subterranean labs make an excellent prison. They run off the wider electricity grid, though, and so a power-cut opens a brief vulnerability. A zealous group of true believers can't see how or why the victim they chose to feed into the maw of their 'god' could possibly resent them for the glorious changes inflicted on her. A Remade dropped into a combat zone for a test run is believed killed in action. He does nothing to challenge that assertion, disappearing into the shanty towns of refugees once he recovers from his wounds.

Whether hunting a Renegade they created or pursuing rivals' rogue agents, conspiracies have the upper hand in the hunt for free Deviants. A conspiracy's nature is to spread its influence into society, and to reach for the levers of power. Sometimes, this takes the form of soft power — an attempt to control behavior, belief, and perception. The Remade on the run must deal with lies spread about her being a criminal or delusional. Supposedly trustworthy figures inform on her when she confides in them, and pillars of the community turn against her. Some conspiracies have the reach to bring harder power to bear. From the proverbial black helicopters and men in suits, to frozen assets and evidence vanishing from the justice system, the Broken finds the world actively turning against her, littered with traps that she must maintain vigilance against to have even the faintest hope of evading capture. She may even face her own kind in the form of Devoted agents, with their own armory of Variations and all the resources a conspiracy's support can buy them.

Ultimately, a conspiracy's foremost duty is to its own continued existence, and that means maintaining its secrecy. Resourceful and persistent Deviants can sometimes drive conspiracies away by threatening to tear the veil that hides their activities. Alternatively, the Broken might try to cause so much disruption and expense that it is no longer worth the cost to bring them in. Such attempts to reach a detente carry a risk. The conspiracy may come to see the existence of the Deviant and her powers as a danger that no promise or threat can balance against. A Deviant who is too much trouble on the pursuit may well find the conspiracy turns its entire strength toward annihilating her.

Divergence gives power, though, and a burning drive for vengeance. Detente or disappearance into a half-life in the shadows does not sit well with most Remade. There comes a time when the Deviant stops running, turns, and fights back. Not every conspirator is well-prepared for this moment, and it can be the catalyst that brings a whole conspiracy crashing down in pieces.

Renegades

Conspiracy members can track every credit card transaction someone makes, and there are cameras everywhere, including in everyone's cellphone. Today, it's exceptionally easy to find someone and increasingly difficult to stay hidden. Also, newly escaped Remade rarely understand how many resources or connections the people hunting them possess. Some attempt to resume their previous lives, but conspiracies can use land deeds, mortgages, credit card records, shipping addresses, and many other details to find someone. Conspiracies can also attempt to locate someone by locating their friends and family, many of whom now conveniently appear on the person's social media profiles. Instead, most Renegades who remain free must choose some strategy for how they are going to avoid the attentions of the conspiracy or conspiracies who are hunting them.

Down and Out

One of the least pleasant facts about being a Renegade is that the easiest way to successfully hide from pursuit is to become invisible by becoming destitute and homeless. If you don't have a credit card or a fixed address, you're impressively difficult to find, and while most convenience stores have security cameras, there's no central database for them — at least not yet.

Of course, in addition to the obvious risks of exposure, hunger, disease, theft, and violence by bored teens or overly aggressive police and security guards, you also are unable to own anything you can't carry with you, and you aren't going to have much time or money to spend tracking down the conspiracy you hate. Anyone living like this needs to spend much of her time surviving, and is lucky to have money for anything other than minimal food and clothing.

That said, this is a way of life that more than a few people manage. Remade who can look and act sufficiently like ordinary people can make money at day labor, and may even be able to save up for the occasional bus ticket to help them follow leads about their conspiracy. Also, while homeless people used to be profoundly cut off from the world around them, many public libraries offer free internet use, and anyone who can save up even a relatively small sum of money can acquire a used low-end smartphone from a pawn shop and buy a prepaid mobile plan. One of the paradoxes of the modern day is that even if you're living under a bridge and eating scavenged food, you can still get access to the internet.

Of course, while access to the internet can be a boon for Renegades researching the conspiracy they're hunting and attempting to keep in touch with their allies, using email or even the web too carelessly can attract attention. Even if one of the Broken is squatting in an abandoned house and stealing a small amount of electricity from the building next door, if they are online, someone can still track them, and their enemies might find them. In addition, being homeless or living as an illegal squatter is exhausting, unpleasant, and any morning, the Renegade could wake up and find her money and her few possessions stolen by others more desperate than her. Also, the police could simply arrest one of the Broken and destroy or confiscate his possessions. The details of his arrest could also easily alert the transformed's pursuers.

Off the Grid

Some Remade have a dream: build a cabin in a remote area, dig a well, learn to farm, maybe even buy some solar panels or a windmill and have running water and electricity. A few even hope to found some sort of isolated and secret intentional community where a dozen or more of their kind can live free and in peace. This is a lovely dream, and a nearly impossible reality. Instead, the best most Renegades can manage is living in a tumbledown shack or an old trailer in the middle of nowhere. One problem is that anyone attempting to set up and maintain a well-built and well-supplied building or small community requires considerable quantities of money and at least a moderate amount of specialized skills. Few Renegades have easy access to either. Also, this sort of life usually requires deeds, property taxes, and either regular trips to town or equally regular mail deliveries. All these points of contact with the outside world can attract notice. Even in rural areas, people are curious about their neighbors, and these days, gossip about the strange neighbors can include posts and photos or videos showing up on social media sites.

It is possible to live in an isolated region like much of Alaska, where there are no neighbors for more than a hundred miles, but at that point, complete self-sufficiency is necessary for survival. Normally soluble problems like a broken arm or even a broken generator can prove to be gradually and brutally fatal. Also, few are willing to live in the squalid pre-modern conditions that this type of lifestyle necessitates. One possible answer is to live in an isolated area and to take a vehicle into the nearest small town every month or two for supplies. Paying a local store to mail order items that you pay for on your next trip to town permits Renegades to lead isolated and marginal lives, while still having access to electricity, spare parts, antibiotics, and toilet paper. Everyone in the town knows that there's some reason you are living out on your own or with one or two other equally strange individuals, but if you don't cause trouble, the inhabitants of many such communities won't ask too many questions. Also, if you break your leg or your vehicle someone might come and check on you. The balance between isolation and civilization is an essential feature of living off the grid, and all the options have notable risks.

A Life of Crime

The most obvious alternative to either living on the grid or being too poor to attract notice is living and making money in ways that are outside of the normal economic system, which means committing crimes like robbery, theft, extortion, prostitution, illegal gambling, drug dealing, or even murder for hire.

A few especially skilled and ruthless Remade make a good living hunting and robbing their Progenitors and other members of the conspiracy pursuing them. However, while few Renegades see any moral problems with this way of life, there are immense practical problems. If you murder members of a conspiracy, there's little reason not to rob them, but stealing anything too valuable, like a car, fancy jewelry, or expensive art requires both risk and skill to dispose of, especially since these valuables are tied to a murder. Simply robbing members of the conspiracy may seem safer, but robbing people who are already actively hunting for you is an excellent way for them to capture or kill you.

Robbing other wealthy people is no easier or safer. One of the most unpleasant truths about crime is that it's far easier to rob poor or working class people than the wealthy or even members of the middle-class. A crappy convenience store in a bad part of town, with a broken security camera is relatively easy to rob, as is the home or car of someone too poor to have good locks, a security system, or enough power to convince the police to take much of an interest in their case.

Of course, any Renegade who is making a living in this fashion is preying on the defenseless, much like a conspiracy preyed on her. Perhaps the fact that she's using some of the money she steals or extorts to fight back against her oppressors is a good enough reason, as long as she doesn't think about the people she hurt, the job they may have lost, or the medicine they were unable to afford.

Another more lucrative, but equally unsavory, option is organized crime. Even for Renegades without existing criminal skills, the ability to rip thoughts from someone's mind or metal doors off their hinges can be worth significant money to the right people. Of course, the right people are typically violent criminals who murder their rivals and threaten or maim anyone who does not swiftly give into their demands. A few Remade have done exceedingly well for themselves in such circumstances, especially since most successful and well-run criminal gangs can create good fake identities and are especially skilled at money laundering. However, in addition to the obvious moral and ethical downsides, unusual abilities, like a Renegade's Variations, attract attention. A rival criminal gang might try to kill a Remade to hurt his employers. Also, while a mid-level criminal might be entirely unwilling to give up his boss or cousin to the police, in return for having all charges dropped, providing information about the weird freak that started working for the gang a couple months ago may be a very different matter. A few criminal organizations foster a tight sense of loyalty, even to their most unusual members, but most do not, especially if the police threaten the gang member with lengthy imprisonment. Also, for many Renegades, the difference between working for a criminal gang, and being their slave can prove tricky, especially since some criminal syndicates are already part of the Web of Pain.

Faking It

Some Remade don't want to dumpster dive for their supper, live in a hut in the middle of the woods, or join a criminal gang. While a few try to resume their old life and perhaps expose the conspiracy that tormented them, most who try soon vanish as their conspiracy kills or recaptures them. However, identity theft is a booming business. A few Renegades possess the skills and contacts to create fake identities, and make a modest living doing so, and others know criminals who supply such fake identities for the right price. Even the best fake ID carries the risk that the police will arrest the ID's creator and the conspiracy will learn about them, but most such people keep no records of their work.

Once the Remade has acquired a good fake ID, he has the option of living like anyone else, within limits. Fake IDs almost never come with money or jobs, and because such information is easy to check, few have anything more than a work history filled with defunct businesses and an education that either stops at high school or, at best, includes a low-end local college far from the Renegade's current location. Graduate degrees, extensive work histories, or professional licenses are only available for fake IDs created by governments or equally powerful organizations. As a result, regardless of their previous life, Remade who use fake IDs are mostly restricted to performing low-end service work for poor wages. This lifestyle can work well, but every interaction with the government or any large corporations, including applying for a new job or getting a traffic ticket, carries the risk that someone will notice that the Renegade's identity is false, and at that point, the police may begin asking exceedingly difficult questions.

Living and Hunting

Combining any of these lifestyles with actively pursuing a conspiracy can be even trickier. Living on the streets involves having very little money, which makes preparing to investigate or

attack a conspiracy exceedingly difficult. The other options are a little easier, since the Remade has some money and a place to live and plan. However, all such attempts involve leading a double life. While resting, planning, and waiting, the Renegade or cohort live as homeless people, criminals, ordinary citizens with fake IDs, or wilderness-dwelling recluses, but when the time is right, they leave this life behind and go out to attack the conspiracy.

The difficulty in this lifestyle is avoiding having the two halves of the Renegades' lives touch. A chance meeting in another city or a face caught by a security camera can expose the other life of even the most careful Remade. Even if they avoid capture, they must then build a new life, which is why many Renegades carefully hide what wealth they possess and live on the streets. With a shower and some good clothes, most people won't recognize them as the homeless person they passed and never really saw.

Trust & Cohorts

With powerful enemies and the need for constant secrecy, Renegades find that trust is an especially precious commodity. The Broken also find it difficult to establish, even with others of their kind. Remade who escape from a conspiracy together often trust each other implicitly, because they understand what each other have been through, and know that they all willingly escaped captivity. However, meeting other Renegades is considerably more fraught. Some are violent and dangerous, and a few either make money or avoid the attentions of the conspiracy that is after them by turning in their fellows. Also, any unfamiliar Remade could secretly be one of the Devoted who reports on their unsuspecting comrades' every move and conversation.

Other Remade gain their freedom when one or more Renegades free them during an attack on the conspiracy. Being liberated from bondage by another Remade creates a strong emotional bond, and for many creates a debt that is especially deep and lasting. Remade almost always trust and sometimes even idolize the Renegades who free them. In addition, the former captives are also likely to trust their rescuer's allies and anyone else their rescuer vouches for.

However, outside of these immediate personal connections, finding other Remade who are worthy of even a modicum of trust is difficult and dangerous. Many Remade share information with one another on secret online message boards and mailing lists that Renegades can only learn about from members or by searching online for topics that few others would know to ask about. Even once they learn of such a forum, most of these online sites require one or more members to invite Broken to join it. Before joining, prospective members typically must respond to a series of emails designed to determine if they are truly a Renegade and not one of the Devoted or a member of a conspiracy pretending to be Remade.

Although having others of their kind to communicate with is an invaluable source of information and support, trusting the individuals they are in contact with can be very difficult. Whenever a Renegade learns of a safehouse or gains information about a conspiracy, they must consider whether this information is designed to lead them into a trap.

Agreeing to meet someone else who claims to be a Renegade requires even greater trust. Members of a conspiracy could be monitoring any such message board or mailing list, and while everyone there claims to be a Renegade, any of them could secretly be an enemy. Even a few careful and paranoid Remade vanish when meeting someone they think could be an ally. However, most such meetings are between two or more Remade. If the meeting goes well, the

sudden joy of knowing that they have found someone who understands their experiences and shares their fears and motives can cause everyone at this meeting to become close allies.

Even on online, on message boards where no one uses their real name or openly reveals their location, one of the most valuable assets any Renegade has is his reputation. Other Remade who he has personally met or who have benefited from information he provided to them serve as living proof that this Remade is worthy of trust and might be safe for others to meet. In contrast, newly escaped Remade who find others of their kind online must take time to build the trust of their fellows, since they possess no easy means to prove they are actually who and what they claim to be.

Many Renegades regularly share valuable information with other of their kind, both in person and online. This often includes a wealth of advice about how to navigate various practical issues, like getting a job without an ID, suggestions for how to live off the grid, sources for fake IDs, or ways to make money in a particular city that don't require any proof of identity. Remade members often share this information with others that they assume are fellow Renegades.

However, most Renegades keep specific information considerably more secret. Three of the most common types of secret information are information about allies, safe havens, and, of course, conspiracies. Some Remade are only willing to share these secrets in person, while others exchange such secrets online, but only via private means like email, rather than posting them to online forums that might later be hacked or infiltrated. The rise of communication apps that delete posts after a set period has proven to be a boon to many tech-savvy Renegades. Unfortunately, the largest and most powerful conspiracies often have access to government intelligence agencies, and thus have little trouble with even the best commercial encryption.

Allies

A few humans learn about the Remade and wish to help them. Some do this because they want to fight against the monstrous conspiracies that created and exploit them. Others know that the Remade have unusual abilities they might use in exchange for money or a service most Renegades find difficult to obtain. These allies can be a valuable source of funds. However, some allies ask Remade to commit crimes to earn their payment; others pretend to be allies while they seek to enslave particularly useful Remade. Also, various conspiracies are willing to pay or threaten such people into helping them, so even trusted human allies may not remain safe.

Safe Havens

Safe havens are locations Remade can safely stay for a few nights or perhaps longer. Abandoned houses or other vacant buildings that are in relatively good shape are popular locations, especially if they are out of the way and not yet occupied by other squatters. Others are places where transients and the homeless gather, but which are safer than many such locations, and where the oddities of some Remade will not raise too many questions. Finally, some people permit Renegades to stay in a building they own, usually either as an attempt to atone for some misdeed associated with the Broken, or in return for the Remade providing some service.

Conspiracies

Most Renegades wish to strike back at those who created or imprisoned them. Because few conspiracies only made or captured a single Remade, Renegades can sometimes find allies with matching animosity who are willing to join forces with someone who has a solid plan. Also,

many Renegades keep detailed files on their own conspiracy and others closely connected to it in the Web of Pain. Some are willing to share this information with other Remade they can trust, either freely or in return for some favor.

Forming Cohorts

The two easiest ways for one of the Remade trust another Renegade enough to join their cohort is to either escape from a conspiracy with them or for them to rescue that Remade. However, a conspiracy hunting two or more Renegades can draw them together as they see one of their kind fighting the same foes they are. Also, transformed who attack a conspiracy together often form lasting bonds.

In the first case, the Remade must rely upon each other to avoid capture or death. In the second, two or more Remade may initially only trust each other sufficiently to make a single strike against a conspiracy before planning to go their separate ways. However, as soldiers throughout history have learned, shared risks draw people together. Remade who have endured such trials by fire together also share the joy, triumph, or perhaps simply grim satisfaction of either surviving or dealing a significant blow against those who imprisoned and enslaved them. These shared emotions and joint victories cause many Renegades to not merely trust one another with their lives, but also to care about each other and often to value the others' lives almost as much as their own.

Mentors

Mentorship is another path to the sort of lasting trust that can lead to the formation of a cohort. Life as a Renegade is especially challenging shortly after the transformed escapes from their captors. In these early days of freedom, many Renegades expect their conspiracy to recapture them at any moment. One of the best ways of remaining free in these circumstances is to have help, and such help is just as useful when plotting ways to strike back at their Progenitors or at the conspiracy that is hunting them.

Sometimes, Remade find ordinary people that teach them the skills they need to survive while living on the streets or off the grid in rural areas, but these individuals rarely understand the special challenges and dangers of being one a Deviant. The best mentor for a newly escaped Renegade is a more experienced Remade. Sometimes, one of the Broken is lucky, and escapes from captivity because of the efforts of an experienced Remade, who then agrees to teach them the basics of survival. Most Remade are not this fortunate. However, meeting another Renegade who is willing to serve as a mentor, even for a short time, often means the difference between freedom or renewed captivity. Transformed who lack experience at being fugitives can accidentally betray themselves in countless seemingly innocuous ways, and often the only way to avoid such a fate is either luck or someone more experienced who shows them how to avoid common pitfalls.

Old School Tradecraft

Before their escape, a few Broken served their conspiracy as covert operatives or criminals, and learned a variety of older techniques for secret communication that serve them well once they become Renegades. Others either used these techniques during their previous lives or learned them from a Remade mentor. Also, determined Deviants can learn the basic methods of what spies commonly call tradecraft online or in books. Regardless of how they came into the

knowledge, most Remade discover that learning at least some aspects of tradecraft is essential to retaining their freedom and their ability to fight back against the conspiracies who pursue them.

One of the most basic techniques is a dead drop. The basic system is that one Renegade leaves a message or package for another at a pre-arranged location, preferably one where they can communicate the location in a way that isn't obvious to anyone else. For example, one Remade might email another that an important message is in a small envelope next to the statue in the park where they first met. Even if someone intercepts this email, no one but the intended recipient is likely to be able to find the message. Also, the Renegade dropping off the message is in almost no danger of being picked up, especially if they drop the message off before sending the email.

In a modern variation of this technique, the Broken emails someone they haven't met in person, and tells them where to pick up a message or package containing something of value. This Renegade then watches to see who retrieves the message and what they do. Especially skilled Remade, or those with Variations that can assist in remaining hidden, may then attempt to follow the individual and see if they report to anyone or do anything else that looks particularly suspicious. These sorts of indirect interactions, rooted in caution and careful observation, can lead to partnerships between Renegades.

Other Deviants create private codes based on shared experience or simply write messages in a circumspect and non-obvious manner and place them in locations where members of a conspiracy are unlikely to notice them. Options include disguising covert messages as posters for a public event and taping them to streetlamps or posting them on community bulletin boards. Also, most Renegades soon learn the value of using inexpensive "burner" phones for communication. Individuals with skill with electronics can even use these phones as wireless video cameras that allow them to keep track of safe houses and other locations that they wish to remain secure.

Devoted

Not all Remade are willing to endure a life of being hunted, or at best struggling to survive. These Remade possess a multitude of reasons why they are willing to trade their freedom for security and remain with their creators or owners. Some fear the consequences of a failed escape and never try. Others are sufficiently useful and obedient that they obtain various minor benefits, including medicines and treatments that mitigate their Scars. A few escape and then willingly return, seeing any consequences they might suffer as less bad than the miserable, constantly hunted life they endured while free.

Most Renegades regard the Devoted as fearful wretches, cowering in their cages, afraid to walk out, even if someone leaves the door open. While many Devoted are like this, some manage to gain at least some measure of their captor's trust. However, despite the lies they tell their captives, conspiracies consider even the most trusted Broken to be valuable tools, not employees, or even people.

Some Devoted possess extensive freedom and various comforts within the laboratory complex in which they live, but are not allowed to leave. In return, the conspiracy expects them to freely comply with tests and tasks, including using their Variations for the conspiracy's benefit. However, despite being slaves, many Devoted enjoy some degree of freedom and access to the outside world. While most have tracking devices locked on or implanted in their bodies, they live

in normal housing and can go shopping and perform other ordinary activities, as long as they reveal nothing about their nature or situation to outsiders.

In addition to making for more compliant test subjects, conspiracies can more easily ask Devoted living in this fashion to use their Variations in a variety of situations, ranging from ripping thoughts from a captive's mind to acting as a bodyguard to one of the conspiracy's senior members. Rewards for exceptional performance are common, and some Devoted believe their lives to be little different from those of government employees with extremely high security clearances, who also must endure restrictions on travel, regular surveillance, and negligible privacy. However, the reality of their situation is that they cannot quit or retire, and their conspiracy considers them to be expendable assets, not loyal agents

A few Devoted possess even greater freedoms, but in return are required to perform dangerous and often morally dubious tasks, which can range from espionage or assassination, to infiltrating the ranks of the Renegades. These latter Devoted must pretend to be Renegades, so they can provide their masters with information they can use to capture them. Some Devoted must also perform these captures. Renegades regard these Devoted as traitors and usually kill any they discover in their ranks.

The rarest they of Devoted are those with actual power within their conspiracy. For reasons that can range from a keen scientific mind to a preexisting relationship with senior members of the conspiracy or years of exceptional service and large amounts of luck, a few Devoted have some degree of status and power within their conspiracy. Much of this power is illusory, because the conspiracy's leadership regards them as property or beasts, but this knowledge and access can still allow the Devoted to wield notable influence.

However, conspiracies will swiftly revoke the privileges from even the most "trusted" and "important" Devoted, if the Devoted's superiors decide that she is too "erratic" or that they have grown tired of providing any Remade with the illusion of power. The Devoted's rivals in the conspiracy will usually be more than willing to use such arguments to defeat or destroy her. A few Devoted who wielded real power have gone from executive meetings and luxury apartments to cages and invasive laboratory tests simply because their rivals wished to eliminate the competition. As a result, some of these privileged Devoted strive to continually prove their worth and loyalty to their conspiracy, while others do their best to obtain compromising information on senior members of the conspiracy, and the cleverest Devoted pursue both of these options.

Regardless of their history with their conspiracy or how they became Remade, the twin drives of most Devoted are some combination of safety and loyalty. If a particular Remade makes herself sufficiently useful to her conspiracy, the conspiracy often keeps her relatively safe, both from harm and from hunger or other forms of privation. In addition to being exceptionally difficult to give up, this safety also engenders loyalty in most Remade, causing them to regard even a particularly capricious and cruel or uncaring conspiracy as their protectors, whom they will defend from all threats. Sometimes, this loyalty is consciously self-serving. Some Devoted help their conspiracy to ensure that the conspiracy treats the Devoted reasonably well, and continues to provide them with necessary medicines. In some cases, Devoted give their loyalty, because the only alternative to extreme loyalty is being caged, experimented on, and possibly even dissected.

However, spending long enough pretending loyalty often creates actual feelings of loyalty and devotion. As a result, many Devoted passionately care about protecting their conspiracy. Many Remade see the Devoted as fawning sycophants who praise the conspiracy for not punishing

their mistakes as severely as it could have. There is some truth to this, since many Devoted lead lives of wretched servitude. Often, poorly treated Devoted burn with envy at Renegades who escape from their conspiracy and lead free lives. Those who have sufficient courage join the Renegades in freedom, but Devoted who either lack this courage or are otherwise unwilling to give up the safety and security that even their unpleasant lives provide to them turn their envy at Renegades into anger, hatred, and a conviction that if they cannot have freedom then no other Remade should either.

Devoted with more pleasant lives are often genuinely grateful for their nice apartment, salary, or expense account, and the medicines that help keep their Scars from killing them. Some Renegades claim that these Devoted aren't even aware they are slaves, and while this is true for a few, the vast majority are completely aware of their condition, but for a variety of reasons are willing to accept the conditions of their life. Other Devoted make very different trades.

Many Elective Remade were researchers who either experimented on themselves or volunteered to allow their team to experiment upon them. Some of these researchers are Devoted because access to their conspiracy's funding and equipment, in order to complete their research and find a way to stabilize or reverse their condition. While almost all find their quest to be utterly in vain, few of these Devoted are willing to give up the promise, or perhaps the illusion, of success that easy access to scanning electron microscopes, gene sequencers, supercomputers, and vast array of similar devices provide.

Other Elective Remade who were subjects and not scientists are especially loyal Devoted, because every day members of the conspiracy promise to return them to normal or to stabilize and improve their condition. These same promises also convince Remade with other Origins to remain loyal, but any of these Devoted who find clear evidence that the Conspiracy either has no interest or no ability to cure or improve their condition swiftly lose their loyalty to the Conspiracy, and can become especially violent and merciless Renegades.

The pangs of Loyalty also drive Devoted to attach themselves to others within the conspiracy, whether it is a supervisor, a coworker, or other loyal Remade. The Broken might even be a true believer in the conspiracy's stated goals, swallowing its propaganda and living its mission statements with an uncritical eye.

Shifting Loyalties

Some Devoted eventually decide to choose freedom over safety and become Renegades. Also, a few Renegades surrender to a conspiracy, either the one that created them or one that makes the best offer. Remade who are considering this latter option understand that they are more likely to be accepted if they return bearing gifts, like captive Renegades or the locations and abilities of other Broken.

However, the possibility of changing loyalties doesn't mean that the decision to change them is a simple one. A handful of the Remade make this change in a few minutes. Suddenly discovering that their conspiracy is lying to them and using them can unravel years of loyalty in minutes. Many Renegades respond to the death or capture of a close comrade or a loved one by the conspiracy hunting them with a renewed desire to make the conspiracy pay for all they have done. However, a few simply snap and decide, out of despair or perhaps cold pragmatism, that they have no future as a Renegade and that their only option is becoming one of the Devoted. Nevertheless, for the vast majority of Remade, the decision to attempt to go from being Devoted

to a Renegade or the reverse requires weeks or months of agonizing deliberation, often followed by days or weeks of planning.

While many Renegades hate their captors and dream of escape, some do not, and only cease being one of the Devoted when their conspiracy betrays them or they learn of horrors it has inflicted. On rare occasions, a few of the most trusted Devoted who infiltrate Renegade organizations and retrieve escaped Remade learn to truly understand why some Remade flee and rebel, and do so themselves. Even more rarely, Renegades who escape from their conspiracy grow weary of an uncertain and dangerous life on the run and return to their conspiracy, begging for forgiveness. Since few conspiracies are particularly kind to rebels, most of these returning Devoted must either trade information on their fellow Renegades or capture one or more Renegades in return for avoiding dissection or other equally horrific fates.

Because of these occasional betrayals, Renegades who regularly interact with others of their kind periodically worry about traitors. Similarly, captured Renegades and Broken who attempt to infiltrate a conspiracy desperately attempt to convince any Devoted they encounter to either understand their desire for freedom and let them go or join them in rebellion. Of course, this same tension is not lost on most conspiracy members who work with Devoted or hunt for Renegades.

Most conspiracy members are vividly aware that Devoted sometimes change their loyalties and become Renegades. As a result, some conspiracy members who work with Devoted regard them all as beings who may, without warning, try to escape, killing or maiming anyone who gets in their way. To prevent such catastrophes, conspiracy members are inclined to lie to and conceal information from even the most loyal Devoted to prevent them from learning anything that might cause them to turn on their captors. This tactic can work exceedingly well, until the Devoted discovers the truth, at which point they become even more likely to renounce their loyalty and become a Renegade.

Members of a conspiracy are even more distrustful of Renegades who renounce their freedom and become Devoted. In addition to the chance that an inherently unstable individual who has already drastically changed her allegiance at least once may do so again, some especially fanatical Remade seek to pretend to become Devoted in order to attack a conspiracy from within. While conspiracies may offer all manner of promises and reassurances to convince Remade to surrender, these promises are often lies. Instead, many conspiracies provide the Remade with a well-guarded cell, or perhaps a thorough interrogation, followed by a shallow grave.

Some surrendering Renegades are sufficiently useful that the conspiracy provides them with at least a modicum of freedom and comfort in exchange for their cooperation. However, to make certain that the Remade is not attempting to fool them, most Conspiracies ask Renegades who seek to become Devoted to prove their loyalty by betraying or killing other Renegades. In addition to the obvious utility of the Renegade's assistance, such betrayals serve as both a test of loyalty and a way to ensure the Remade cannot easily return to the embrace of other Renegades.

Manticores

The same transformations that create the Remade can also alter animals, which conspiracies and Remade call Manticores. Manticores, like Deviants, are often a conspiracy's deliberate creation, but some arise by accident, either when an animal breaks into a lab containing powerful

mutagens or wanders too close to a location charged with potent mystical energies or other exotic phenomena.

Although many Progenitors wish to create exceedingly bright Manticores that understand almost any command, increasing a Manticore's intelligence above the level of a great ape requires making the creature's mind more human, which not infrequently results in fully intelligent and free-willed creatures that more closely resemble Deviants than other Manticores — complete with a vestigial or shattered soul. As a result, few Manticores are smarter than a chimpanzee or a gorilla, and the majority possess the intelligence of a particularly smart monkey or parrot.

Manticores possess one great advantage over the Remade: almost all are genetically stable and do not develop new Variations or increasingly severe Scars. Even the bizarre symbionts that attach themselves to human flesh are stable, but can cause their hosts a variety of problems. As a result, Manticores are often far safer to work with than the Broken. Most conspiracies begin working on Manticores before advancing to the human tests that create the Remade.

Conspiracies create most Manticores for specific reasons. They can be roughly divided into five categories: guards, hunters, pets, spies, and symbionts. The sixth type of Manticores are the accidentally created wild things.

Guards

Like Remade, Manticores can be exceptionally dangerous, and many conspiracies have found ways to harness this danger. While most such creatures are large animals like dogs, wolves, or bobcats, some conspiracies have enhanced chimpanzees, crows, eagles, or even snakes to create impressively deadly guards. The particulars differ from one animal to the next, but the goal is usually the same — to create animals that won't harm authorized personnel, but will capture, kill, or incapacitate intruders or dangerously disobedient captives.

Of course, like the Broken, Manticores are prone to being at least somewhat unpredictable. As a result, conspiracies use guards less frequently than the leaders of some conspiracies wish. Many researchers are generally unwilling to work next to monsters that could suddenly transform their gleaming and expensive workplace into something out of a survival horror video game.

The majority of Manticores created as guards are not used to keep intruders out, but instead to keep Remade captives in. Since Remade have strange and often unexpected abilities, designing technologies to keep them in their cages can be exceedingly difficult, and so researchers sometimes use animals with similar abilities, in the mostly accurate hope that the animal will be easier to control than the Remade captives it guards.

Hunters

The Manticores that Renegades fear the most are animals that a conspiracy has transformed into preternaturally good trackers, which can potentially follow a scent or some other, less obvious, trace left days or weeks after the Remade departs. They are also one of the rarest forms of Manticores, since a good private detective and either legal or illicit access to law enforcement and intelligence databases are excellent ways to find anyone who hasn't dropped entirely off the grid. As a result, most conspiracies have better things to do with substantial amounts of their time and money than to create methods of tracking escaped Deviants. Humans may not be quite as effective, but they're a lot cheaper, especially since Remade who don't want to be found are likely to attack anyone looking for them, and so Renegades frequently kill hunters.

This is not to say that hunters are never used. Instead, conspiracies usually only use hunters when they *really* want to find a particular Deviant. Generally, this means that the Broken possesses knowledge could seriously damage the conspiracy, Variations that they desperately need access to, or, more commonly, that the Remade has been successfully attacking the conspiracy, and the survivors need to kill or capture the Renegade before it kills or exposes them. Some Deviants take pride in a conspiracy sending a hunter after them, because this means that they have done serious damage to the conspiracy.

Remade who have dealt with these creatures understand that hunters are not always obvious. While most Deviants think of dogs or perhaps cats that can track and which accompany hunting parties, many other options are possible. A small, swift-flying hunter can cover far more ground than people on foot or in cars, and if it carries a radio tracker, the conspiracy knows precisely where it is at all times. Attach a camera, a microphone, and a speaker to the tracker, and the people monitoring the hunter can observe and even negotiate with the Broken. Something the size of a hawk or a crow can easily carry all the necessary electronics. Also, some hunters either possess Variations they can use aggressively, or are fitted with small tanks of anesthetics, or perhaps even a small bomb, that the conspiracy uses to incapacitate or kill especially dangerous Remade.

Pets

Many of the leaders and wealthy plutocrats funding conspiracies are exceedingly eccentric, and some demand equally unusual pets. Conspiracies design many of these pets are to be useful. One such Manticore might be a dog or cat that emits pheromones that makes everyone nearby more trusting and agreeable, except of course the pet's owner, who regularly takes an antidote to these pheromones. Another could be a small pet like a cat or miniature dog that sits in the owner's lap and quivers or twitches in a distinctive manner if someone nearby knowingly tells a lie. These pets can provide a valuable and nearly undetectable edge in business. However, almost as many special pets are simply creatures created to be gorgeous, loyal, and exceedingly impressive companions.

Most Manticore pets appear relatively normal, like a large housecat with stripes like a tiger that understands and follows commands as well as a bright and exceptionally well-trained dog. However, winged serpents, cats with metallic gold feathers, and other similarly exotic and obviously unnatural creatures are favored in some circles. Also, all but the most sociopathic individuals desire some form of close emotional connection, and an unusually bright and loving pet can provide that to conspiracy leaders who have little reason or ability to trust the people in their lives.

However, the desire for an intelligent and loving pet can sometimes go awry, especially when the resulting Manticore is too smart. Such creatures often resent their owners treating them like semi-intelligent slaves. More than a few of these intelligent Manticores have attempted to escape, and those that succeed occasionally meet Remade and form an alliance.

Spies

Learning others' secrets can be exceptionally valuable, and some Progenitors are convinced that while a careful opponent can discover or jam electronics, people are far less likely to consider small creatures a security threat. A hummingbird, or even a cat, or a small, friendly dog with keen hearing that can repeat anything it hears, can provide information difficult to obtain in other ways. Other more invasive creatures also exist, including animals that cause people to fall

unconscious or asleep and then either rifle through their minds or cause them to become extremely suggestible. Give the same creature the ability to speak or send its thoughts, and it can provide a detailed report on a rival's plans. Animals that can "hear" and decipher electronic signals, like cell phone calls, exist, as do ones that can both speak and gain information in a variety of paranormal means.

Symbionts

One of the strangest and most potentially problematic Manticores are the symbionts. These creatures feed off or are otherwise physically connected to a human host, providing them with the benefits of one or two Variations. Most conspiracies want to gain the benefits of some of the more useful Variations, but without the risks or Scars, and many see Manticore symbionts as an excellent intermediate step towards this goal. However, connecting animals that researchers have subjected to radical genetic engineering to your bloodstream and your nervous system is not for the faint of heart. Some researchers, and a few exceptionally wealthy individuals that they work for, have successfully halted, or in a few cases, entirely cured, fatal illnesses. Other symbionts have produced a wide variety of additional abilities, including extreme strength and the ability to move with inhuman speed. However, some symbionts also induce serious side effects in their hosts.

Although symbionts do not suffer from the instability that afflicts the Remade, some of them inflict Scars on their users. A few symbionts always inflict the same Scars, but others that have never previously caused Scars can suddenly begin causing them, and these Scars sometimes swiftly increase in severity. In addition, long-term, symbiont users occasionally, and without warning transform into one of the Broken. Some conspiracy members see these risks as worthwhile, and bond with Manticores symbionts to become enhanced bodyguards or spies, or simply regain their lost youthful vitality, but a few Remade once lived similar lives until their symbionts stole their humanity. As long as they have not become too physically divergent, Deviants can also use symbionts, but suffer all the risks of symbionts inflicting additional Scars on them.

Wild Things

Animals who become Manticores when they are accidentally exposed to the chemicals, radiation, or similar phenomena are the least predictable. No one created them to fulfill some purpose. Instead, their bodies warped and changed due to random chance. Some transform near a laboratory where conspiracies create Remade. Traces of the chemicals, tailored viruses, and radiation may leak out, or a wild animal might break in. Also, the same strange locations which occasionally spontaneously transform humans into Remade often also turn animals into Manticores.

These accidental Manticores are very different from deliberately created creatures, in large part because most are wild animals that have had no training to obey humans. Some avoid all human contact and live strange, wild lives, occasionally being spotted by hikers to become the source of strange urban legends. Others are predators that develop a taste for human flesh and hunt anyone who comes into their territory alone. Stories about these creatures can provide Remade with information about locations where someone is creating others of their kind, but sneaking into a remote and secret laboratory becomes considerably more dangerous if a hungry Manticore is stalking you.

Manticore Companions

Some Manticores break free from their creators. Others escape due to the efforts of Remade who are determined to leave no captive behind, regardless of species. A few befriend captive Deviants and help them escape. Some of these Manticores are nearly as intelligent as humans. However, most are relatively bright animals that developed a strong bond to one of the Broken, because their once-human companion treats them as an ally and not an experimental subject or a living tool. All types of Manticore can become a companion to one of the Remade, but symbiotic companions are relatively rare and wild things are even rarer. Some Broken find that their relationship with their Manticore companion is the first close relationship with any creature since their transformation, and for relatively isolated Remade, the Manticore may be their only friend.

Instability

As a Deviant learns to use her newfound powers, as she strives to protect her loved ones from the horrors that have befallen her, and as she seeks revenge upon the conspiracies intent on using her, she must also cope with how her Scars affect her. At first, she might struggle to adapt to the changes in her physical and mental condition. Eventually, she comes to understand what actions and situations exacerbate her mutations, and what makes their manifestations unbearable.

Left unattended, a Broken's Scars may deteriorate beyond his body's ability to adapt, ultimately killing him. However, avenues exist to help stave off mutation's ill-effects.

Instability measures how profoundly the Deviant's Scars affect her. Her actions can bring relief or intensify their impact, though she can never entirely halt Instability's progress.

Causes and Mitigation

The Divergence steals something both subtle and profound from the Remade — a piece of the soul whose absence some Deviants notice right away, while it takes others months, years, or even their entire lifetimes to realize what has gone missing. The change tears a hole in her humanity, damaging her sense of self. What rushes in to fill the vacuum is twofold: a fierce protectiveness for the few people and causes that remain important to the transformed, and the burning drive to bring down the people who changed her or who attempt to exploit those changes.

Acting on these twin desires gives the Deviant something to cling to, provides her a way to reassert her humanity and even carve out a place in a world that's otherwise driven her out. Ignoring or neglecting these drives pushes her in the other direction, giving her Scars a chance to take greater hold and her Variations to run rampant, until she's a danger to herself and everyone around her.

Renegades often find the instinct to drop completely off the grid extremely attractive. How simple it seems, to run away from the conspiracies who would use the Remade for their own nefarious ends, or go somewhere she can't hurt her loved ones. But isolation — even when it's well-intentioned — breeds instability. The Remade needs human contact, whether it comes from a place of love or hatred. Without it, that tear in her soul widens faster and faster, and her mutations intensify at an alarming rate.

How a Deviant navigates the push and pull between isolation and interaction is deeply intimate. Many are driven by the need to bring down the conspiracies that hunt their cohorts. Others try to nurture the relationships that matter most to them.

Manifestation

If a Remade ignores the things that anchor her to her humanity and instead tries to go it completely alone, or if she acts counter to her Loyalties or lets a chance at revenge slip away, that neglect manifests in measurable — if not always visible — ways.

One of the worst feelings is the loss of control that goes along with Instability. Many Broken work for years to master their Variations: keeping one's size consistent, for example, or not lighting objects on fire with their bare hands. When the Remade's actions force him into a crisis of conscience, that hard-won control over his abilities slips, making him more likely to lash out with his powers by accident or with more intensity than he usually wields. Not only is it frustrating and frightening to lose that adroitness, it can also put the Renegade's friends in danger, or tip his location off to agents of a conspiracy.

Even when growing Instability brings about an increase in the Deviant's abilities, there's a downside. As his powers ramp up, so do the Scars entwined with them. These manifestations can be internal and hard to detect: The Remade goes from losing a few minutes' worth of memories any time he controls an electrical current to losing hours or even entire days. Or a Broken plagued by phantom voices suddenly sees people who aren't really there. He might be able to hide the onset of these troubles for a time, but eventually people close to him recognize signs of his distress.

Other times, the mutations are physical, as the Remade's body begins breaking down or reshaping itself in some way that aligns with her Variations. Her bones grow brittle, her skin sloughs off. Odd appendages sprout from her torso and reveal her as something no longer human. In the early stages, these mutations can be hidden with carefully draped clothing, or passed off as the result of an unlucky fall. But as her Instability increases, the changes get harder to explain away or hide, and place mounting strains on her system.

The Deviant's Scars may even be beyond a Baseline's understanding, like when a Renegade's skin blisters at the sound of a trumpet, or when fortune consistently serves up the worst possible outcome at every turn. Other times, her powers fail her when they're most needed, or using them causes her harm.

A Broken who suffers from such mutations is occasionally able to wrest control of her body back to a manageable state, usually by making a hard and successful push against the target of her Conviction or by shoring up her relationship with a Loyalty Touchstone. Regaining control is a relief, if often a temporary one.

Loyalty

The Deviant isn't the only one affected by his transformation. The changes have a ripple effect on the people in his life: family, friends, coworkers, neighbors. His powers hurt someone he cares about. His Scars put innocent bystanders in danger. Members of the conspiracy he's running from show up on his mother's doorstep, or in his boss' office.

Some people abandon the Renegade first — he gets fired, friends stop returning his calls, neighbors turn out the lights when he knocks. Other times, he's the one cutting the ties, both for other peoples' safety, and to prevent the sting of betrayal.

But there are those who refuse to let him ghost on them.

These are the people who offer crash space and a hot meal when he shows up, desperate and bloodied, no questions asked. The niece who stays in contact even after her mom has forbidden her to call. The friends who have hidden him away when unsmiling Devoted come looking, and are ready to do it again.

The transformed are capable of making new friends as well, people proficient at breaking through the instinctual distrust he's learned along the way. They may be other Renegades in his cohort, who share the same thirst for vengeance or understand what he's going through better than anyone else in the world. She may be a Baseline ally who's got it in for the conspiracy for reasons of her own. He might be a new lover, who only knows the Remade as he is now, and lets the Broken forget what he's lost for a little while.

These people are the Deviant's Loyalty Touchstones. Protecting them becomes a sacred duty to the Remade. They connect him to his humanity and give him a purpose beyond the burning hate he harbors. Often, they keep the flames of that hatred from consuming him utterly.

Of course, caring about someone that deeply has its own dangers. Mere association with the Broken puts his Touchstones on the conspiracies' radar. Some conspiracies make overt threats toward the Touchstones, aimed directly at getting the Renegade to fall in line or turn himself in. Other times, they work more subtly, pumping the Touchstone for information or tricking them into acting counter to the Renegade's plans. A Deviant who learns his friends have betrayed him — even unwittingly — feels the foundations of his world shake.

Some Broken grow deeply possessive of their Touchstones. They cling too tightly, hover too closely, for fear their enemies will take their loved ones away. This unhealthy behavior often puts a strain on the relationship, as friends and family feel stifled — or even threatened — by the Deviant's obsession. When two Remade become one another's Touchstones, this can turn into a feedback loop of codependence with each person feeding the other's fears.

Unhealthy Relationships

When determining the dynamics between Remade and their Touchstones, please remember to check in with other players at your table. Obsessive or codependent relationships may be a trigger for someone in your group, and should be approached with care and compassion.

Deviants often find themselves forced to choose between acting in support of their Loyalties and chasing down a lead toward one of their Convictions. Win-win situations are nearly unheard of, which makes these decisions all the harder. Something's going to break. The question is, which of those can be pieced back together?

Conviction

Hatred is as powerful an anchor for the Renegade as Loyalty. Someone set her on the path toward Divergence, or learned of its happening and tried to use her and her powers for their own purposes. The rage she feels — toward her Progenitor, toward a conspiracy, toward anyone who has wronged her — either makes her feel whole again or is so all-consuming she doesn't have time to mourn the part of her excised by the Divergence.

The Deviant devotes her time and what resources she has to destroying the conspiracy and preventing it from doing to anyone else what it's done to her. Having a cohort dedicated to the same goals is certainly helpful, but if she must burn it all down on her own, she'll find a way.

This drive can lead the transformed to make some dangerous and even self-destructive choices. Conspiracies tend to have money and influence. They can afford decent security. Some have Devoted and Manticores working for them, tasked with guarding the conspiracy from vengeance-seeking Renegades, or with finding them and bringing them in. While all of these are obstacles in the Remade's path, none of them are truly a deterrent. Her Conviction pushes her to find a way around, even if that means breaking some laws...or some skulls.

Members of a conspiracy consider few things off-limits when it comes to the Remade. Friends and family make excellent fodder, and undermining a Renegade's relationships sets the Deviant that much more off-kilter, makes them that much easier to catch.

Guardians

Many Deviants prioritize their hate and rage, preferring to let those things drive them rather than dealing with the nigh-inevitable heartbreak that comes with having people to care for and protect. Friends have a terrible habit of turning their backs, turning you in, or turning up dead, and who could blame a Renegade for thinking they're often more trouble than they're worth?

But some see a different path to keeping their Instability at bay, by focusing on protection over vengeance. A Renegade whose Loyalty is greater than his Conviction becomes a Guardian. He has found balance between the two drives, and is temporarily at peace. He no longer feels Instability hovering just around the corner, and in fact notices some of those troubles lessening. His mind is quieter, his flesh heals, and that awful bout of bad luck seems to have come to an end.

The Broken may believe he's come to the end of the conspiracy, or that burning the lab that created him to the ground has granted him closure. Now he can turn his sights on those friends who stood by him, and repay the countless kindnesses they've shown him during his quest for revenge.

But this condition cannot last. A new branch of the conspiracy rears its head, or the Renegade finds himself dissatisfied with destroying just that one lab. Paranoia is second nature, and he can't help but wonder who his Touchstone was on the phone with, and why she hung up so hastily when he entered the room. Betrayal is always lurking.

As soon as his Conviction equals or exceeds his Loyalty, the calm state of Guardianship is over, putting the Deviant at risk of Instability once more.

Ferals

While both Renegades and Devoted must attend to their Conviction and Loyalty Touchstones to keep hold on their humanity, some Deviants never even get that chance. Ferals are those Remade who have no Touchstones, and have yet survived their Instabilities. These Deviants have often mutated beyond recognition, their shapes monstrous and only vaguely human. The powers they display are wild and often uncontrollable. Renegades view them with pity — Devoted, with disgust. The conspiracies use them or discard them as need be, with little regard to the people they used to be.

Origins

A Feral's origin is much like that of his fellow Remade. The same lab that created other, more stable Deviants can also produce Ferals. Sometimes experiments go awry, or a Progenitor fails to take a variable into account, and the result is horrific. A cult draws ancient power down into their victim, and it's too much for her human mind and form to bear. A research student decides he wants the glory for himself, and injects his mentor's untested serum into his veins.

As the effects take hold, the Feral's Variations and Scars run rampant. A Feral who quickly grasps how to wield her newfound powers is a danger to those around her. The lab experiment destroys the facility in her wild attempt to escape. The sacrificial victim murders any cultists foolish enough to stay to negotiate with their new deity. The research student stumbles toward his rival's house to gloat, ignoring the pain as his bones crack and reshape themselves along the way.

With their powers outpacing their ability to adapt, or to begin processing what happened to them, Ferals continue to degenerate. She might have time to say goodbye to a loved one, but the protective drive that might make that person a Loyalty Touchstone is overwhelmed by the Feral's own agony and confusion.

Likewise, there's not enough time for the deep, burning hatred for her Progenitor or the conspiracy that made her to settle into her bones. A Feral who wakes up on the operating table or the altar might have time to lash out at her creator, but it's done more out of instinct and terror than from the seething fury that a Renegade learns to harbor.

The fear of going Feral is a threat even for Deviants who survive their transformations. Touchstones anchor the Remade to their humanity; losing them all sends the transformed spiraling. That ever-present danger makes her hold her loved ones just a little closer, or stoke the flames of her hatred that much hotter.

Conspiracies

The conspiracies tend to view Ferals as failed experiments or the results of botched rituals. They are a stepping stone on the way to perfection, the error in trial-and-error. For those who believe you can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs, Ferals are the discarded shells. If their humanity is acknowledged at all, their existence is more likely to be covered up than mourned.

When the Remade turns Feral on the slab, and the conspiracy can catch and subdue her, they have a few options. The first is to put her in a cage and hold her for further experimentation. Here is a prime chance to study what went wrong, or whether any of her resulting mutations might be useful to build into future attempts at Divergence. From the safety of the other side of the bars, scientists can record the rate and method of the Ferals' deterioration and introduce drugs to slow down or speed up those effects. They may force the Feral to activate her Variations — usually with the scientist holding a sedative-loaded syringe, and an armed guard close by.

Conspiracies that gain some measure of control over a Feral — whether through drugs and devices or outright manipulation — also use them as weapons. Ferals are not as reliable or obedient as a Manticore, and they run the risk of turning on the conspiracy at inopportune times. However, as a single-use, throw-away instrument, Ferals make effective tools. Set one free in a crowded downtown area to sow havoc and fear, and the conspiracy's response team can swoop in and save the day. Send the Feral after the family of a Renegade in hiding and flush her out

when she comes to save her kin — if the Renegade kills the Feral in the ensuing battle, so much the better.

Whether the conspiracy holds on to them awhile for experimentation or puts them down immediately, Ferals are disposable. Labs cremate their remains, or save the useful parts in a morgue drawer and destroy all evidence of anything that might identify their subjects. Cults bury their victims in unmarked graves where no one ever goes. The Feral's identity and very existence is scrubbed to the best of the conspiracies' abilities, leaving their loved ones little chance for closure. It is the final indignity in a chain already heavy with them.

Escape

Some Ferals escape from the laboratory's mazelike halls, or flee the ritual grounds and outrun their pursuers. Others were never captured at all, but sense their change and realize they have to get away, fast. Once free, Ferals tend to avoid heavily-populated areas, keeping their distance from Baselines much the way the wild animals who are their namesakes do. They are keenly aware not only of the danger they pose to humans, but of the danger humans pose to them.

Many Ferals who retain memories of their humanity can no longer bear to be near people. Fear and shame drive them away from civilization. Whether that means the Feral makes a lair deep in the forest or claims a corner in an abandoned warehouse, the result is the same: she stakes out a safe place, and holes up there. Eventually, hunger and other necessities pull her back toward cities and towns, but even then, the Feral attempts to remain unseen, stealing clothes from unattended dryers in the 24-hour laundromat, shoving handfuls of protein bars in her pockets at an all-night convenience store. Some Ferals' Variations and Scars lend well to staying off the grid, aiding them in going undetected or slipping past security to snatch up what they need.

Others have no such luck — a trip into town is a nightmare scenario as soon as the Feral is spotted, and witnesses flee in terror from her monstrous appearance. The stress from such an appearance risks making the Feral's condition worse, triggering uncontrollable powers and Scars that endanger both the Feral and any onlookers who get too close.

Of course, isolation affects Ferals much as it does other Deviants. Although he has no Touchstones, the Feral still feels the effects of his damaged soul. He is caught in an untenable situation. Hiding away from others causes him to grow more unstable. But there's little benefit for a Feral to maintain human contact. Ferals cannot heal Instability by protecting people or seeking revenge. Often, doing those things comes with further risk of falling into madness and mutation. Any relief he feels when helping others is dashed by their revulsion. What satisfaction he gleans from vengeance is dulled by the knowledge that his monstrous acts are what people expect of him.

It's for these reasons that Ferals tend to burn fast and bright, as even their most benign actions run the risk of sending them into a spiral of Instability.

Ferals and Renegades

Renegades hear tales of Ferals and think "there but for the grace of God — or science, or sheer stubbornness — go I." Ferals represent a glimpse into the Deviant's own potential future, the Instability and decline awaiting him if he finally tips over that edge and can't claw his way back to solid ground.

When instinct, anger, and shame tell a Renegade to withdraw from society, he recalls the burden Ferals face and finds the strength to stay in the world a while longer. Some Remade even attempt to “domesticate” Ferals, seeking out family members who might become Touchstones, or pointing them at their Progenitors and hoping hatred takes root. This is often a lost cause, but someone out there took a chance on the Deviant and kept her grounded — shouldn’t she try paying that forward?

It’s rare enough for one Broken to find others like him. Seeking out a Feral is harder and riskier, though doing so can yield useful information for the Remade who earns a Feral’s trust. Those who are still capable of communicating can recall the layout of the labs, the names the cultists chanted and the position of the stars, or the contents of that one fateful syringe. A Feral has plenty of reasons to keep tabs on the conspiracy that created him. After all, he’d be a stain on their reputation if word of what they did to him got out. Or if he destroyed a city block while shouting the name of the conspiracy’s parent company.

A Feral is likely to keep detailed records on the conspiracy, even if he isn’t driven to use those records the same way a Renegade would. For a Renegade, information is ammunition. For a Feral, it’s a bargaining chip to be used to buy his freedom, or a way to stay one step ahead of the conspiracy’s searches.

Getting a Feral to part with her information can be fraught. How does she know the Deviant knocking on the door isn’t a Devoted looking to bring her back to her cage? How can she be sure the Renegade won’t come calling again, wanting her to get involved, to expose herself to the conspiracy, to act as bait? Helping out means putting herself at risk of getting caught and used and hurt all over again. Unless the Feral is, by some twisted miracle of fate, one of the Deviant’s Loyalty Touchstones, she fears she’s just as disposable to other Remade as she is to her Progenitor.

Yet, some Ferals can be persuaded to help, especially if the Broken has something the Feral desperately needs. Materials to repair degrading parts, a vial of a hard-to-procure remedy, food that doesn’t come from a supermarket’s dumpster. Though they’re further removed from humanity than their Renegade cousins, Ferals can still be moved by another victim’s plight and convinced to share their knowledge or offer their strength. Renegades should be wary of tricking or setting a Feral up to take a fall, lest they find themselves the focus of the wronged Feral’s rage.

Swan Song

A Feral’s fate is to die tormented by his Variations and Scars, his body and powers no longer obeying his will, or doing so in erratic and unpredictable ways. While some Ferals try to take themselves far away where their death throes can do no harm, others retain enough outrage to want one last shot at revenge. Still others are lonely and tired and desperate enough to go in search of comfort, regardless of how dangerous they’ve become.

Some of these Ferals join with other Renegades to attack the conspiracies that tore away their humanity. Rather than the conspiracy turning him into a weapon, the Feral decides to be one himself, aiming at a target of his choosing. These Ferals tend to give their comrades in arms one last order: if it goes too far, end it. Remade take this request seriously, knowing that someday they might ask a friend to do the same.

Other Ferals have less benevolent goals, wishing simply to make others suffer as they have. He wants his Progenitor to face her creation and take responsibility, perhaps. Or she might want to go out in a way that means she'll never be forgotten, no matter how hard the conspiracy tried to erase evidence of her existence.

Lastly, some Ferals have no plan at all. As they fall prey to the whims of their Instabilities, they're drawn to an area like moths to a flame. They sense the heart of the power grid, or see the lights of a city on the horizon, or hear the hum of the machinery that turned them into something no-longer-human. They turn toward these siren calls and go to investigate, bringing their hazardous flesh and terrible powers along with them.

The Web of Pain

It's all too easy for a Renegade to focus on the here and the now. Many a Deviant thinks in immediate terms, fueled by anger and driven to lash out at the enemy they know through whatever means are available. Survival and revenge dominate the Renegade's mental landscape, inflicting a narrow view of the conflict that plays out. It's the Broken and their close allies against the conspiracy and its pawns, and everything outside of the battleground between the two can be tuned out and ignored.

Things are rarely so simple. Unwelcome complexity intrudes on the Renegade's black-and-white view. Society isn't a clean set of clearly-divided units. It's a tangled mess, a web of threads reaching beyond obvious perception, each strand forged by personal alliances or enmities and reinforced by passion or pain. Unseen feuds and allegiances run throughout the fabric of civilization, focusing around the conspiracies that draw them in like spiders. Pull at a thread, and the consequences can be felt far and wide throughout the web. Tear a thread away entirely, and all the connected strands reverberate like an alarm. Crushing the enemies she can see will not win the Deviant the reprieve she hopes for. The web is wide and deep, and there is no easy way to escape it.

Hidden Threads

Conspiracies attract other conspiracies, becoming entangled with alarming ease. Sometimes they combine completely, creating a new singular whole, like a sinister fraternity in a state police department with the influence and pull to forcibly unify the other groups of crooked cops under one banner. Often, though, entangled conspiracies attempt to influence or dominate each other without merging entirely. A coven of occultists in state government has direct lines to half a dozen lesser conspiracies — the crooked police, company owners carving up the construction contracts, the weird rat worshipers in the sewers, and others besides. The coven keeps its membership exclusive, but it needs the resources and reach of the other conspiracies. It reinforces its grasp through blackmail and bartered influence. Sooner or later, an even bigger fish will notice the coven, and the occultists will get a pointed lesson in the limits of their own power.

Then there are the times conspiracies go to war. These conflicts rarely play out in the open, instead fought in the shadows, the back-alleys, the exclusive soirees, and the churches. Warring conspiracies may have fundamentally incompatible goals or beliefs, or refuse to compromise over desired resources. Regardless of the depth of hostility, they are just as bound up in the Web of Pain as any other group. Their struggles tie them together tightly.

For a Deviant, discovering the depth and complexity of this web is a gradual, and often painful, process. It starts simple — there is a conspiracy responsible for the Renegade's Divergence, and

they must pay for what they've done. Except it turns out that the street gang was just given the mutagenic drug by someone else, a chemist-kingpin whose very name terrifies the thugs that pushed the needle in; or the company never actually existed, just a hollow shell for the puppeteers to hide behind; or the cult leader is just one of an entire cabal, and there are other nightmare sects scattered all across the country, other innocents being tormented just as the Renegade was.

Conspiracies are secretive by nature, and often one conspiracy values another on the basis that it can serve as a deniable asset, a cell that can be severed and left to its fate if matters go awry. As such, the Deviant faces the challenge of piecing the connections together. Often, revelation comes only in glimpsed fragments. An enforcer turns up, sharp-suited and tooled up with cutting-edge armaments that can stop even a Remade in her tracks, but the mafia foot-soldiers only know that he's from 'back home in Sicily'. A cohort gets ready to tangle with corrupt cops, only to run into an entirely different conspiracy of mad-eyed rat-worshipping lunatics — a seemingly bizarre alliance of police and cultists they could not predict, because the Deviants can't yet see the occultists who hold both conspiracies' leashes. Perhaps foes always seem to be well-equipped with crates of gear from a single mysterious source, a strange benefactor who remains in the shadows but for the identifying mark of the scorpion on the manufactured hardware.

As the Renegade picks away at the scab of conspiracy, they reveal more and more of the festering truth. Divergence was a very personal tragedy for the Deviant, yes, but they may find it was just the endgame of a very long chain of decisions and choices. In some cases, this can be terribly humbling or even crushing, when a Remade discovers that their individual pain is just the footnote in a scheme that may have been going on for centuries, or just another digit on a spreadsheet. Even when the process and Progenitor of Divergence were intimately close to the Renegade, just dealing with that trauma does little to clear away the knowledge that others empowered the Progenitor in the first place, or profited off the Divergence and the Renegade's suffering. Unless a Deviant can achieve balance in their wounded soul, the urge to grab the frayed threads, to pull and tear at the whole web until it comes apart entirely, can be a powerful and dangerous drive.

Tense Connections

Where two or more conspiracies are webbed together, they often connect around the personal relationships of a few specific individuals. Most of the mafia family only know that the patriarch has 'connections', and they've learned not to ask deeper questions than that. The company employs the 'Special Executive' to handle a discretionary budget of off-the-books payments for 'troubleshooting' purposes, and she's the only one that knows the details of the paid muscle — with the rest of the board specifically not wanting any incriminating information. The contract between government military and a cybernetics research division is really about the personal links between the head researcher and a few of the generals that she has persuaded of her ambitions — as well as her ongoing enmity against several other high-ranking command staff.

Conspiracies make these personal relationships vital, because it's all about who can and can't be trusted with information. A conspiracy can't just run through regular government channels to acquire that contract, because they need people on the other side who understand and will quietly give the nod to the fact the research program will involve some ethical sidesteps or illegal materials. It's very hard for conspiracy members to trust outsiders when it comes to schemes that

are vital to the conspiracy. Trust comes, therefore, through mutual understandings and shared transgressions. Two conspirators each know that the other has a lot to lose if anything of an arrangement ever came to light, so each can feel at least some measure of assurance that the other will play along.

This, in turn, puts a lot of strain on those relationships, especially if anything ever goes wrong — and where Deviants are involved, it often does. When a Weaponized Human Organism breaks free from the Enhanced Soldier Program, the general demands the company woman clean the mess up as quickly as possible, and the company woman demands the general pull the levers of government to help cover it up. Prickly threats break trust down fast. Brittle strands might snap entirely.

When the threads prove strong enough, though, they can allow a knotted tangle of conspiracies to aid one another with remarkable effectiveness, rendering the whole greater than the sum of its parts. One conspiracy of modern-day flesh-traders has the dumb muscle needed to bring down a Renegade, but they can't find the escaped slave in the first place. They turn to the coven of tech-fetishists who sit behind the staring eyes of the city's surveillance cameras, offering an opportunity at trying their own flesh-tech Divergence on a future victim if they can just help track this escapee down first. Elsewhere, a payment comes into an untraceable bank account, and suddenly the Honorable Fraternity of Lawyers and Representatives has its legal staff working hard to stymie any attempt the Renegade makes to reach out to the law for help. Whether it's knowledge, influence, or leg-breaking, the trio of conspiracies can work to cover each other's weaknesses, to the benefit of them all — and to the detriment of the Deviants caught in their net.

Broken Strands

Deviants plow through the delicate network of the conspiratorial web with wild abandon, laying waste to old agreements and pacts. Like flies, they tend to catch themselves in too many strands to fully break free of, and end up the victims of the spider-like masterminds who command the most powerful and dangerous of the conspiracies. Sometimes, though, even the spider comes up empty-handed, and the fly rips through entirely.

The most straightforward way that a Deviant can damage the web is by weakening or destroying conspiracies. In its most brutish form, a Renegade might achieve this by simply hunting down and killing conspirators. This is particularly effective against conspiracies that are weak or lack the stomach and ability for violence, but brutal murders tend to attract attention. Sooner or later, a conspiracy that is well-gearred for confrontation will come sniffing around the blood-spattered crime scenes, and the Deviant will find themselves with more unwanted attention than if they had been more circumspect about their vengeance in the first place.

If a Renegade can gather enough information to piece together an understanding of the web's connections, they can attack those connections directly. Find out what one conspiracy wants of another, what resource the conspiracy provides to its benefactors, and take that asset away.

Those occultists who trade their alchemical lore to the street gangs suddenly have nothing to offer when their library burns down. A ruined reputation renders worthless a conspiracy that relies on its social leverage to aid its allies. For those Deviants utterly determined to indulge in bloody violence, just knowing the names of the specific individuals in each conspiracy who make the deals can render a targeted attack vastly more effective.

Conspiracies themselves often wreak havoc in the web by striking at each other. As alliances and enmities shift rapidly, Broken find themselves caught in the crossfire. As a cohort finally closes in on the team behind the illegal experimentation that created the Deviants, the researchers' benefactors decide the Progenitors are now a loose end that needs to be tidied up, and so the Renegades find a kill-team executing the doctors with brutal efficiency. One conspiracy starts hunting down the Renegades of another, either mistaking them for active agents or intending to interrogate them for any information of value regarding the rival.

An organization might reach out to a Deviant with the carrot rather than the stick in hope of acquiring a Devoted. Offering a Renegade the chance to strike back at the ones who made her or hurt her is a tempting deal, especially if it comes with the full backing of an organization bringing more power to bear than she can manage on her own. Such an offer can be just as much a set of chains as those the Deviant escaped from in the first place, though, even if this time they'd be gilded by whatever benefits the would-be Devoted might glean from the deal.

Clashes between conspiracies and rents torn in the web by vengeful Deviants can offer opportunities to Renegades, but they can also serve as a danger. When two conspiracies tangle over assets or power, the victor may end up stronger and more influential than either was beforehand, and all the more able to mop up any loose resources of the vanquished. Finally laying waste to a Progenitor at the top of a hierarchy can be satisfying, but it may open space for a new conspiracy to flourish in — and possibly one that is now better-educated about Divergence and more ambitious in its goals. Tearing one conspiracy down brings the attention of its immediate partners and superiors against a threat capable of wreaking such destruction. For the beleaguered Deviant, it can feel as if every success brings more challenges, reveals more conspirators, and unveils more atrocities that must be set right. The world has no end of challenges to throw at the Renegade, and the burning drive of conflict and struggle brings only more pain.

Deviant: The Renegades Manuscript Preview #2

Chapter Three: Renegades

I'm not a killer. I'm just someone who wanted to make things right. Can't I just let myself forget what you've told me? Can't I just let myself forget what you've made me do. You think I just want another puzzle to solve? Another John G. to look for? You're John G. So, you can be my John G... Will I lie to myself to be happy? In your case Teddy...yes, I will.

— Leonard Shelby, Memento

In **Deviant: The Renegades**, Deviants are humans who have been given supernatural powers for which they paid a terrible price. The following rules show you how to create Renegades for your **Deviant** chronicle, as well as the effects of the Divergence that forever set the Remade apart from Baselines.

Character Creation

In a **Deviant: The Renegades** chronicle, each player experiences the game through their very own Remade character. This character interacts with the world of the chronicle and the other characters, via the Storytelling game mechanics in this book and the narrative collusion between the players and Storyteller. Together, the group creates a tale of revenge, loyalty, horror and conspiracy.

This section provides the rules for creating the players' characters through the nine steps detailed below. Each player builds a character sheet as they go, either using the pre-made character sheet in the back of this book, creating their own sheet, or just writing the details down with a pencil and a piece of paper.

Getting the players and Storyteller together and going through character creation as a group can help with building a cohesive feel to the cohort of Remade and to the story that follows. This is particularly true in a **Deviant** game because the capabilities of the Remade and their antagonists, the conspiracies that hunt them, are interlinked. The decision of how powerful the Variations that the Remade have access to, and hence the reach and grasp of the conspiracies, should be discussed and agreed on together.

Each step of character creation includes an ongoing example to help illustrate how a player might approach the process. These steps are a guideline, not a straitjacket; it's normal to make adjustments to Attributes or Skills after you've made some decisions about Variations and Scars!

Step One: Determine Chronicle Threat Level

The foundation of a **Deviant** chronicle is the **threat level**. The more powerful the Variations inflicted on the Remade, the more burdened by Scars they are, and the greater the instability they cause in the fabric of society. In turn, the most unstable and powerful Remade attract the attention of the most threatening conspiracies.

It's important to note that the threat level directly impacts character creation by controlling the Magnitude of Variations available to the character and hence, indirectly, the amount of Scars the

Remade will have to suffer in balance. Additionally, it dictates the Standing of each conspiracy, as described later in Chapter Five.

The threat level is a chronicle-wide barometer of the intensity of the protagonists and antagonists. As such, it is the first thing decided during character creation, and should be agreed upon by all participants. If the Storyteller and other players are amenable, some characters might be set at levels above or below that of the chronicle, with corresponding impact on the particular conspiracy connected to them. Everyone should be informed of the potential risks to this approach, though. A Remade with far fewer dots of Variations might lag behind more powerful cohort members. A Remade with far higher threat level than the rest of the cohort will be accompanied by a conspiracy that may be much more powerful than the other characters can cope with.

[TABLE]

Threat Level	Total Variation	Magnitude*	Conspiracy Standing
Mutation	2	1	
Hyperplasia	5	2	
Dysplasia	7	3	
Invasion	10	4	
Metastasis	12	5	
Metamorphosis	15	6	

[END TABLE]

*This is the total Magnitude in dots that the character has available to assign to Variations during character creation and does not include the Scar-free Magnitude dot(s) granted by her Origin.

Example: *Arran, Luke and Monika get together to play a chronicle of **Deviant**, with Alice as the Storyteller. Alice tells the players that she plans a short chronicle of intrigue and spiraling revenge set in a big city, and she's keen on corporation and government conspiracies to contrast against themes of urban decay. The group discusses what threat level to choose. The players want a substantial number of dots to play with when it comes to Variations, and they're happy to face some powerful opposition, so they settle on Invasion level. Alice is quite happy to go along with it — the significant threat level gives her lots to play with when it comes to designing the conspiracies!*

Step Two: Character Concept

Moving on from the chronicle-wide decisions, each character's concept helps shape the rest of the creation process. This doesn't need to be an extensive background. Just a few words can help give you a greater sense of who the character is and what sort of capabilities they should have. A *bitter and disabled veteran* or a *middle-manager trapped in corporate drone hell* or a *repentant criminal* all provide good groundings in who the Remade was before they suffered Divergence; a *chimera struggling with bestial instincts*, a *self-made superman gone horribly wrong*, or a *youth raised from birth to become the god's avatar* say something about how they might be dealing with their new nature as a Deviant.

As the later stages of character creation play out, this initial concept may change or transmute into something different and more interesting. That's absolutely fine. The concept settled on at this point is not a hard or final decision.

Example: *Luke decides his character was a young, local criminal arrested and 'sold' by corrupt cops to a sinister corporation for experimentation. He has an image of a character with spines or other spiky Variations; the researchers did all manner of horrible tests on the Remade before he managed to escape, and now he's back on the streets and seeking vengeance, so an urban legend about a 'needle man' is growing up around his activities. Luke writes 'vengeful urban legend' on his character sheet, and also decides on a first name: Lee.*

Step Three: Select Attributes

Your character now begins to take shape through selecting their attributes, the innate talent and capability that each person possesses. Every character in a **Deviant: The Renegades** chronicle has nine attributes, divided into three categories: Mental (Intelligence, Wits, Resolve), Physical (Strength, Dexterity, Stamina), and Social (Presence, Manipulation, Composure). Every Attribute begins with a single dot in it.

Rank the three categories according to how talented they feel the character is in each. The primary category receives five more dots to allocate freely between its Attributes; the secondary category receives four; and the tertiary category receives three. These dots are in addition to the free dot each Attribute begins with, but cannot be used to take any starting Attribute above five dots.

More information about Attributes can be found on p. XX.

Example: *Luke feels that Lee, having been a fairly minor criminal and street tough before he was Remade, should probably focus on Physical attributes first, Social attributes second, and Mental attributes third — Lee never had a chance at a good education, but learned how to navigate the dangerous maze of trust, loyalty and peer pressure that was life in a gang.*

Starting with one dot in each Attribute, Luke raises each of Lee's Mental Attributes to two — a relatively mundane distribution. Luke brings his Strength and Stamina up to two each and uses the remaining three Physical dots to give Lee a Dexterity score of four. Lee is nimble and wiry. Finally, Luke decides Lee isn't particularly imposing — maybe he's too scrawny, or he's learned to keep his head down and try to avoid notice. He leaves Lee's Presence at one dot, but gives him both Manipulation and Composure scores of three.

Lee is quick, and canny when it comes to dealing with people, but he's not particularly frightening — at least, when his skin isn't sprouting spines. Luke looks back at his original concept now and refines it a bit — he had Lee down as a street thug, but Lee wouldn't actually be very good at the sort of posturing or intimidation he imagines such a gang member to engage in. Instead, Luke now decides that Lee was purely a petty thief, paying a cut to the local gangs for their protection rather than being a gang member himself.

Step Four: Select Skills

Skills represent the specific training and experience that your character possesses, and there are 24 skills in total. Just like Attributes, Skills are divided into three categories — Mental, Physical and Social — but Skills begin with a dot rating of zero. A character who has no dots in a Skill is

considered to be unskilled in that field, which will inflict an additional penalty on her if she attempts to use it. More information about Skills and their use can be found on p. XX.

Prioritize the Skill categories just like with Attributes in the prior stage. The primary category receives eleven dots to distribute among the Skills therein; the secondary category receives seven dots; and the tertiary category receives 4. Again, no Skill can be raised above five dots.

Example: *With a much stronger picture of Lee being a thief, Luke decides how to assign the character's Skills. He picks Physical as Lee's strongest area again, as it includes a lot of Skills that are important to a thief, but he decides that Mental should be the secondary category — Lee achieves his schemes via planning rather than smooth-talking. That puts Social as his tertiary category.*

Luke quickly locks onto Athletics, Larceny and Stealth as the most important Skills for how he envisages Lee. Athletics also has the advantage that it contributes towards Lee's final Defense score. Luke puts three dots into Athletics and Larceny, and four dots into Stealth. That leaves him with one dot free. He wants Lee to have some ability to hold his own in a fight; firearms are too loud and attention-grabbing, so Luke decides on putting the last dot into Weaponry.

In the Mental Skills category, Lee puts two dots each into Computer, Crafts and Investigation. He figures Lee is smart enough to plan well and use what resources are available to him. The last dot goes into Medicine. Luke is further building up the feeling that, prior to becoming Remade, Lee was very self-reliant and that included dealing with the consequences when his schemes and robberies went awry.

Lastly, in the Social Skills category, Luke puts one dot in Empathy and Persuasion, and two dots into Subterfuge. He's tempted to drop either Empathy or Persuasion and increase Subterfuge to three, making Lee very good at lying, but he doesn't want to deal with unskilled penalties on either of the one dot skills, and Luke figures that Lee's high Manipulation should give him a high enough dice pool for dealing with most problems.

Looking round the rest of the table, Luke sees that Arran has built a military veteran who underwent eldritch drug treatments to make him very strong and tough, while Monika's character is a university student with emerging psychic powers. Lee is clearly going to be the nimble problem-solver of the group, next to the other characters' brawn and brains.

Step Five: Select Skill Specialties

Specialties are areas where your character has refined training or expertise, giving them an edge or niche where they are particularly capable. Each Specialty is attached to a specific Skill, and the character receives a bonus when using that Skill in the field of their Specialty. See p.XX for further information on how Specialties and Skills interact.

Distribute three Specialties among the character's Skills. A Specialty cannot be chosen for a Skill with zero dots, but there is no limit to how many Specialties can be placed in each category, and more than one Specialty can be picked for the same Skill. Each Specialty comes as a short description or phrase indicating its nature, so a biologist might have the Specialty of Biology for the Science skill, or an urban explorer might have a Specialty of Climbing for the Athletics skill.

Example: *Luke wants Lee to be a bit more silver-tongued, in line with how he sees Lee navigating dangerous relationships in the criminal underworld and making his living handling stolen goods. He spends two of his Specialties to shore up the weakness in Lee's social skills.*

One goes on Making Deals for the Persuasion Skill, and the other goes on Misdirection for the Subterfuge Skill.

The last Specialty goes into making Lee even better at his main focus. Luke gives Lee a Specialty of Urban Shadows for Stealth. Alice asks what exactly Luke means by this, and he explains that he sees the Specialty applying when Lee is hiding and remaining still in an urban environment, so it wouldn't help if Lee was in the woods or moving through a crowd. This sounds reasonable for a Specialty to Alice, and so the Storyteller agrees.

Step Six: Divergence

This step is the point where you decide on the specifics of the Remade's Divergence and the changes it inflicts.

Origin

Pick the Origin of your Remade character.

Origin represents the specific way that the Divergence happened — was the Remade altered by others, or were the changes self-inflicted? Was the process voluntary, forcible or just random chance? There are five Origins to pick from:

Autourgics wished to be Remade, and may have sought out transformation as an end in and of itself. They chose this path, even if they didn't necessarily get exactly what they wanted. The Elect gain one Scar-free Magnitude of an Overt Variation, and an extra dot of Loyalty.

Epimorphs agreed to be Remade, whether through threats or promises on the part of their Progenitor. They had a secondary goal, with Divergence as the means or gateway to getting there. The Volunteers gain one Scar-free Magnitude of a Subtle Variation, and an extra dot of Loyalty.

Exomorphs never wanted to be Remade. Someone else forced Divergence upon them on purpose, a purpose the Deviant was not party to. The Unwilling gain one Scar-free Magnitude of an Overt Variation, and an extra dot of Conviction.

Genotypical Deviants had Divergence woven into their ancestry or parentage. Whether or not they knew about it, they never really had a choice about their impending transformation. The Born gain one Scar-free Magnitude of a Subtle Variation, and an extra dot of Conviction.

Pathological Remade are victims of pure circumstance. Something bizarre or accidental happened to trigger their Divergence, often without any clear Progenitor involved. The Accidents gain one Scar-free dot of any Variation and one dot of either Loyalty or Conviction. They also begin the chronicle with one medium Instability (p. XX).

Ambiguous Origins

You may encounter edge cases, where a character's Origin seems to fit into two (or more) categories. For example, what if a cancer patient at a VA hospital was mistaken as a volunteer for a program that made no secret that Divergence was the goal? Would that make her an Epimorph (since she underwent the treatment without knowing about what it would do) or a Pathological (because no one intended that she be a test subject in the first place)?

While you might examine the character's origin in greater depth (which would be a great use of your time, since it will help better define her, suggest appropriate Touchstones, and guide your portrayal), remember that the character's relationship with her beginnings is a significant influence on Origin. An Autourgic Deviant and an Exomorph might be torn apart and Remade with the exact same swarm of nanorobots, but if the former was a willing participant and the latter was strapped in and forcibly experimented on, their Origins remain distinct.

Clade

Choose your character's Clade. Clades are the broad categorizations that the changes inflicted by Divergence fall into. Each Deviant belongs to a single Clade, but the variety within each Clade is staggering, and the choice of Clade does not prevent a Deviant from manifesting Variations associated with other Clades. There are five to pick from, each possessing its own unique Adaptations (p. XX):

Cephalists employ psychic powers unleashed by the trauma of Divergence, tapping into the potential of the human mind to impose their will directly onto the world. Through sheer willpower, Psychics can strengthen a Variation.

Chimerics are a mixture of human and *something else*, Remade through commingling with the bodies of animals or other living things. Focused on survival, Hybrids can temporarily suppress a Scar.

Coactives harness and channel energies, whether natural forces or eldritch ones. The Infused can overload their bodies with the power they wield, briefly strengthening a Variation at the expense of flesh and blood.

Invasives wield powers drawn from the intrusive replacement of their flesh by technological or occult materials. Cyborgs are immensely resilient, and can withstand terrible punishment at the expense of their Variations.

Mutants possess aberrant biology that grants them superhuman abilities. Grotesques can briefly manifest surprising and unexpected Variations.

Variations

You can now assign dots of Magnitude to the Remade's Variations. The total Magnitude of Variations cannot exceed that permitted by the chronicle's chosen threat level. Each Remade must begin with at least a single Variation, and at least half of a Remade's Variation Magnitude must be invested in Variations from some combination of their Clade category or the Universal category. You are otherwise free to assign dots across multiple Variations and to choose Variations from other Clades' categories.

See p. XX for a full explanation of Variations.

Scars

Each Variation must be **entangled** with a Scar of equal or greater Magnitude. The Scar is the cost, consequence, or side-effect of the Variations entangled with it. Scars are Controlled, Involuntary, or Persistent (the activation method). A Scar can be entangled with multiple Variations, all of which take the same activation method. When entangling multiple Variations, the Scar's Magnitude cannot be less than the highest Magnitude among the entangled Variations,

plus one per additional Variation. For example, a Magnitude 3 Scar can entangle one Magnitude 3 Variation, two Magnitude 2 Variations, or three Magnitude 1 Variations. A Remade may have several different Scars, each combined with different Variations. A Variation is never combined with more than one Scar, however.

Full details for Scars are found on p. XX.

Forms

Some Deviants possess Forms, oddities that reflect an unusual set of circumstances or capabilities. Forms are not necessary for all — or even most — Remade, and are not an inherent bonus or upgrade. Rather, they're a package of game mechanics allowing for specific concepts that would otherwise be hard to represent. Forms color a Deviant's Scars and Variations, cost no Experiences, and are not mutually exclusive. The most common forms are:

Amalgams are the combination of two or more distinct, sapient beings, whether multiple humans fused together, or direct combinations with supernatural beings. Amalgams can gain access to the communal talents of the gestalt, sacrificing initial Skill dots to give a flexible pool of temporary dots.

Unlike the vast majority of Deviants, the **Self-Made** are their own Progenitors. Lacking the external bond to blame as the cause of their Divergence, the Self-Made possess more agency in establishing Touchstones.

Symbiotes possess Variations with a mind of their own, drawing power from one or more sources with a distinct and separate mind or agenda. If the Deviant is not acting in accordance with the symbiotic entity's traits, they may find their Variations are no longer obedient.

Transmissible Deviants spread their Divergence like a contagion. The Form can infect other human beings during play in much the same way as a disease, with choices made in terms of its transmittable vectors, virulence, and means to resist its advance.

Full details for Forms are found on p. XX, while a fifth form, the Devoted, is detailed on p. XX.

Loyalty and Conviction Touchstones

Each Remade has two conflicting urges pulling at them: Loyalty and Conviction.

A starting Renegade possesses three dots of Conviction and one dot of Loyalty, plus one additional dot of either Conviction or Loyalty based on their Origin.

For each dot, note down a Touchstone — a person (or, more rarely, an object or place) towards whom the Remade feels either hatred or protectiveness, as appropriate. These characters will be significant to the Remade as the chronicle unfolds, so it's important to put some time and thought into who they are and why they matter to the Deviant.

Full details on how Loyalty, Conviction and Touchstones function are found on p. XX.

Acclimation

Every Remade begins with an Acclimation rating of zero dots. This represents the Broken's adaptation to their changed nature, and can improve during the course of the chronicle. A Deviant's player can spend five of his starting Merit dots to begin play at Acclimation 1, or all 10 dots to begin play at Acclimation 2.

Example: *The players' faces light up as Alice announces it's time to pick the characters' powers! Luke already has a pretty strong idea of where he wants to go with the Needle Man theme, but first he needs to decide on Origin and Clade. Origin is easy, as Lee was definitely unwilling and therefore an Exomorph, and Luke notes that this means Lee gets one extra dot of Magnitude in an Overt Variation, and that it's a Scar-free dot, as well as an extra dot in Conviction. Clade is a little harder. Luke goes back and forth between Lee being a Mutant or a Chimeric. He thinks that maybe Lee's spikiness comes from some sort of bizarre fusing or hybridization with sea urchin DNA, but in the end decides that'll probably be a bit silly, so settles on Mutant. He explains that the researchers tried to modify Lee's body to create keratinous natural weaponry and defensive carapace via bio-engineering, and that the spines and spikes are actually the result of the project's failure — it wasn't what the corporation was looking to achieve.*

The chosen threat level gives Luke ten dots to spend on Variations, plus the bonus from Lee's Origin. Several Variations are at the top of Luke's shopping list: he puts three dots into Cutting Weaponry Lash (Envenomed, Grappling, Grave, Piercing) and Enhanced Speed (Fleetness), two dots into Carapace (Leathery) and Hypercompetence (Larceny), and one dot into Brachiation (Wall Crawling). Lee can sprout a coat of barbed, envenomed spines and needles that he can use as weaponry and that protect him. Alice asks where the Enhanced Speed and Hypercompetence come from, and Luke suggests that when the Divergence rewired Lee's nervous system, giving him control over his body's ability to produce the more obvious Variations, it also fine-tuned his reaction speed. The Storyteller points out that Lee is not built as a combat-focused character but has a lot of combat-focused Variations, and wonders whether some of the shape-shifting Variations like Face Thief might work well for him. Luke, though, wants to explore how the character deals with the fact he's been given all these dangerous powers, especially coupled with a Deviant's drive for vengeance. Also, he feels going down the shape-shifting and infiltration route with his powers would result in a very different character to how he sees Lee at the moment.

Luke decides some of Lee's Variations are Controlled — Lee can spend a few moments to make his flesh erupt in these deadly spines, activating Carapace or Cutting Weaponry Lash. Luke figures that the transformation into the Needle Man really hurts, so he takes Perilous Variation at two dots for both Variations (he put his Scar-free dot of Variation from his Origin into Cutting Weaponry Lash). He considers folding both Variations into Hybrid Transformation, instead, but that would either increase the Magnitude of Perilous Variation (which he doesn't want) or decrease the Magnitude of his Lash.

Luke then picks Deterioration at one and two dots for Brachiation and Hypercompetence. He thinks that Lee literally extrudes spikes of strange shapes to help with the Larceny boost, and when he scuttles on walls it can cause some of the spines to break off.

Finally, he picks the Conspicuous Appearance Scar at three dots, combining it with Enhanced Speed. Lee looks unhealthy, maybe oddly mottled and scarred due to the Variations.

With the Variations and Scars done, Luke moves onto Conviction and Loyalty. Due to being an Exomorph Remade, Lee has four dots in Conviction and one in Loyalty, and needs a Touchstone for each dot. Fortunately, the backstory that has emerged as Luke has put the character together makes this easy: he assigns the Conviction Touchstones to the researcher who hit the switch that began the Divergence, the corrupt cop who was the one who arrested Lee and handed him over

to the corporation, and the boss of one of the local gangs who made his life hell and was taking a cut of his profits before *Divergence*. That leaves one *Conviction Touchstone*. Luke asks Monika and Arran for ideas as to how he might link up with their characters. Luke ends up assigning his final *Conviction Touchstone* to one of the esoteric researchers who used occult artifacts to trigger the psychic awakening of Monika's character — he figures Lee stole one of the artifacts from the researcher's home, and so Monika's conspiracy leaned on the police to have Lee picked up and dealt with.

For the *Loyalty Touchstone*, Luke decides to go with a classic trope and assigns it to Lee's sister. With the parents apparently out of the picture for reasons not yet decided on, Lee sells his stolen goods so that he can pay for the sister to get a better education than he did.

Step Seven: Select Merits

Merits represent additional talents, resources, allies and assets that a character can draw upon. Assign up to ten dots between whichever Merits you choose to round the Remade's capabilities out. Note that Merits classified as Overt are those that are potential vulnerabilities when dealing with conspiracies; the use of such a Merit can help a conspiracy to track the character down.

Additionally, five Merit dots can be spent to raise starting *Acclimation* to 1, and all 10 can be spent to raise it to 2.

Example: *Luke reads over the Merits list and quickly picks a few out that fit Lee. He grabs *Anonymity* and *Contacts*, both at two dots, picking gangs and fences as his connections. Two dots in *Safe Place* makes sense — Lee has a bolthole for the times the heat gets too much to handle. Finally, he picks three dots in *Fleet of Foot*, and assigns the last dot to *Hypervigilance*.*

Step Eight: Determine Advantages

Every character has a set of derived traits that are determined at this stage. These traits are fully defined in Chapter Four. The base values for most advantages are as follows, although some may be modified by merits or other effects:

New Remade begin with a **Stability** of 5 and a **Size** of 5.

Willpower is equal to the character's *Resolve* + *Composure*.

Health is equal to the character's *Size* + *Stamina*.

Speed is equal to 5 + *Strength* + *Dexterity*.

Initiative is equal to the character's *Dexterity* + *Composure*.

Defense is equal to the lower of the character's *Wits* or *Dexterity*, plus the character's *Athletics*.

You should also pick a single *Aspiration* for the character, as described on pg. XX.

Example: *With the rest of the character sheet filled out, Luke runs through the derived traits quickly. He notes *Stability* and *Size* of 5; *Willpower* of 5; *Health* of 7; *Speed* of 11, and then increases it to 14 due to Lee's *Fleet of Foot*; *Initiative* of 7; and *Defense* of 5. For Lee's *Aspiration*, Luke wants an opportunity to explore how Lee's *Variations* and abilities help him escape his pursuers, so he chooses *Escape From A Pursuit*.*

Step Nine: Shape Cohort and Conspiracy

At this stage, you should have a character that you are more or less happy with. Further tinkering can yet take place, but now the group as a whole can start talking with more confidence about their cohort. By looking at each others' characters and mulling over how the Remade know each other, what events have dragged them together and what forces prevent them from splitting apart, the group can build a brief background for the cohort that will let them hit the ground running once play begins.

You should also talk to the Storyteller and the other players about the nature of the conspiracy or conspiracies that oppose your characters. You may want to get quite specific about the details of your conspiracy, the kinds of resources they can draw upon and key figures in the organization, but it's fine to work in broad brush-strokes and leave the specifics up to the Storyteller if you desire. You may also want to tie your Remade characters' together through having the same Progenitors or conspiracies. Armed with some ideas from the players about the shape and style of conspiracy they want, the Storyteller can then build each organization with the rules provided on p. XX.

Example: *Luke, Arran, and Monika chat about how their characters know each other. Lee has a tie to Monika's psychic, Amanda, because Lee stole an occult artifact from the conspiracy that inflicted Divergence on Amanda without really knowing what he'd grabbed. Amanda, having escaped her own Progenitor, comes looking for Lee because she hears that a thief had tried to sell the object on the black market — only to find that Lee himself has since been abducted and turned into one of the Remade! Arran, for his part, suggests his character Miguel played a part in Lee's escape. Miguel believed Lee's conspiracy had knowledge about the Progenitor responsible for his own Divergence, and during a break-in to their facilities, freed Lee. Amanda then tracks the two down as they hide in the dark places of the city, using her psychic powers to locate them. Voila — one cohort.*

Discussing the nature of Lee's conspiracy with Alice, Luke thinks they're something of an intermediary — a group of zero-ethics researchers working for a corporation that buys and sells the secrets and results of Divergence with other conspiracies. Luke suggests they're ruthlessly mercantile, interested in profit above all else, and can act as something of a go-between and negotiator between conspiracies — a nexus point in the tangled map of this hidden world. Alice likes the idea, as it gives her an excuse to have the corporation bring in strange resources from other conspiracies, and she can tie Arran and Monika's conspiracies together through it too.

Character Creation Quick Reference

Step One: Determine Chronicle Threat Level

Choose the chronicle's threat level as a group, setting Variation Magnitude and conspiracy Standing.

Step Two: Character Concept

Choose your character's concept.

Step Three: Select Attributes

Prioritize Attribute categories, and spend 5/4/3 dots by category.

Step Four: Select Skills

Prioritize Skill categories, and spend 11/7/4 dots by category.

Step Five: Select Skill Specialties

Choose three Skill Specialties.

Step Six: Divergence

Choose Origin, Clade and any appropriate Forms.

Assign dots in Variations and Scars.

Assign Touchstones (3 Conviction, 1 Loyalty, plus any from Origin).

Set Acclimation to zero.

Step Seven: Select Merits

Assign ten dots of Merits. Five dots can be spent to raise starting Acclimation to 1, or all ten spent to raise it to 2.

Step Eight: Determine Advantages

Stability and Size both begin at 5.

Willpower equals Resolve + Composure.

Health equals Size + Stamina.

Speed equals 5 + Strength + Dexterity.

Initiative equals Dexterity + Composure.

Defense is the lower of Dexterity and Wits, + Athletics.

Pick one Aspiration.

Step Nine: Shape Cohort and Conspiracy

Discuss how the cohort has formed, and the nature of the conspiracies that pursue each character.

Variations & Scars

Start with a number of dots in Variations as set by chronicle threat level and adjusted by Origin. At least half the total Magnitude must be assigned to Universal and Clade Variations. Choose Scars, and note which Variations are combined with which Scars.

Divergence Origins & Clades

[BEGIN TAB TABLE]

Origin Effects

Autourgic / Elect +1 Scar-free Magnitude of Overt Variation, +1 Loyalty

Epimorph / Volunteer +1 Scar-free Magnitude of Subtle Variation, +1 Loyalty

Exomorph / Unwilling +1 Scar-free Magnitude of Overt Variation, +1 Conviction

Genotypal / Born +1 Scar-free Magnitude of Subtle Variation, +1 Conviction

Pathological / Accidental +1 Scar-free Magnitude to any Variation, +1 Conviction or Loyalty, +1 medium Instability

[END TABLE TABLE]

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Clade Effects

Cephalist 1/chapter, +1 Variation Magnitude until the end of the scene (spend Willpower to further increase Magnitude); spend Willpower to reset a 1/scene or 1/chapter Variation or Adaptation.

Chimeric 1/chapter, -2 to a Scar's Magnitude until the end of the scene (spend Willpower to further decrease Magnitude); suffer bashing/lethal damage to reset a 1/scene or 1/chapter Variation or Adaptation.

Coactive 1/chapter, +1 Variation Magnitude until the end of the scene (suffer lethal damage to further increase Magnitude); spend Willpower to reset a 1/scene or 1/chapter Variation or Adaptation.

Invasive 1/chapter, reduce Magnitude of Variations by any amount to heal a like amount of bashing/lethal damage; suffer bashing/lethal damage to reset a 1/scene or 1/chapter Variation or Adaptation.

Mutant 1/chapter, exchange a Variation for a Universal Variation of up to half its Magnitude until the end of the scene; suffer a minor Instability to reset a 1/scene or 1/chapter Variation or Adaptation.

[END TAB TABLE]

Conviction and Loyalty

Divergence damages the part of the Remade's soul that once guided her senses of self and identity, replacing Virtue and Vice with the twin Anchors of Loyalty and Conviction. She defines herself by her interactions with others — specifically those actions driven by love and hate and directed toward a specific person, group, cause, or location.

A Remade's Conviction can run white hot or blisteringly cold. It compels the transformed to do what needs to be done, often forcing her to make hard choices in the pursuit of her designated enemies. It dictates her need to confront anyone who would keep her from pursuing her goals. Conviction is the churning, seething anger that always lurks at the edges of her emotions. It is what makes a Renegade fight, what gives her the courage to escape, and what pushes her to determine her own fate. Conviction serves as a source of Willpower based on her actions.

Where anger and hate guide Conviction, Loyalty represents the Remade's ties to those she cares about deeply and strives to protect — both from herself and from the sinister forces she tangles with. These are those few people who have stood by her since her Divergence, who accepted her how she was before and how she is now. They're the friends and family who refuse to be scared off even when she insists they ought to run, that it's for their own good. They're also the new friends she's made since everything changed. It's hard for a Deviant to maintain relationships, but these ones approach the sacred for her. She'll do anything it takes to protect the people who have earned her trust to this degree. Loyalty restores the Broken's Willpower when she acts to uphold it.

Touchstones

Touchstones invoke strong feelings of hate or love in the Remade, anchoring her to her remaining humanity. Acting for or against a Touchstone helps the Deviant keep her Instabilities from growing worse, while falling short of these obligations shakes her confidence and can trigger disastrous complications.

Whether Conviction or Loyalty, most Touchstones are individual people. Some Broken forge ties with an object, place, or organization, but these are always concrete and localized — something that can be threatened or destroyed by a single actor in a single time and place, whether with a gun or an explosive.

A Deviant hates her Conviction Touchstones with a limitless rage. She recalls them with a passion so deep it always seethes just beneath the surface, ready to boil over. Most are members of the conspiracy that stalks her or created her: her Progenitor, the school administrator who nominated her for the experimental program, the lab tech who injected her with the serum, or the old roommate who invited her along to participate in an obscure ritual. She might even wish to see the lab where she was experimented on destroyed, or the ritual altar smashed. Others have earned her enmity in other ways, such as by threatening a Loyalty Touchstone, standing in the way of the Remade's revenge, or inconveniencing her in other ways: the police officer who keeps hauling her in for questioning, or the neighborhood gang that's always making trouble for the cohort and their allies.

If causing a Conviction Touchstone to suffer is satisfying, killing one outright offers a moment of catharsis. However, resolving a Conviction Touchstone by destroying it does not extinguish the yawning chasm of the Deviant's need to protect or exact vengeance. The Remade who destroys one Conviction Touchstone almost always replaces it with another as soon as possible — or with a Loyalty Touchstone.

The focus of a Loyalty Touchstone is often someone the Deviant knew before her Divergence. This may be an old friend or lover, a partner in crime, or even a former enemy whose past sins now pale in comparison to what her Progenitor did to her. Some Touchstones form after the Renegade goes through her ordeal: the lab assistant who helped her escape, or the member of her cohort who bears an uncanny resemblance to her little sister. They are people who remind her that even though being Remade took away a piece of her humanity, it didn't take all of it. They show the transformed kindness even when — especially when — she's incapable of showing it to herself, and they have her back even if they don't always agree with her choices.

Loyalty Touchstones are the source of both comfort and concern for the Deviant. The Touchstone is the person he goes to when he's troubled, but that means if his enemies are watching, and he's not careful enough, he's putting his friend in the conspiracy's crosshairs. Ruthless conspirators often threaten to harm the Touchstone, following her to work, watching her children on the playground. They make her life difficult, sometimes using bureaucratic frustrations to mask their involvement. Police show up on her doorstep, following up on a tip that she's harboring the fugitive Renegade. Child services pays a visit based on an anonymous call from a concerned party. Some conspirators contact the Touchstone directly, attempting to turn her against the Remade or suggesting they can protect her from him if he grows violent. They try their best to sow seeds of doubt between them.

Upsetting the Broken's loved ones is a combination of a taunt and a threat. The conspiracy wants the Renegade to know they're watching, to know they're keeping tabs on where he goes and who he values. Anything they can do to throw their target off-balance is just fine by the conspiracy. In

extreme cases, the Deviant's enemies kidnap his Touchstones or put them in physical danger. While this can draw the Remade out of hiding or make him come to the table and negotiate, it also serves to fuel his hate and determination against the conspirators involved. Overtly threatening a Touchstone can backfire — a Touchstone is much less likely to be off the grid, and therefore will be missed by other people in her life if she suddenly stops showing up for work or her children don't come to school. Conspirators usually deploy these extreme tactics sparingly, and only when they're certain they can minimize the fallout.

Touchstones and Subplots

Touchstones, it should be noted, usually have lives of their own outside of the Remade's intrigues. Sometimes, the trouble a Touchstone finds herself embroiled in is a mess of her own making and has nothing at all to do with a conspiracy's machinations. Just because they're more mundane matters doesn't mean she isn't threatened or in danger. These types of subplots make for interesting story fodder and offer a chance to explore and develop the relationship between the Deviant and his Touchstone. They can provide something for a Renegade to do between bringing down one part of a conspiracy and discovering the next piece of the web, or can affect the main plot, with the Touchstone's troubles eventually leading back to the conspiracy in some way.

Faltering

Renegades often pick the worst option out of a handful of already bad ones. Their self-destructive tendencies mean they run toward danger or mouth off to the wrong person at the worst time to provoke a fight. It also means they push away the people who care about them, and sometimes lash out rather than accept a hand up out of their dark places.

When a Deviant makes a conscious choice to act counter to her Conviction or Loyalty, she has **Faltered**. Her sense of self is shaken, and she can't help but wonder: if she failed on this, what about all the other truths she's declared for herself since her Divergence? Even when her reasons for turning away are justified, guilt slips into the cracks in her soul and takes root. Her Variations and Scars give her the potential to be monstrous, but her Conviction and Loyalty are what keep her from giving in to it completely. And now she's weakened that resolve. She questions herself: was she ever worthy of that person's love? Is she too weak to take on the conspiracy? Who does she think she's kidding?

Faltering affects her relationships, too. The conspiracy gains ground on her, or gets away with information she could have used to bring them down. Those who know the Renegade is pursuing them feel emboldened by her failure. The person she's Loyal to loses some faith in her, feels hurt and angry and betrayed. Depending on the degree of the Renegade's neglect, the Touchstone might back off from the relationship awhile, or cut ties entirely. Eventually, the Remade's actions — or indifference — toward a target clues them in to the fact something's changed.

Faltering forces the transformed to face her own vulnerability, and her uncertainty is made manifest in increasing Instabilities and worsening Scars. If she suffers from hallucinations, she hears the voice of the person she failed in her head, accusing her of letting them down. The severity of her bane increases, her aversion to the material growing even more painful. Her Variations grow unreliable, firing off when she hasn't activated them or sputtering out when she's reminded of how she's failed her friend.

Conflicting Interests

Conviction and Loyalty occasionally pull the Remade in opposite directions. She receives word of a meeting between her Progenitor and a supplier that night, and on the heels of it answers a desperate phone call from her best friend, who has just been arrested on bogus charges. She can't be in both places at once. The meeting's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get intel, but she can't let her friend rot at the precinct for hours on end, especially when the Renegade is the friend's alibi.

Either she lets a chance to strike at the conspiracy slip away, or she fails one of the people in the world who cares about her most. Which does she choose?

There are no good options here, and yet she has to actively choose one of them. Acting counter to her Touchstones shakes her carefully curated sense of self to the core. She's worked so hard since her Divergence to define who she is, and now one of those things is untrue.

Failing to go to the meeting goes against her Conviction. Does it mean she's not as dedicated as she should be to bringing down the conspiracy? Has she let her cohort down? Was she a little relieved at not going, and what does that say about her?

Failing to go bail out her friend goes against her Loyalty. If the situation were reversed, her friend would have dropped everything to come get her out of holding — probably has. Probably more than once. What if she gets roughed up in that cell? What if they somehow make the charges stick? How can the Renegade say she'll do anything to protect her friend if she leaves her there, waiting?

All is not necessarily lost. Friendships can sometimes be repaired and reaffirmed, though it might take time and mean eating a healthy amount of crow. The Renegade can recommit to breaking up a conspiracy — if she dig deeps, she'll feel that anger surge once more. Fixing these things steadies her, confirming that she is the person she declared herself to be. It might take time for the Scars to settle down, and some are likely there to stay, but she's adjusted to a new normal before. She can do it again if she has to.

Switching Sides

Touchstones are (usually) human, and that means they lead complex inner lives and make hard choices, just like the Renegade does. Both the Broken's actions and those of the conspiracy she's tangling with can force a Touchstone to act in a way that makes the Remade reassess their relationship, for good or ill.

Deviants live in a near-constant state of paranoia when it comes to other people. With each new encounter, they have to wonder if this person is working for a conspiracy or the cops. Do they recognize the Deviant from that segment on the news a month or so back? Are they going to reach for their cell phone and call the tipline as soon as her back is turned?

When it comes to her Loyalty Touchstone, the transformed lets her guard down a bit. This person understands her struggles and her fears, and may even know the dangers the Renegade faces — whether they're from the conspiracies hunting her, or are situations the Renegade gets herself into out of sheer recklessness. They have the Remade's Loyalty because they're the ones who say "I believe you." Every time.

Which makes it all the worse when that person betrays her.

Loved ones may not even realize they're doing harm — the conspiracies can be frighteningly convincing in their deception, and often play on a family member's concern for the Renegade's well-being to get information out of them. Sometimes, their betrayal comes from trying to protect the Broken from her own self-destructive actions. The phrases "I'm doing this for your own good" and "This is for your own best interests" make a Deviant's blood run cold.

Other times, the Touchstone has simply had enough. The Renegade has brought trouble to her doorstep one too many times, and she has to put her own safety or her family's well-being first.

Love and hate exist on a spectrum for the transformed, and the anger and asperity that goes along with feeling betrayed can flip the Touchstone from Loyalty to Conviction. How can she trust that person again? How could they have sold her out?

Likewise, someone the Deviant has been gunning for might surprise them in the opposite direction. A conspiracy member realizes — through his own digging, or through information the Renegade has exposed — that he's working for the wrong side. He can't change what's been done, but he can help prevent it from happening to other people. Earning the Broken's trust takes time. The Deviant can't help but be skeptical. She second-guesses her former-enemy's motives, expects favors to come with caveats and that every meeting will end in a trap. But eventually, when the source proves himself to be reliable and sincere, he stops being the Renegade's sworn enemy and becomes her trusted friend.

Until, of course, he lets her down.

This push and pull can be exhausting, but Deviants cling to it like a lifeline. Their Convictions and Loyalties tie them to their humanity, and letting go leaves them adrift in dangerous waters. Abandoning or ignoring these drives puts them at risk of going the way of the Ferals — monstrous, uncaring, inhuman, and dangerous.

Systems

- Starting Renegade characters begin with at least three dots in Conviction and one in Loyalty, which Origin then modifies (see Chapter One). The sum of Loyalty and Conviction is never more than five. Each dot has one associated Touchstone, a character toward whom the Renegade feels a particularly strong hatred or protectiveness.
- After a scene in which the Renegade makes progress toward one of her Conviction Touchstones, she gains one Willpower and takes a Beat. Once per chapter, when she risks danger or suffers for her Loyalty Touchstone, she regains all Willpower.
- If a Touchstone is destroyed or killed, or when a Touchstone falls to Wavering, the Broken's Loyalty or Conviction falls by one (depending on which Trait the Touchstone was attached to). If both Loyalty and Conviction reach 0, the Deviant goes Feral (p. XX).
- Once per chapter, the Remade may declare a new Touchstone to fill an open Touchstone slot — the player's choice of Loyalty or Conviction. This Touchstone begins at Wavering, and therefore doesn't increase the character's Loyalty or Conviction, unless it is successfully affirmed (p. XX).
- A Touchstone may switch from Loyalty to Conviction (or vice versa) without Wavering first, as long as the Touchstone itself remains the same. This immediately changes the rating of Loyalty/Conviction — increasing one and decreasing the other. When the Broken's best friend betrays her, for example, her rage is so instantaneous she doesn't pause to consider why her

friend might have done such a thing, increasing Conviction by one and decreasing Loyalty by one, in turn.

- Abandoning an existing Touchstone and replacing it with a new one is a two-step process. First, the Remade must cut ties with the old Touchstone, therefore losing a point of Loyalty or Conviction. This counts the same as his declaring a new Touchstone action for the chapter. Once the next chapter begins, he may name his new Touchstone, which begins at Wavering.
- Acting counter to his Touchstone — failing to pursue the subject of a Conviction Touchstone or abandoning a Loyalty Touchstone in a time of need — means the Renegade has **Faltered**. The player rolls his current trait rating as a dice pool to determine the severity of the damage to the relationship:
- Supporting or acting against Touchstones also affects the Deviant's long-term Stability (p. XX).

Roll Results

Success: The character's devotion to the Touchstone remains firm, although the strain of Faltering increases his Instability. Both trait and Touchstone remain in place, but he suffers a minor Instability.

Exceptional Success: The character remains both steadfast in his commitment to the Touchstone and grounded. As Success, but the character does not suffer a minor Instability.

Failure: The character partially closes himself off to his commitment to the Touchstone. The Touchstone becomes Wavering, reducing his Loyalty or Conviction trait by one. If the Touchstone was already Wavering, he loses it entirely and cannot reestablish a connection to the same Touchstone during the current chapter. In addition, the character suffers a minor Instability.

Dramatic Failure: The lapse deals serious damage to the character's soul. As Failure, but he instead suffers a medium Instability.

The Renegade can also attempt to **affirm a Wavering Touchstone**, strengthening his friendship or rekindling his hatred for a conspirator. When he acts in support of a Wavering Touchstone such that he would allow him to heal Instability (whether or not he actually has any), he does not receive the normal benefits of acting in support of the Wavering Touchstone. Instead, the Touchstone is no longer Wavering, and the Renegade gains a dot in Conviction/Loyalty (as appropriate).

Example: Chris is playing Peter, who, with the help of his best friend Jack, has conned his way into a private party for the pharmaceutical company that experimented on him. He's nearly close enough to lift the CFO's phone when there's a commotion and a security officer holds Jack at gunpoint. Peter hasn't been found out yet; another couple of minutes and he can have that phone and all the incriminating evidence on it. But they're leading Jack away, and Peter knows what happens to trespassers here. Cursing, he turns away from the CFO and slips out into the corridor after Jack.

Peter has upheld his Loyalty Touchstone for the first time this chapter, so Chris marks all of Peter's Willpower points as restored. However, because Peter failed to get that phone, Chris makes a Faltering test. He rolls three dice for Peter's Conviction. The roll fails, setting the

Conviction Touchstone he was pursuing — the CFO — to Wavering and dropping his dots in Conviction down to two.

- Remade are more likely to trust the instincts and suggestions that come from her Loyalty Touchstones, and look warily on those that her Conviction Touchstones offer up. If a Conviction Touchstone is trying to socially maneuver the Deviant, she suffers a penalty equal to the Deviant's Conviction Trait. Likewise, when the Broken's Loyalty Touchstone is trying to spur her to act a certain way, she receives a number of bonus dice equal to the Deviant's Loyalty. Conviction and Loyalty also impact the Deviant's Doors in social maneuvering (p. XX).
- Having a Touchstone adds a level of solidity to the Renegade's actions concerning that person. All Deviants share the Stubborn Resolve Adaptation (p. XX), which helps them resist supernatural mental influence when acting in support of a Touchstone. In addition, social maneuvering meant to support or
- Renegades with the Progenitor Merit receive a Touchstone that can't be discarded. However, the Renegade's relationship with that Progenitor can fluctuate between Loyalty and Conviction over the course of her story. If the Renegade acts against the trait her Progenitor is associated with, she still rolls Faltering as normal, but may not lose the Touchstone. However, when the Touchstone would become Wavering, she may instead move it to the other trait (Loyalty to Conviction or Conviction to Loyalty) to prevent it from becoming Wavering.

The Devoted

Devoted believe in their conspiracies' aims, and in many ways have opposing goals and experiences than their Renegade kin. This is reflected in how they approach Loyalty and Conviction.

Devoted characters begin with three dots in Loyalty and one in Conviction. However, they apply their Origin's traits the same as Renegades. An Elective Devotee begins with 4 Loyalty and 1 Conviction, for example.

For the Devoted, the benefits of upholding Loyalty and Conviction are the opposite of Renegades. After a scene during which the Devoted pursued his Loyalty, he gains a Willpower and a Beat; upholding his Conviction restores his full Willpower pool once per chapter. Although their Scars and Instabilities still increase the same way Renegades' do when they Falter, Devoted have access to help and treatment from their conspiracies that make those things more manageable.

Touchstones and Stability

The Broken's Touchstones are what keeps the ground under her feet solid, and what sates her soul, either by offering a safe, calm place for her worries, or by letting her fury and frustrations run free. When her actions make her Touchstones waver, or force her to reevaluate her worldview, her stability is threatened. Most events that mete out Instability or heal it are related to the Deviant's interactions with her Touchstones (p. XX).

Sample Touchstones

Below are some sample Touchstones a Renegade might focus on. Though they're divided up between Loyalty and Conviction, they contain elements of story hooks for each, signaling the Touchstone's potential to move between the two traits over the course of the story.

Loyalty

The Childhood Friend: She's known you forever. That awful haircut in second grade? She gave you her hat to cover it up. When your girlfriend dumped you in front of the whole cafeteria, she came to your house and listened to sad songs with you for hours. She knew all your secrets back then, so when they took you and changed you, she's the one you knew would still recognize you despite the things they'd done. She used to say she'd help you hide the bodies. Back then, it was a joke.

The Co-worker: You sat next to each other in the cube farm for years, went out for the occasional post-work drink, but that was about it. When you stopped showing up at the office, you figured the only person who missed you was your boss, and only because he had to do your tedious paperwork until he found a replacement. But when the doorbell rang, your ex-coworker was there with a six-pack in one hand and a laptop in the other, ready to get to work.

The Ex-lover: You were good together, at first. Things were better in bed than out of it, though, and after a while, that wasn't enough to sustain either of you. Still, you stayed in touch, maybe even hooked up a few times. You helped him through bad breakups. He helped you through your Divergence. He tells it like it is, whether you want to hear it or not, and that's exactly what you need from him.

The Frenemy: You were never quite sure if he genuinely liked you, or if he was only nice to you because circumstances made you rivals. Academically, professionally, wherever either of you went, there the other was, climbing the same damned ladder to the top. He knows your habits and your weaknesses, how determined you can be and what distracts you from your goals. Competing with him made you try harder, and you both became experts in your field. When you went to ground, they deactivated all your clearances. His keycard, however, still works.

The Mentee: She's so smart it's painful. She reminds you of yourself when you were her age: young and bright and so optimistic. You try not to let her see too much of what the world — and the conspiracies — have done to you, but. Well. She's so smart. If she hasn't picked up on it already, she will soon enough, and that terrifies you. Curiosity got you into this. You don't want to imagine her being lured down the same path.

The Partner in Crime: If it wasn't nailed down, you two stole it. Hell, even if it was. Didn't matter what — jewelry, cash, weird artifacts from the museum — you could get in, take the prize, and get out undetected. The pay was good, but the thrill was what mattered, and the best part was, you were a team. Since you were Remade, it's been a little different. You're more careful about which jobs you take, but she's willing to let you call the shots. It also doesn't hurt that your Variations make the heists go that much smoother.

The Research Assistant: He did all the boring bits, and you got all the glory. He was right there with you as you made the interesting discoveries, but it was your name that got published in the academic journals. He didn't mind, though; he was in it for the science and the opportunity to learn from one of the best. When you drank the serum, he stood there, clipboard poised. When you came to three days later, he was there, notes in hand.

The Roommate: You pulled a tab off a flyer at the bar: "Roommate Wanted. Requirements: Don't Suck." Apparently you passed muster, because she offered you the room. She keeps odd hours and mostly sticks in her room when she's home, but she keeps the medicine cabinet stocked with migraine medicine for when your headaches get bad, and doesn't complain when

members of your cohort crash on the couch. Last week, she got rid of the Devoted who came knocking, no questions asked.

Conviction

The Company Man: "I just work here," he said, as he helped them strap you down. "You know how it is." Maybe he didn't know what the procedure entailed. Maybe he didn't know what it did to you, after. But he sure as hell knew you didn't want to be there. You were quite vocal about that. What if he'd stood up for you? What if one goddamned person in that goddamned place had said "NO," had said "stop," had done anything other than smile politely and avert their eyes?

The Cultist: You're not sure she even knew your name. She asked for it, sure, along with your date of birth — down to the hour — and whether the sight of blood made you squeamish. Those were the important bits. Maybe if you'd been born under different stars, she'd have moved on to someone else, but you were the one she picked to be a vessel for her god on Earth. You never got her name, but oh, you remember her face.

The Operating Theater: You smell it in your dreams, that gagging antiseptic stench mixed with the acrid smell of bone as the saw bites in. The doctors' faces are blurs in the crowd, looking down on you dispassionately. To them, you were only a thing, like a skeleton or a cadaver, only they needed a specimen whose heart still beat. You never want to go back there, but every time you close your eyes you're on that gurney again. Maybe, if that room was gone, your nightmares would stop, too.

The Progenitor: It doesn't matter that she needed an entire organization and its infrastructure to make her experiments possible. It doesn't matter that a dozen other people witnessed the ritual. Anyone else, they were bystanders or cogs in a machine, but this person, this one, solitary individual — she's the one who did this to you. Maybe she convinced you it was a fantastic idea beforehand, that you'd be yourself-but-better after it was done. Maybe she pointed her heavies at you and said "That one." However it went down, she's the one responsible for your Divergence and all that came after, and you're going to make her pay for what she did to you.

The Recruiter: He had a bright smile and a pocketful of pamphlets. The study offered money at a time when you were strapped for cash, or access to a group of people you could share your worries with and not be judged. He had an answer for every question you asked — honest and smart and informative answers, not hedges and half-truths. He charmed you, just a bit. You let him. Did he buy what he was selling? You don't know. Did he know what they'd do to you, once you signed their forms? You don't care. You're going to find him, and cramming those pamphlets down his throat will just be the start.

The Thief: Her science was at least two years behind yours. There's no way she caught up that fast. She didn't have the resources, and you'd read her white papers — she was on the wrong track, but you weren't going to correct her. Then one day she was breathing down your neck, discovery-wise, and you knew the only way that was possible was if she'd gotten access to your lab and stolen your research. There wasn't time for animal trials or any safety precautions: if she beat you to it, she'd get the patents and the money and the fame, and you'd be a footnote. You went straight to testing on human subjects: yourself. If you'd had time for animal trials and tests, maybe you wouldn't be in such constant agony. But you had to do this. She forced your hand.

Stability

Stability measures the extent and progression of a Deviant's mutations as she retreats farther from human society and loses control of her powers. After her Divergence, a Remade must relearn who she is and what she stands for. Her world has fundamentally changed — not only due to those alterations brought about by her Variations and Scars, but by that part of her soul they've broken as they anchored in.

She also works to control her Variations. Getting a grasp on her powers is essential: she needs to keep them in check to avoid harming innocents and be able to unleash them on the conspiracies that hunt her. When a Variation fails or responds in an erratic manner, the results can be catastrophic. The Deviant's body reacts, her Scars intensifying in response to the power fluctuation or to the Renegade's own panicked reaction. Sometimes, she can get them back under control, by focusing on the things that ground her. She protects her loved ones. She pours her rage into dismantling the conspiracy. If a Deviant is unable to rein in her Instabilities, she risks a horrifying spiral that leads to further mutation, madness, and possibly, death.

When the character neglects her Touchstones or feels her carefully constructed sense of self shaken, her Stability is wounded and she gains an Instability. Instabilities are measured in three degrees of severity: minor, medium, and major.

When the character has taken sufficient levels of Instability, her Scars grow more severe and difficult to control. Minor Instabilities aren't always immediately obvious. Scars flare up more often, and Involuntary Variations (p. XX) rage out of control longer. Most Deviants regard minor Instabilities as an ever-present, if unwelcome, companion. Few remain completely free of Instability for long, if ever.

Medium Instabilities get harder to overlook. Like a mole that is noticeably larger than it was a week ago or a mysterious lump where no lump should be, such Instabilities make themselves a constant source of worry for the Remade. He might try to shrug off the increased frequency of memories glitching on him as simply being distracted. He can hide smaller wounds and subtle changes to his body by dressing carefully to conceal any unusual growths. But no matter how much he tries to pretend everything is normal, the Broken recognizes these are signs that something is seriously wrong.

Major Instabilities are impossible to ignore, representing as they do a truly existential threat to the Deviant. Each such injury to the Remade's fractured soul comes with a new Scar, symptoms that worsen exponentially with each new spiritual tumor. Many Broken never fully recover from a major Instability, for such damage is exceptionally stubborn.

Marking Instability

The character's Stability track contains a number of boxes equal to $5 +$ his Acclimation.

Instabilities are marked off from left to right, with the most severe injuries in the leftmost box, pushing the least severe further to the right as injuries accrue. When healing Instabilities, the rightmost boxes are healed first, progressing to the left.

At the start of a story, the character marks off a number of minor Instabilities equal to the Magnitude of her highest Variation.

When a character suffers a minor Instability, mark it with a slash (/) in the empty box farthest to the left on her Stability track.

When a character suffers a medium Instability, mark it with an X in the box farthest to the left that doesn't already contain a medium or major Instability. If this marks over a minor Instability, that minor Instability moves one box to the right.

When a character suffers a major Instability, mark it with a large asterisk (*) in the box farthest to the left that doesn't already contain a major Instability. If this marks over a medium or minor Instability, those shift to the right.

Example: Peter has eight boxes in his Stability track (5 plus his Acclimation of 3.) He has failed to help out one of his Loyalty Touchstones, and has to test for Faltering, granting him a minor Instability. His Stability boxes look like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES, WITH A \ IN THE BOX FARTEST TO THE LEFT, LIKE THE HEALTH TRACK EXAMPLE ON P. 95 OF THE CHRONICLES OF DARKNESS CORE BOOK.]]

If he later takes a medium Instability, his Stability boxes look like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES, WITH AN X IN THE THE BOX FARTEST TO THE LEFT AND A \ IN THE ONE NEXT TO IT, AS ON P. 95 OF THE COD CORE]]

If he then takes a major Instability, his Stability boxes look like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES, WITH A LARGE ASTERISK IN THE BOX FARTEST TO THE LEFT, AN X IN THE NEXT BOX, AND A \ IN THE THIRD BOX, AS ON P. 95 OF THE COD CORE.]]

Upgrading Instability

If the character's Stability track is filled with minor Instabilities, each subsequent minor Instability she receives upgrades the leftmost Instability from minor to medium. Turn the slash farthest to the left into an X.

Example: After a particularly bad week filled with setbacks and frustration, Peter has filled his Stability track with minor Instabilities. His boxes look like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES, WITH A SLASH IN EVERY BOX.]]

While chasing after a Devoted, he suffers a Dramatic Failure when he attempts to activate one of his Variations. This gives him a new minor Instability, but since his track is already full, the leftmost minor Instability on the track becomes a medium one:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES, WITH AN X IN THE FIRST BOX ON THE LEFT AND A SLASH IN THE SEVEN REMAINING BOXES.]]

If the character's Stability track is filled with medium Instabilities, each subsequent Instability she receives upgrades an existing medium Instability to a major one. Turn the X farthest to the left into an asterisk.

Consequences

Unlike Health (p. XX) Stability has no wound penalties. However, the number of Instabilities marked off does have mechanical effects:

- Every minor, medium, or major Instability in the last (rightmost) five boxes imposes a 1-die penalty on Scar Resistance rolls (p. XX).
- Every medium or major Instability in the last five boxes adds one Magnitude to a Scar. This cannot create new Scars.
- For every major Instability in the last five boxes, the player must choose a new, unentangled Scar. This Scar's Magnitude must adhere to the rules for new unentangled Scars (p. XX).
- If the rightmost box is filled with a major Instability, the characters' mutations have progressed too far beyond his ability to adapt or heal, and he gains the End Stage Condition (p. XX).

Stabilizer

A character with the Stabilizer Merit (p. XX) possesses an item or receives a treatment that blunts some of the impact of Instability and helps keep certain Scars under control.

As Instabilities only carry consequences when adding Magnitude to Scars in the last five boxes, dots in Acclimation give the character additional Stability boxes she can fill with no consequences attached.

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE FIRST BOX, XS IN BOX TWO AND THREE, AND SLASHES IN THE LAST FIVE.]]

Example: Peter has suffered a major Instability, two medium Instabilities, and five minor ones. Because he has an Acclimation of three, this means that only his Scars linked to an Involuntary Variation increase by a Magnitude of 1. As all of his medium and major Instabilities are currently in the three boxes on the left, his other Scars stay at the same Magnitude.

Later in the scene, Peter tries to activate one of his Variations and suffers a Dramatic Failure, adding a minor Instability to his Stability track. It now looks like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE FIRST BOX, XS IN BOX TWO, THREE, AND FOUR, AND SLASHES IN THE LAST FOUR.]]

Since his track was full of minor Instabilities, the leftmost minor Instability was upgraded to medium, which places a medium Instability in one of the last five boxes. Peter must now add one Magnitude to a Scar.

Causes

Instability rears its head when the Remade feels her grasp on her humanity slip. It stems from a loss of control, either over her powers or in her ability to navigate her relationships with her Touchstones. The following situations create Instability:

- At the start of a story, the character marks off a number of minor Instabilities equal to the Magnitude of her highest Variation.

- At the end of each chapter during which the character did not further one or more Touchstones, the character suffers a minor Instability.
- A Dramatic Failure on a Scar Finesse or Scar Resistance roll (p. XX) causes a minor Instability.
- A Success or a Failure result on a Faltering roll causes a minor Instability, while a Dramatic Failure causes a medium Instability.
- The death (or permanent destruction) of a Loyalty Touchstone causes a medium Instability.

Additionally, some Scars, Variations, and Adaptations may inflict Instability, leading the Deviant toward a dangerous spiral of Instability and mutation unless she finds a way to halt its progress.

Healing Instability

Instabilities do not simply heal with time. The blows to a Remade's psyche require more than just thinking about what she did, or giving herself some distance from the act. In fact, withdrawing from human contact only exacerbates her Instability. Instead, the transformed must actively work to shore up her relationships with and her approaches to her Touchstones. By acting in support of her Loyalty Touchstones or pursuing her Conviction Touchstones, she pulls herself back toward more stable spiritual ground, and her mind and body respond in kind. The mutations she's suffered recede, and her control over her Variations returns.

- Once per scene, acting in concert with her Conviction Touchstone heals one minor Instability or downgrades a medium Instability to minor.
- Once per scene, acting in support of her Loyalty Touchstone heals one medium or minor Instability.
- Killing or otherwise permanently destroying a Conviction Touchstone heals one major, medium, or minor Instability.
- By gaining a new permanent Scar, the Deviant may downgrade one major Instability to medium, or heal one medium or minor Instability (p. XX). This is limited to once per chapter and is not available once all Stability boxes are filled with major Instability.

Example: Peter's Stability track looks like this:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE LEFTMOST BOX, AN XS IN THE NEXT BOX, AND A / IN THE NEXT TWO BOXES.]]

Peter has tracked down his hated Progenitor (and Conviction Touchstone) and tailed him to his lab. Peter isn't ready to confront him yet, but he did catch the passcode to the lab's rear door and plans to visit after hours. He's confident he's one step closer to shutting his Progenitor's operation down. Because he's acted against his Conviction Touchstone, he can heal a minor Instability:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE LEFTMOST BOX, AN XS IN THE NEXT BOX, AND A / IN THE NEXT BOX.]]

Before he has a chance to go to the lab, though, Peter gets a frantic phone call from Carol, his childhood friend and a Loyalty Touchstone. He goes to her aid and resolves the crisis that prompted the call. Because he has acted in support of a Loyalty Touchstone, he heals a medium Instability:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN ASTERISK IN THE LEFTMOST BOX AND A / IN THE NEXT BOX.]]

Peter breaks into the lab, hoping to catch his Progenitor by surprise and kill him, which would heal a major Instability (for destroying a Conviction Touchstone):

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN / IN THE LEFTMOST BOX.]]

Matters go poorly, however, and his Progenitor escapes. The Scar the major Instability has been worsening has become difficult for Peter to cope with, though. He wants to eliminate that major Instability. He develops a new Scar, permanently worsening his Broken condition but downgrading the major Instability to medium:

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH AN X IN THE LEFTMOST BOX AND A / IN THE NEXT BOX.]]

The next time Peter helps Carol out of whatever trouble has come to her, he can heal the remaining medium Instability.

[[PLEASE CREATE A LINE OF EIGHT BOXES WITH A / IN THE LEFTMOST BOX.]]

In addition to the Renegade working to uphold his Touchstones, some Variations, Scars, Conditions, and Merits may also grant him the ability to heal an Instability.

Normally, when Instability heals, the increased Magnitude of Scars and any new Scars go away. However, a player may choose to permanently increase the Magnitude of one, some, or all Variations entangled with that Scar (which does not cost Experiences), or to spend Experiences to choose a new Variation to entangle it with (see p. XX). This purchase can be made mid-scene, when the Instability first occurs, or after the dust has settled. In either case, once the Instability heals, the Scar's Magnitude remains at its new rating.

End Stage Condition

The Divergence has reached a terminal stage, as new mutations proliferate and existing ones worsen beyond the capacity of the human mind and body to compensate for them. Any of the Deviant's Magnitude 5 Variations (as well as those of lower Magnitude that represent the maximum Magnitude for that Variation) exceed their usual capabilities and activate immediately. A character with Gigantic 5 might grow to Size 30, for example, or a per-scene, per-chapter, or per-story limit might not apply to a Variation that normally has one. Although this can be potent, it is primarily a narrative effect — the explosive power of a supernova that will leave only a dead star behind.

Unless the character resolves this Condition by the end of the current chapter, he dies. No medical intervention, Variation, or supernatural influence can prevent or reverse this death. The forces at work are too much for the human body to bear, and the Deviant's cracked soul shatters beyond repair.

Possible Sources: Suffering a major Instability in the character's rightmost Stability box.

Resolution: Heal a major Instability by destroying a Conviction Touchstone.

Forms

No two Broken are exactly alike, but some Remade are more unlike their kind than others. By default, a Deviant has a single, nearly human mind, his Variations do not possess a will of their own, his condition is not contagious, and he is a Renegade who is not directly responsible for his Divergence. **Forms** represent cases where some or all of these are not true.

Like Clades, Forms color the Remade's Scars and Variations. They do not cost Experiences, nor are they mutually exclusive. One of the Broken may be both Self-Made and a Symbiote.

However, with a few exceptions handled within the story and subject to Storyteller approval, any Forms must be chosen during character creation. Each Form comes with special rules. The most common Forms are Amalgam, Devoted, Self-Made, Symbiote, and Transmittable. The rules for Devoted are covered in Chapter Five (p. XX).

Amalgam

Before the Divergence, the Broken was two or more distinct, sapient beings, and his memories are a patchwork of their experiences. Most Amalgams consist solely of human partners, but some are people fused with supernatural creatures from this world or stranger ones. Most Amalgams involve the combination of two beings. However, some are a gestalt of three, five, or even a hundred formerly distinct creatures.

Amalgam personalities are usually a seamless fusion of their source material, recombining traits so that the Deviant's temperament resembles a child born of the amalgamated beings. Some can identify whose memories originally belonged to whom, while others find it impossible to tell the difference anymore.

Systems: During character creation, the Amalgam's player may reduce the number of Skill dots available to him by no more than six (from 22 to 16). Each dot sacrificed grants the Amalgam access to a like number of temporary Skill dots each chapter, which can be used to gain a new Skill or raise an existing Skill (to a maximum rating of five dots). Such knowledge fades at the end of the scene. These floating Skill dots can be called upon one at a time, all at once, or anywhere in between, and they can be stacked onto a single Skill or spread out across multiple Skills.

Self-Made

Unlike the vast majority of transformed, the Self-Made has no one but herself to blame for her Divergence. Self-Made are their own Progenitors and so cannot purchase the Progenitor Merit (see p. XX). Some used themselves as a test subject. Others were meddling with forces beyond their understanding and fell victim to accident. Many Self-Made do not immediately come to the attention of a conspiracy, unless they already belonged to one. This means that although the experience of Divergence is as traumatic for the Self-Made as it is for other Broken, they often have an opportunity to shape their response to this singular experience in a thoughtful way. This is very different from other Deviants, who usually begin their new lives with a desperate grasping at any social connection that will keep them from drowning in Instability.

Systems: During character creation, the Self-Made's player may opt to begin play with an alternate distribution of Conviction and Loyalty dots. The Loyalty/Conviction dot granted by the transformed's Origin remains, but she may assign the other four dots in any combination of Loyalty and Conviction. She may even choose not to assign some or all of these starting dots, establishing Touchstones during play (p. XX). The Broken must have at least one Touchstone when play begins.

In addition, the Self-Made will not become Feral as long as she has at least one Wavering Touchstone. However, if she has one or more Wavering Touchstones and only one empty Touchstone slot, her player cannot select a new Wavering Touchstone.

Symbiote

The Deviant's Variations have a mind of their own. He may draw power from a demon that has been bound to him, for example, or maybe his cybernetic implants occasionally override his commands. This consciousness can be an invaluable ally where its goals and personality mesh with the Remade's own, but it can pose a significant liability when he attempts to act contrary to its wishes. Some sapient manifestations of occult power are open with the Deviant regarding these desires. Others are more secretive or simply less able to communicate their needs to him.

Systems: During character creation, the Symbiote's player chooses the complexity of the motives the Deviant's Variations possess — expressed as one or two short-term Aspirations and/or one long-term Aspiration. The Symbiote's player does not choose the specifics of these Aspirations (that is the purview of the Storyteller) — only the number and type. While these resemble the Aspirations of Baseline humans (p. XX), the motives of a Symbiote's Variations can be as alien as the power that grants them.

Once per chapter, when the Deviant makes a roll related to activating or controlling a Variation, the entity may choose to involve itself if doing so would further its motives (or if failing to do so would thwart its desires). This grants a bonus or imposes a penalty based on the type of motive involved:

[BEGIN TABLE]

Furtheres a long-term Aspiration: +/-1

Resolves a short-term Aspiration: +/-3

Resolves a long-term Aspiration: +/-5

[END TABLE]

If multiple motives apply to the situation, use only the most potent. Ordinarily, the Storyteller chooses which roll is affected, but the Symbiote may attempt to convince it to use its influence at a particular time with an appropriate Social action — typically a task of from a single turn to a few minutes.

If the entity successfully resolves an Aspiration, the Storyteller may choose a new one.

Chimeric vs. Amalgam vs. Symbiote vs. Alternate Persona

All of these reflect different beings (or parts of them) coexisting within a single Deviant, but they do so in distinct ways:

A **Chimeric** fusion involves multiple species and is usually physical, although some Hybrids retain elements of the donor's personality or even a few memories. Moreover, the comingling is frequently unequal, capturing a few traits of one species and implanting them into another.

An **Amalgam** fusion involves multiple sapient beings and is usually mental. Their memories are a patchwork, but their mingled personalities are perfectly harmonious.

A **Symbiote** fusion involves multiple motives contained within a single body — sometimes in harmony, sometimes opposed. However, the symbiote does not exercise direct control over the Deviant's body.

The **Alternate Persona Scar** (p. XX) reflects personalities that share control over a body, with each consciousness spending some time in the pilot's seat.

Transmissible

Some forms of Divergence are contagious. They spread like a disease, potentially infecting anyone with whom the Transmissible has contact.

Most Transmissible forms of Divergence pass along ordinary vectors of disease — through transfusions of blood or other bodily fluids. Others pass on their condition through their Scars and Variations, exposing targets or nearby humans to infection each time the Deviant calls upon her occult abilities. In rare cases, the vector is mystical — passing along bonds of sympathy or ties of fate, for example, or exposing to potential Divergence anyone who dreams of the Remade. In cases where Variations are a vector, it can affect one, some, or all of the Deviant's Variations, as determined during character creation. Vectors are not mutually exclusive. A Transmissible can have both claws that carry her disease and infectious blood.

A Transmissible's virulence determines the amount of exposure that is required to carry her disease. In most cases, this Form follows the examples of real world diseases. Casual exposure to the vector is sometimes but not always enough to allow the infection to take root. This includes a successful attack with a Lash (see p. XX) if that Variation is a vector. A minority of Transmissibles are much easier to transmit. A single drop of blood that gets on a papercut is enough, for example. The remainder are barely infectious, such as those requiring a considerable transfusion of blood via I.V. or a nearly fatal attack with a Lash.

In some cases, a Transmissible is not contagious all the time along her usual vectors. It might be that her illness can only be passed during a full moon, or perhaps she is only contagious while submerged in water or when exposed to elevated levels of radiation. Further, these occult diseases sometimes permit countermeasures that allow a potential victim to neutralize them before their symptoms manifest. This could be as straightforward as applying sanitizing lotion to any skin exposed to the disease, but it might instead be an antidote brewed from occult compounds. Such remedies prevent symptoms from manifesting.

Once exposed, most Deviant contagions have an onset period before symptoms manifest. This usually ranges from a few hours to a couple of days, with some variation depending on the victim's natural resistance. In rare cases, symptoms do not appear until months after exposure, or else they manifest almost immediately, within a few seconds of contact with the occult disease.

The symptoms of a Transmissible's contagion vary from one strain to the next. Some resemble cold or flu symptoms, differing from these ordinary-seeming complaints only if a victim suffers spontaneous Divergence. More extreme strains mimic serious diseases or even replicate one or more of the Transmissible's Scars. With very rare exceptions, a victim of this disease is not contagious unless and until he suffers the Divergence.

Once symptoms begin to manifest, a victim has some ability to fight off the infection naturally — whether biologically, psychically, or spiritually. Contagious Divergences vary in the systems they attack in the victim and the difficulty of fighting them off. For most of these diseases, a victim who successfully fends off one infection is forever immune to that strain of transmissible Divergence.

If the victim fails to resist the disease, he suffers Divergence. This typically takes several days or weeks, but the metamorphosis can be more rapid (a few seconds) or gradual (several months). A Remade created in such a way has no inherent loyalty to the Transmissible and is as likely as any potential Deviant to die during or shortly after the Divergence.

Systems: Infection only affects those humans who are capable of Divergence, so most supernatural beings are immune to this occult disease. During character creation, the Transmissible's player details the vector, virulence, and other attributes of her occult contagion. If some but not all the Transmissible's Variations are vectors, her player may decide whether any new Variation the Transmissible later develops is also a vector.

During character creation, the Transmissible's player also decides the dice pool a victim uses to overcome the contagion. This can be any combination of two Resistance Attributes (including duplicate Attributes) or a single Resistance Attribute. In the first case, the roll is usually extended, with an interval and target number determined by the player during character creation — but never more than 15 successes, and five successes is typical. In the second case, a single success prevents Divergence.

Catharsis

Renegade Deviants are largely defined by their enemies. Although they can forge bonds of sentiment to establish Loyalty Touchstones, most Renegades have significantly more Conviction Touchstones — people whose destruction the Broken seeks. Obeying this drive to destroy, to raze to dust the lives of those who have wronged him, allows the Renegade to maintain a grim equilibrium, but doing so is messy, to say nothing of bloody.

Occasionally, and usually by accident (at least initially), one of the Remade bucks this trend. A Renegade successfully destroys all or most of those who have wronged her, for example, leaving her the leisure to focus on the bonds of loyalty she has forged. Alternatively, she still has enemies left on her list of vendettas, but she has accumulated so many people for whose well-being she cares that the drive to protect and serve eclipses her natural inclination to kill and destroy.

Such Renegades have more opportunities to engage with Loyalty Touchstones in ways that push back Instability (see p. XX). Moreover, this arrangement affords the Deviant's Variations greater stability, preventing her Scars from worsening.

Causes and Effects of Catharsis

Whenever a Renegade's Loyalty exceeds her Conviction, she achieves a state of **Catharsis**, becomes a **Guardian**, and enjoys the following benefits:

- The Guardian regains one additional point of Willpower per day, even if she does not get a night of restful sleep.
- The Guardian does not suffer automatic minor Instabilities at the beginning of each story.
- The Guardian heals one minor Instability at the beginning of each chapter.

Returning to Earth

It is difficult for Renegades to remain in a state of Catharsis. Even a Guardian who sincerely wishes to set aside his life of revenge seldom receives that opportunity. Conspiracies watch for such "retired" Remade and take steps to recruit them. Most employ the usual tactics of capture, imprisonment, and coercion to force the Deviant to serve. Others are not so direct. They might abduct the Guardian's Loyalty Touchstones to ensure his cooperation, for example, or else they might convince or coerce these allies into betraying him in large ways or small. More insidiously, a conspiracy might send agents to befriend the Remade such that they become Loyalty Touchstones who can exert pressure on the Guardian to ally himself with the conspiracy — turning him into one of the Devoted.

Guardians fall out of the state of Catharsis in one of two ways:

- If a Guardian's Loyalty is at least two higher than her Conviction, and at least one Loyalty Touchstone belongs to a conspiracy, the Deviant's player may convert her to one of the Devoted, gaining the Devoted Form (see p. XX). A Guardian who becomes Devoted exits the state of Catharsis at the end of the chapter.
- If the Guardian's Conviction equals or exceeds his Loyalty, the Remade loses the state of Catharsis immediately.

Regardless of the impetus, leaving Guardianship causes the Deviant to Falter in both Loyalty and Conviction (see p. XX).

The Devoted and Fury

The Devoted (see p. XX) are mirror twins of their Renegade siblings. They are just as capable of bottomless hatred, but that is not the focus of their desperate need to forge connections with those around them. Rather, it is their obsessive, and at times possessive, love that sustains them from one day to the next.

Like Renegades, some Devoted — usually by happenstance or through the machinations of others — defy this generalization. Some find themselves beset on all sides by enemies and so forge Conviction Touchstones too quickly for the Deviant to resolve them. Others are survivors of attacks that kill all or most of the people they cared about, leaving them hollowed out except for their desire for revenge.

Whenever a Devoted's Conviction exceeds her Loyalty, she attains a state of **Fury** and becomes a **Nemesis**. Although most eventually heed the call to return to the arms of a conspiracy, while the Devoted remains a Nemesis he finds that his hatred insulates him from Instability and hardens his resolve. Mechanically, Fury is attained and provides the same benefits as Catharsis except with Loyalty and Conviction reversed. A Nemesis falls from the state of Fury in one of two ways:

- If one of the Nemesis' Loyalty Touchstones betrays him to the point of becoming a Conviction Touchstone, and if this betrayal leaves him with a Conviction at least two higher than his Loyalty, the Deviant's player may convert her to one of the Renegades. This causes the Nemesis to lose the Devoted Form, and he exits the state of Fury at the end of the chapter.
- The Nemesis' Loyalty exceeds his Conviction. The Remade loses the state of Fury immediately.

Self-Made Guardians and Nemeses

Many Self-Made (see p. XX) — Renegade and Devoted alike — achieve these states not long after their Divergence. Few can maintain their grip on Catharsis or Fury for long, however. Once the conspiracies come calling, this coveted equilibrium is almost certain to slip. The Self-Made Guardian finds herself hounded by people and organizations that refuse to take no for an answer, and eventually some of these wrong her enough to qualify as Conviction Touchstones. The Self-Made Devoted, meanwhile, finds himself courted by a conspiracy, and eventually he forms bonds with enough of his new associates that his Loyalty Touchstones outnumber his Conviction Touchstones.

Losing Everything

A Remade who resolves or loses all his Touchstones becomes a Feral (see p. XX) — regardless of whether he is a Renegade or Devoted. Deprived of any means of healing Instabilities, these wretched beings seldom last long before their Scars consume them.

Acclimation

The Divergence is an extremely traumatic experience — one that taxes the victim's body, mind, and spirit. Most people subjected to this metamorphosis do not survive long enough to live new lives as Deviants. Many simply expire in the face of the intense supernatural power flowing through them. Others rapidly deteriorate as their internal organs rupture, cancerous tumors proliferate, or their brains suffer enough damage to place them in a permanent vegetative state.

Most conspiracies that stumble upon a reliable method of creating transformed only see one success per twenty or twenty-five test subjects, with the remainder either dying on the operating table or simply failing to develop any remarkable talents in exchange for the scars the procedure inflicts upon them. Even those conspiracies that have identified and screen for traits that greatly increase the likelihood of producing a Deviant fall far short of a one hundred percent success rate.

Remade who survive the Divergence without immediately descending into a cascading and ultimately fatal cycle of supernatural instability suffer new challenges. With their souls shattered, their capacity to form ordinary human connections blasted away, and their bodies and minds forever scarred, many new Broken become casualties of the Divergence's secondary effects. Nearly half choose suicide by the most expedient means available within a few months of transformation. Others fail to form bonds with Touchstones and quickly become Ferals (see p. XX). Most of the rest can be compelled to imprint loyalty, joining the ranks of the Devoted. However, there are always a few Deviants in any large batch of surviving test subjects whose anger and thirst for vengeance places them among the Renegades.

The period shortly after the Remade establishes her Touchstones is among the most important of her whole life. Not only is she experimenting with her Variations and testing their limits, she is re-establishing her whole identity and relationship to those around her. She faces fundamental questions about the nature of the world as much of what she took for granted lies shattered.

This is not a comfortable process of self-discovery. It is the lifelong vegetarian finding that he can no longer digest anything but raw meat. It is the jazz musician who one day discovers that all music sounds like noise to her ears. Personality traits the Broken has taken for granted his whole life suddenly feel like they belong to someone else, and continuing to act in accordance with them is the act of an imposter, a fraud. Regaining a new sense of normal after the Divergence demands substantial effort and adequate time for self-reflection. For most Renegades, this is a luxury they are unlikely to enjoy often (if ever), but those who manage to do so can greatly increase their longevity — putting off the madness and death of instability a little bit longer.

Acclimation is a trait that reflects the degree to which the Deviant has explored her new nature — learned how her Variations work, probed the limits imposed by her Scars, and established a means of leaning on Touchstones to prevent further degeneration. Most Remade begin play with no dots in Acclimation, representing just enough familiarity with the arcane forces flowing through them to prevent rapid physical and cognitive deterioration. A Deviant can raise her Acclimation to as high as five dots during play. Acclimation has several important effects:

- A Remade has dots of Stability (see p. XX) equal to five plus Acclimation.
- Whenever the Broken wishes to activate a Controlled Variation (p. XX) or target a Directed Variation (p. XX), the player must succeed on a Scar Finesse roll (p. XX), which includes Acclimation in its dice total.
- Certain Scars allow the Deviant to limit or suppress some of their effects with a successful Scar Resistance roll (p. XX), which includes Acclimation in its dice total and suffers a penalty based on Instability (p. XX).
- The Deviant's Supernatural Tolerance is equal to the rating of her highest-Magnitude Variation plus Acclimation.
- If the Remade engages in a Clash of Wills with another supernatural being, her player's dice pool is equal to the Magnitude of the Variation plus Acclimation.

Increasing Acclimation

Acclimation cannot be improved by simply spending Experiences. The Remade must be in a state of equilibrium with her Divergence and must have begun to explore new capabilities within herself. The Broken must not be suffering from any medium or major Instability and must have at least five Experiences available. A Remade's Acclimation may only increase once per chapter.

Character Advancement

Characters in **Deviant: The Renegades** advance through a system of "Experiences." Players spend Experiences to increase and buy new character traits. Experiences are earned by accruing "Beats," which are small elements of drama in the plot. These Beats come through fulfilling Aspirations, making progress toward a Conviction Touchstone, through good and bad things happening to characters, and resolving minor plot hurdles called Conditions.

Beats

Beats are measures of drama in the Storytelling system. Five Beats become one Experience, one significant moment able to advance your character. You receive Beats for multiple things in the course of the story. Scars, Aspirations, Conviction Touchstones, and Conditions are the most common ways to achieve Beats, but numerous others exist. Here are the main ways this occurs:

- Whenever one of your Scars creates a significant story complication for you or your cohort, take a Beat.
- Any time you resolve an Aspiration, take a Beat.
- Any time you resolve or make progress toward a Conviction Touchstone, take a Beat.
- At the end of every chapter (game session), take a Beat.
- Any time you resolve a Condition, take a Beat.
- When you fail a roll, you can opt to make it a dramatic failure and take a Beat.
- Any major dramatic event the Storyteller deems appropriate can award a Beat.

You can only receive one Beat from a given category in a given scene. If you resolve three Conditions in a scene, for example, you only receive one Beat. However, if the moment is particularly dramatic, or you've made significant sacrifice to trigger multiple Beats, the Storyteller can award multiple Beats.

Beats are pooled with those of other players. At the end of any chapter, each player gets an equal share of the pooled Beats. If there are leftover Beats, the troupe may choose either to carry the remainder to the next chapter or to award these extra Beats to one or more characters based on whatever criteria the players find acceptable. Some troupes might award an extra Beat to a player whose character was particularly important to the chapter. Others might give excess Beats to a player so that her character will be able to purchase a trait, such as a Merit or Skill, that will benefit the whole cohort. Some may simply take turns.

Aspiration

Choose one Aspiration. This is a goal you wish to achieve during the upcoming chapter. If you complete this objective, take a Beat. If you do not resolve the Aspiration before the end of the current chapter, you can keep it for the next chapter or swap it out between chapters for a new Aspiration.

Aspirations exist as a way to measure and express advancement toward goals other than pursuing Conviction Touchstones and suffering from Scars. They also convey the players' intentions to the Storyteller so that he can incorporate the Aspirations into the current chapter. Aspirations can be reasonably specific ("Stake out the warehouse to identify a likely employee to abduct and interrogate."), but general, or even somewhat vague, Aspirations will be more common ("Fortify my base of operations against intruders."). It is easier to fulfill a general Aspiration than a specific one — in part because it gives the Storyteller more latitude in how to provide you with the opportunity to do so.

As a Storyteller, make an effort to give players a chance to fulfill an Aspiration each chapter. If a player chooses an Aspiration that is unrealistic, don't hesitate to say so and let her choose a new one before the chapter begins. And when it comes to the question of whether or not a player fulfilled an Aspiration, always lean towards allowing it.

When an Aspiration is fulfilled, after the scene you can swap it out for another one. Usually in resolving an Aspiration, another one becomes a clear choice. However, the new Aspiration doesn't have to be related to the old one. It can just be a different goal or direction for your character, to keep things dynamic and progressing.

Aspirations also have some other game effects. For example, they can influence Social maneuvering actions (see p. XX).

Baseline Anchors and Aspirations

Baseline humans ordinarily have two Anchors (a Virtue and a Vice) and three Aspirations (two short-term Aspirations and one long-term Aspiration). Anchors describe a major personality trait or motivation that refreshes Willpower similarly to Loyalty (for Virtue) or Conviction (for Vice) Touchstones. Short-term Aspirations are identical to a Remade's Aspiration except in being more numerous. Long-term Aspirations are character goals that require several chapters to achieve and provide Beats when the character makes progress toward or fulfills its objective (similar to Conviction Touchstones).

The experience of Divergence causes irreversible damage to the psyche and soul of the Broken. It obliterates the capacity for both spiritual fulfillment and guilty pleasure and stunts the Deviant's ability to learn and grow through her experiences. The Divergence replaces these touchstones of mental and emotional well-being with an unhealthy abyss of neediness that defines her selfhood by her connections with others. It comes with a driving need to destroy her enemies — one that cannot entertain the possibility that no one wants to harm or use her — or a fierce, jealous loyalty more akin to possession than to love.

Conditions

Conditions are minor dramatic effects that occur in the scope of gameplay and the story. They influence the rules in various ways, often adding or removing dice from a pool.

Every Condition has a Resolution. When that thing occurs in the game (often at your choice as a player), the Condition goes away, and you take a Beat.

Some Conditions are Persistent, which is to say that they last longer than normal Conditions, and offer multiple Beats. These Conditions have a "Beat" entry in their descriptions. When that thing happens, no more than once per scene, take a Beat.

Any time a scene calls for a Condition, the Storyteller can impose one. As well, any time a character achieves exceptional success or dramatic failure on an action, a Condition will occur. Exceptional success grants a positive Condition of the player's choosing, and dramatic failure imposes a negative Condition of the Storyteller's choosing.

You can find a list of example Conditions beginning on p. XX.

Experiences

Whenever you accrue five Beats, those Beats vanish, and you take an Experience. An Experience is a sign of meaningful progress in your character's story and within the greater plot of the chronicle. You can expend Experiences at any time to increase your character traits — including

during a chapter (subject to Storyteller veto). A single dot of a trait may cost one or more Experiences, depending on what it is. Look to the chart below:

[BEGIN TAB TABLE]

Trait	Experiences per Dot
Attribute	4
Skill	2
Merit	1
Variation	4*
Acclimation	5*

* To develop a new Variation, the Broken must already have a Scar that can be entangled with it. To improve Acclimation, the Deviant must meet all the criteria described above (p. XX).

[END TAB TABLE]

The Beat Economy

Particularly in a long-running game, Beat acquisition is a core part of the Storytelling system, and the Storyteller should always be mindful of it. On average, characters should receive somewhere between three to eight Beats per chapter. If they're not, consider why that is. Are you not applying or enforcing Conditions? Are your players not rolling enough to fail sometimes? Are you not engaging their Aspirations, Conviction, or Scars? These are all things to keep in mind. If you're playing loose with the rules, you may not see as many Beats. In that case, don't hesitate to hand them out any time something cool happens. If two characters butt heads and it becomes a really tense, driving scene, go ahead and award both players with a Beat. If one character has an emotional breakdown thanks to the strangeness around him, give a Beat.

Troupes who play for only two or three hours at a time might also struggle to collect three to eight Beats per player per chapter. One solution to this is to reduce the number of Beats per Experience to four or even three in order to ensure that characters are still advancing at a pace the troupe is comfortable with.

If you're only playing a single-session game, Beats aren't nearly as useful as in an extended game. In these cases, any time the player would get a Beat, instead give them a token. This token can be cashed in to replenish a Willpower point, to offer 8-Again on a single roll, or to add a single success in a Contested action.

Individual Beats

If the players and Storyteller wish, players can "keep" all the Beats they earn, instead of pooling them. This rewards players who take action to engage with the story and game systems. It can punish shy or non-confrontational players and encourage more proactive players to hog the spotlight, however. Moreover, it means that characters may advance at very different rates, leading to a cohort with significant competency gaps between characters.

Merits

Below is a list of Merits Deviant characters can take. Any Merit marked (Overt) means that a character who takes that Merit can more easily be tracked by their Conspiracy. See Chapter Five for more details.

Sanctity of Merits

Merits reflect aspects of your character but are an out-of-game resource. For example, your character may have friends, but you can choose to spend Experiences or Merit dots to purchase the Allies Merit. This gives those friends a direct effect in the game. If something happens to a character's friends, specifically supporting cast not represented by Merit dots, the story goes on and nothing happens in terms of game mechanics. If something happens to Allies, however, those points are not lost. The Allies dots disappear but you receive Experiences equal to the dots lost. This is called the **Sanctity of Merits** rule.

If your character loses a Merit, you may repurchase it in the next chapter of your chronicle. You can't just say, "All right, my Allies died. I'm buying new Allies to call." You'd have to wait until the next chapter. Alternatively, you can spend those Experiences on other traits that are relevant to the situation. Maybe losing those Allies inspired a few trips to the firing range to let off steam, so you spend those points on a dot of Firearms.

For additional Merits available to all characters, see **The Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Mental Merits

Area of Expertise (•)

Prerequisite: Resolve •• and one Skill Specialty

Effect: Your character is uncommonly specialized in one area. Choose a Specialty to assign to this Merit. This Specialty grants a +2 bonus instead of +1. You can take this Merit multiple times to represent different areas of expertise.

Bleeding Heart (•••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Through sheer bloody-minded tenacity, your character has managed to hold on to part of her humanity, allowing her to behave as though she still had a Virtue (chosen at the time you purchase this Merit). Once per chapter, when your character acts in accordance with that Virtue, roll Resolve + Composure. Success means that she regains all her Willpower as though she has acted on a Virtue (p. XX). The character does not otherwise count as having the Virtue.

Blood on My Hands (•••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Through spite and ill-will, your character has managed to hold on to part of her humanity, allowing her to behave as though she still had a Vice (chosen at the time you purchase this Merit). Once per scene, when your character acts in accordance with that Vice, roll Resolve + Composure. Success means that she regains a point of Willpower as though she had acted on her Vice (p. XX). The character does not otherwise count as having the Vice.

Direction Sense (•)

Effect: Your character has an innate sense of direction, and is always aware of her location in space. She always knows which direction she faces, and never suffers penalties to navigate or find her way.

Eidetic Memory (••)

Effect: Your character recalls events and details with pinpoint accuracy. You do not have to make rolls for your character to remember past experiences. When making Intelligence + Composure (or relevant Skill) rolls to recall minute facts from swaths of information, take a +2 bonus.

Fight, Flight, Freeze (••)

Effect: Humans share the fight, flight, and freeze response that prey animals have, but your character has been afraid for his life too many times, and it has made it almost impossible for him to respond to violent situations in any other way.

Whenever violence breaks out in the character's presence, immediately before you roll initiative, you may choose to react with one of the prey responses:

- **Fight:** Your fear manifests as a berserk frenzy. You suffer the Insane Tilt.
- **Flight:** You only wish to flee your attackers. You suffer the Beaten Down Tilt. However, you enjoy the 8-again quality on any actions you take to leave the area affected by the violence.
- **Freeze:** Your panic manifests as inaction, whether it freezes you in your tracks or sends you cowering in terror. You suffer either the Stunned Tilt or the Insensate Tilt, but you regain a point of Willpower.

Flashback (•)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Sometimes Deviants recall their torture and transformation vividly — whether they want to or not. Once per chapter, you can choose to accept the Shaken Condition for your character. She has had a flashback, or vivid traumatic sense memory, to an important part of her transformation. She might recall code phrases, medical diagrams, words exchanged between her tormentors, or something else of importance. While it might not be immediately apparent as to why that particular thing is important, it should reveal itself later in play.

Good Samaritan (••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Despite the suffering the Divergence has caused you, or perhaps because of it, your character feels compelled to use his experiences and remarkable abilities to help Baselines and protect them from the Web of Pain. He enjoys a +2 bonus to Intimidation and Persuasion rolls to warn a Baseline away from a conspiracy's agents or projects. Additionally, take a Beat whenever you risk conspiracy attention by using a Variation to aid a Baseline who is not a Loyalty Touchstone.

Hypervigilance (•)

Effect: Your character is constantly on the lookout, scanning her environment for the curling of fingers, the flash of a barrel, a raised voice. You enjoy the 8-again quality on reflexive Wits + Composure rolls for your character to detect an impending ambush, snare, or trap.

Drawback: If you achieve an exceptional success on a roll to detect a source of danger, your character suffers the Spooked Condition (p. XX).

Indomitable (••)

Prerequisites: Resolve •••

Effect: Your character possesses an iron will. Any time a supernatural creature uses a power to influence your character's thoughts or emotions, add two dice to the dice pool to contest it. If the roll is resisted, instead subtract two dice from the manipulator's dice pool.

Interdisciplinary Specialty (•)

Prerequisite: Skill at ••• or higher with a Specialty

Effect: Choose a Specialty that your character possesses when you purchase this Merit. You can apply the +1 from that Specialty on any Skill with at least one dot, provided it's justifiable within the scope of the fiction. For example, a doctor with a Medicine Specialty in Anatomy may be able to use it when targeting a specific body part with Weaponry, but could not with a general strike.

Investigative Aide (•)

Prerequisites: Chosen Skill at •••+

Effect: Your character has one particular knack that can contribute amazingly to an investigation. Choose a Skill when purchasing this Merit; when making rolls to Uncover Clues (p. XX), she achieves exceptional success on three successes instead of five. As well, Clues that come from her use of that Skill start with one additional element. You may purchase this Merit multiple times, to enhance different Skills.

Investigative Prodigy (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Wits •••, Investigation •••

Effect: Your character investigates instinctively, and can intuit details and connections in a scene without much time. He's a veritable Sherlock Holmes. Instead of simply uncovering Clues or not uncovering Clues when investigating (p. XX), your character discovers multiple Clues in a single action. Your character can uncover Clues equal to his successes or his Merit dots as an instant action, whichever is lower. Only the first Clue benefits from additional elements; other Clues established with this Merit receive only a single element each.

Language (•)

Effect: Your character is skilled with an additional language, beyond her native tongue. Choose a language each time you buy this Merit. Your character can speak, read, and write in that language.

Multilingual (•)

Effect: Your character has a strong affinity for language acquisition. Each time you purchase this Merit, choose two languages. Your character can speak conversationally in those languages. With an Intelligence + Academics roll, he may also read enough of the language to understand context. If you purchase the Language Merit for either of these languages, replace the Multilingual language. For example, if you have Multilingual (French, Italian), and purchase Language: Italian, you may choose to take Multilingual (French, Portuguese).

Patient (•)

Effect: Your character knows how to pace herself and take the time to do the job right the first time. When taking an extended action, you may make two additional rolls, above what your Attribute + Skill allows.

Professional Training (• to ••••) (Overt)

Effect: Your character has extensive professional training in a professional field. When choosing this Merit, decide on a Profession for your character and choose two Asset Skills on your character sheet. The advantages of Professional Training relate directly to those Asset Skills.

- **Networking:** At the first level of Professional Training, your character builds connections within her chosen field. Take two dots of relevant Contacts.
- **Continuing Education:** Your character tends toward greater successes within her areas of expertise. When making a roll with her Asset Skills, she benefits from the 9-again quality.
- **Breadth of Knowledge:** As your character has advanced in her field, she has expanded both the depth and breadth of her expertise. Choose a third Asset Skill, and take two Specialties in your character's Asset Skills.
- **On the Job Training:** Your character has access to extensive educational tools. Take a Skill dot in an Asset Skill. Whenever you purchase a new Asset Skill dot, take a Beat.
- **The Routine:** With such extensive experience in her field, your character makes difficult tasks look easy. Before rolling, spend a point of Willpower to apply the rote quality to a single roll with an Asset Skill.

Shared Suffering (••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Your character feels a deep sympathy for her fellow Broken. She enjoys a +2 bonus on Empathy and Medicine rolls to aid a fellow Deviant. In addition, whenever you preserve a Remade who is not in your cohort from destruction, you take a Beat. This includes showing mercy to an enemy Deviant when it would be more expedient not to do so.

Tolerance for Biology (•)

Effect: Most people turn away at the sight of blood, other bodily fluids, or exotic biology, but nothing turns your character's stomach. You do not need to make Composure, Stamina, or Resolve rolls to withstand the biologically strange. This doesn't mean she's immune to fear; she's just used to nature in all its nasty forms.

Note: This is a three-dot Merit for Baseline characters.

Physical Merits

Crack Driver (•• or •••)

Prerequisite: Drive •••

Effect: Your character's an ace at the wheel, and nothing shakes his concentration. So long as he's not taking any actions other than driving (and keeping the car safe), add his Composure to any rolls to Drive. Any rolls to disable his vehicle suffer a penalty equal to his Composure as well. With the three-dot version, once per turn he may take a Drive action reflexively.

Dauntless (•)

Effect: Through years of torture, experimentation, and abuse, your character has learned how to take a beating. Whenever an effect would apply the Beaten Down Tilt to your character, you may opt not to suffer this Tilt.

Demolisher (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Strength ••• or Intelligence •••

Effect: Your character has an innate feel for the weak points in objects. When damaging an object, she ignores one point of the object's Durability per dot with this Merit.

Fleet of Foot (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Athletics: ••

Effect: Your character is remarkably quick, and runs far faster than his frame suggests. He gains +1 Speed per dot, and anyone pursuing him suffers a -1 per dot to any foot chase rolls.

Hardy (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Stamina •••

Effect: Your character's body goes further than it rightfully should. Add the dots in this Merit to any rolls to resist disease, poison, deprivation, unconsciousness, or suffocation.

Iron Stamina (• to •••)

Prerequisites: Stamina ••• or Resolve •••

Effect: Each dot reduces the penalties your character suffers due to fatigue or wounds by one (to a minimum penalty of 0).

Parkour (• to ••••, Style)

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••, Athletics ••

Effect: Your character is a trained and proficient free runner. Free running is the art of moving fluidly through urban environments with complex leaps, bounds, running tricks, and vaults. This is the type of sport popularized in modern action films, where characters are unhindered by fences, walls, construction equipment, cars, or anything else the city puts in their way.

Flow (•): Your character reacts instinctively to any obstacles with leaps, jumps, and scaling techniques. When in a foot chase, subtract your Parkour from the successes needed to pursue or evade. Also, ignore environmental penalties to Athletics rolls equal to your Parkour rating.

Cat Leap (••): Your character falls with outstanding grace. When using a Dexterity + Athletics roll to mitigate damage from falling, your character gains one automatic success. Additionally, add your Parkour rating to the threshold of damage that can be removed through this roll. Parkour will not mitigate damage from a terminal-velocity fall.

Wall Run (•••): When climbing, your character can run upward for some distance before having to traditionally climb. Without rolling, your character scales 10 feet + five feet per dot of Athletics as an instant action, rather than the normal 10 feet.

Expert Traceur (••••): Parkour has become second nature for your character. By spending a Willpower point, you may designate one Athletics roll to run, jump, or climb as a rote action

(reroll all failed dice once). On any turn during which you use this ability, you may not apply your character's Defense to oncoming attacks.

Freeflow (•••••): Your character's Parkour is now muscle memory. She can move without thinking, in a Zenlike state. The character must successfully meditate (p. XX) in order to establish Freeflow. Once established, your character is capable of taking Athletics actions reflexively once per turn. By spending a point of Willpower on an Athletics roll in a foot chase, gain three successes instead of three dice.

Quick Draw (•)

Prerequisites: Wits •••, a Specialty in the weapon or fighting style chosen

Effect: Choose a Specialty in Weaponry or Firearms when you purchase this Merit. Your character has trained in that weapon or style enough that pulling the weapon is his first reflex. Drawing or holstering that weapon is considered a reflexive action, and can be done any time his Defense applies.

Seizing the Edge (••)

Prerequisites: Wits •••, Composure •••

Effect: Your character is always ready for a chase. Whether to escape a threat or hunt down a rival, she's always geared and ready to go. She always has the Edge in the first turn of a chase scene (p. XX). Additionally, the opponent must make a successful Wits + Composure roll, as if being ambushed, or your character does not have to account for her Speed or Initiative when calculating needed successes in the first turn.

Sleight of Hand (••)

Prerequisite: Larceny •••

Effect: Your character can pick locks and pockets without even thinking about it. She can take one Larceny-based instant action reflexively in a given turn. As well, her Larceny actions go unnoticed unless someone is trying specifically to catch her.

Stabilizer (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Your character possesses an item or receives a treatment that holds off Instability. It may be a device that creates a dampening field around her, or a serum that repairs damaged cells. Not only does it grant her peace of mind, it also allows her some measure of control over her Instability.

Each dot of this Merit reduces the Instability penalty on Scar Resistance rolls by one, to a minimum penalty of 0 (p. XX).

Drawback: If the character loses the item or misses a treatment, she loses the benefits of this Merit until she can retrieve the object or resume treatment. If the object or treatment is lost permanently, the Sanctity of Merits applies normally.

Social Merits

Air of Menace (••)

Prerequisites: Intimidation ••

Effect: Your character has survived dozens of fights, and each one has taken its toll. He carries scars, features that have healed crookedly, and an attitude that unsettles others. The character gains +2 dice to rolls that use fear and menace to force compliance, such as with Intimidation rolls. Opponents less menacing than the character also think twice before provoking him. Opponents with Intimidation dots fewer than the character's must spend a point of Willpower to initiate combat against him.

Drawback: Though people may try to overcome their prejudices, appearance still drives many human opinions. In social maneuvers, the character's first impression is downgraded one step for people who do not know him, and even for those who do, he must overcome an additional Door.

Allies (• to •••••) (Overt)

Effect: Allies help your character. They might be friends, employees, associates, or people your character has blackmailed. Each instance of this Merit represents one type of ally. This could be in an organization, a society, a clique, or an individual. You can take this Merit multiple times to represent different Allies. For example, your character may possess Allies (Police) •••, Allies (Organized Crime) ••, and Allies (Church) •.

Dots in this Merit reflect greater relationships and access. Work with the Storyteller to determine just what your character's dots mean, and what she can request from her Allies reasonably.

When requesting help from Allies, the Storyteller assigns a rating between 1 and 5 to the favor. A character can ask for favors that add up to her Allies rating without penalty in one chapter. If she extends her influence beyond that, her player must roll Manipulation + Persuasion + Allies with a penalty equal to the favor's rating. If the roll is successful, the group does as requested. Failed or successful, the character loses a dot of Allies (but Sanctity of Merits applies).

Drawback: Most Allies won't have your Deviant's back for free. They're going to expect you to have theirs as well. Allies might call at inconvenient times, demand favors, talk to the wrong people, or put themselves in harm's way.

Anonymity (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character lives off the grid. This means purchases must be made with cash or falsified credit cards. She eschews identification. She avoids any official authoritative influence in her affairs. Any attempts to find her by paper trail suffer a -1 penalty per dot purchased in this Merit.

Armed and Extremely Dangerous (•••) (Overt)

Prerequisite: Deviant, Any Fighting Merit, Strength or Dexterity •••

Effect: Your character had an unusually bloody escape from her conspiracy. Whether she gunned her way through legions of guards and scientists with a stolen automatic weapon, or shredded the facility with nothing but a scalpel and a pair of forceps, she is a fugitive in every sense of the word. Her conspiracy treats her at best with extreme caution, and at worst as a bogeyman, a tale that they tell to new recruits and at bars. Any members of the conspiracy your character meets will either call for backup or flee outright.

Drawback: Taking this Merit means your character cannot have a Living Progenitor. It also means that, while your conspiracy will only rarely send agents to collect you, when it does, it will send well-equipped, heavily armed hit squads, ready to bring her in dead or alive.

Contacts (•)

Effect: Contacts provide your character with information. This Merit represents a sphere or organization within which the character can garner information. Contacts do not provide services, only information. This may be face-to-face, email, by telephone, or even by séance, in some strange instances.

Garnering information via Contacts requires a Manipulation + Social Skill roll, depending on the method the character uses and the relationship between the characters. The Storyteller should give a bonus or penalty depending on how relevant the information is to that particular Contact, whether accessing the information is dangerous, and if the character has maintained good relations or done favors for the Contact. These modifiers should range from -3 to +3 in most cases. If successful, the Contact provides the information.

You may purchase this Merit multiple times to reflect different sources.

Fast-Talking (• to ••••, Style)

Prerequisites: Manipulation ••, Subterfuge ••

Effect: Your character talks circles around listeners. He speaks a mile a minute, and often leaves his targets reeling, but nodding in agreement.

Always Be Closing (•): With the right leading phrases, your character can direct a mark to say what he wants, when he wants. This trips the mark into vulnerable positions. When a mark contests or resists your character's Social interactions, apply a -1 to their Resolve or Composure.

Jargon (••): Your character confuses his mark using complex terminology. You may apply one relevant Specialty to any Social roll you make, even if the Specialty isn't tied to the Skill in use.

Devil's Advocacy (•••): Your character often poses arguments he doesn't agree with, in order to challenge a mark's position and keep him from advancing the discussion. You can reroll one failed Subterfuge roll per scene.

Salting (••••): Your character can position himself so a mark pursues a non-issue or something unimportant to him. When your character opens a Door using conversation (Persuasion, Subterfuge, Empathy, etc.) you may spend a Willpower point to immediately open another Door.

The Nigerian Scam (•••••): Your character can take advantage of his mark's greed and zeal. When the mark does particularly well, it's because your character was there to set him up, and to subsequently tear him down. If a target regains Willpower from his Vice while your character is present, you may immediately roll Manipulation + Subterfuge to open a Door, regardless of the interval or impression level.

Lifeline (•• or ••••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: The Deviant can divide his passion between more people than can most Broken. At two dots, the Remade may have a maximum of six Touchstones (and associated Conviction and Loyalty traits) at a time, instead of five. At four, this is instead seven Touchstones. If purchasing this Merit during character creation, the character's player may assign an additional Conviction or Loyalty Touchstone to each of these bonus slots, increasing Conviction/Loyalty accordingly. Otherwise, the character must establish and affirm a new Touchstone to fill them.

Living Progenitor (••• or •••••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Deviants often have complicated relationships with their Progenitors, ones that frequently mimic that of child with parent, created with creator, or victim with abuser. Your character's Progenitor still lives, and he knows it. Work together with your Storyteller to decide what sort of person your Progenitor is — how often he worked on you, if he spoke to or cared for you, etc.

You must assign the Progenitor as one of your character's Touchstones.

At three dots, the Broken cannot sever this connection to his Progenitor. The Touchstone may fluctuate between Loyalty and Conviction, but it never becomes Wavering or fades, no matter how many times the Deviant Falters. Only death can end this relationship, but neither the Storyteller nor other members of the cohort may kill your Progenitor without your express permission. He is your character's tormentor to spare or slay.

At five dots, your love/hate relationship intensifies:

- If your Progenitor was one of your Conviction Touchstones at the beginning of the chapter, and you have him at your mercy, you may let him go free (or preserve him from certain death) instead of killing him. This still counts as Faltering, but you heal a minor, medium, or major Instability after resolving the Faltering roll.
- If your Progenitor was one of your Loyalty Touchstones at the beginning of the chapter, and you healed at least one minor or medium Instability during the chapter by coming to his aid, you heal an additional minor or medium Instability at the end of the chapter. However, if he died during the chapter, you suffer a major Instability.

Restriction: This Merit is only available at character creation except with an in-character explanation and Storyteller approval — such as if your character only learns the identity of her Progenitor after the chronicle begins.

Manticore Companion (• to •••••) (Overt)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Manticores (pg. XX) are the animal versions of Remade, the lab rats on whom different Divergences are tested. Mostly, they work for conspiracies, serving as spies, pets, or hunters of particularly troublesome or valuable Renegades. Sometimes, though, things don't go as planned. Sometimes a Renegade takes a Manticore with her, busting out the dog or parrot who was incarcerated in the same lab. Other times a Manticore who escaped on its own finds a Deviant simply by sniffing around long enough. For whatever reason, your character has a Manticore that follows her around and that she cares for.

Work together with your Storyteller to decide what sort of Manticore companion your character has. A one-dot Manticore is basically a pet parakeet — it can do tricks and even talk, but isn't sentient and screams at the most inconvenient times. A three-dot Manticore is a smart parrot who understands nuance and meaning and may even speak several different languages and do a perfect mimicry over the phone. A five-dot Manticore is a sun conure who is nearly sapient and devoted to the Deviant.

Manticores manifest one or more Variations. As a rule of thumb, purchase Variations for the Manticore as though its Merit dot rating were a Scar being used to support those Variations. A three-dot Manticore could have one Magnitude 3 Variation, two Magnitude 2 Variations, or three Magnitude 1 Variations, for example. Manticores do not have Scars, although some have strange appearances or habits that are not typical for their species.

Drawback: This Merit is distinct from Allies in that the Manticore is a particularly smart animal and is not truly sapient. Your character may need to take care of it with special equipment, feed it, and clean up its droppings. It cannot sign for its own apartment or take itself to the doctor without attracting major attention.

Mentor (• to •••••)

Effect: This Merit gives your character a teacher that provides advice and guidance. He acts on your character's behalf, often in the background, and sometimes without your character's knowledge. While Mentors can be highly competent, they almost always want something in return for their services. The dot rating determines the Mentor's capabilities, and to what extent he'll aid your character.

When establishing a Mentor, determine what the Mentor wants from your character. This should be personally important to him, and it should reflect on the dot rating chosen. A one-dot Mentor might want to live vicariously through your character's stories of her exploits. A five-dot Mentor could want something astronomical, such as the downfall of a powerful, global conspiracy.

Choose three Skills the Mentor possesses. You can substitute Resources for one of these Skills. Once per chapter, the character may ask her Mentor for a favor. The favor must involve one of those Skills, or be within the scope of his Resources. The Mentor commits to the favor (often asking for a commensurate favor in return), and if a roll is required, the Mentor is automatically considered to have successes equal to his dot rating. Alternately, you may ask the Storyteller to have the Mentor act on your character's behalf, without her character knowing or initiating the request.

Mystery Cult Initiation (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character is a member of a secret society, which can represent anything from a fraternity house, to a scholarly group, to a fringe religion. Dots in this Merit act as Status for other members, as well as additional benefits defined when the Merit is first purchased. The following are guidelines; use them to craft your own cults:

- A Skill Specialty or one-dot Merit pertaining to the lessons taught to initiates.
- A one-dot Merit
- A Skill dot or a two-dot Merit
- A three-dot Merit
- A three-dot Merit or a major advantage not reflected in game traits

Prized Experiment (•••) (Overt)

Prerequisite: Deviant, Living Progenitor

Effect: Maybe your character was her creator's child, who he was forced to experiment on to save her from a rare disease. Maybe he just grew attached to her as he drowned and revived her

regularly, asking her to tell him what she saw “on the other side.” For whatever reason, your character’s Progenitor does not want her dead or harmed. Members of the conspiracy take great care not to hurt her, handling her with all the delicacy of a Ming dynasty vase. Work with your Storyteller to determine why this might be (if you don't want to be surprised, that is).

Drawback: The conspiracy will still come after your character, and it will expend considerable resources into catching her without damaging her.

Resources (• to •••••) (Overt)

Effect: This Merit reflects your character’s disposable income. She might live in an upscale condo, but if her income is tied up in the mortgage and child support payments, she might have little money to throw around. Characters are assumed to have basic necessities without Resources.

The dot rating determines the relative amount of disposable funding the character has available, depending on your particular chronicle’s setting. The same amount of money means completely different things in a game set in Silicon Valley compared to one set in the Detroit slums. One dot is a little spending money here and there. Two is a comfortable, middle class wage. Three is a nicer, upper middle class life. Four is moderately wealthy. Five is filthy rich.

Every item has an Availability rating. Once per chapter, your character can procure an item at her Resources level or lower, without issue. An item one Availability above her Resources reduces her effective Resources by one dot for a full month, since she has to rapidly liquidate funds. She can procure items two Availability below her Resources without limit (within reason). For example, a character with Resources •••• can procure as many Availability •• disposable cellphones as she needs.

Retainer (• to •••••) (Overt)

Effect: Your character has an assistant, sycophant, servant, or follower on whom she can rely. Establish who this companion is, and how he was acquired. It may be as simple as a paycheck. He might owe your character his life. However it happened, your character has a hold on him.

A Retainer is more reliable than a Mentor, and more loyal than an Ally. On the other hand, a Retainer is a lone person, less capable and influential than the broader Merits.

The Merit’s dot rating determines the relative competency of the Retainer. A one-dot Retainer is barely able to do anything of use, such as a pet that knows one useful trick, or a homeless old man that does minor errands for food. A three-dot Retainer is a professional in their field, someone capable in his line of work. A five-dot is one of the best in her class. If a Retainer needs to make a roll, and it’s within her field, double the dot rating and use it as a dice pool. For anything else, use the dot rating as a dice pool. This Merit can be purchased multiple times to represent multiple Retainers.

Restrictions: Renegades rarely have this Merit, and very few of them have a Retainer rated at more than three dots.

Safe Place (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character has somewhere she can go where she can feel secure. While she may have enemies that could attack her there, she’s prepared and has the upper hand.

The dot rating reflects the security of the place. A one-dot Safe Place might be equipped with basic security systems or a booby trap at the windows and door. A five-dot could have a security crew, infrared scanners at every entrance, or trained dogs. Each place can be an apartment, a mansion, or a hidey-hole.

Unlike most Merits, multiple characters can contribute dots to a single Safe Place, combining their dots into something greater. A Safe Place gives an Initiative bonus equal to the Merit dots. This only applies to a character with dots invested in the Safe Place.

Any efforts to breach the Safe Place suffer a penalty equal to the Merit dots invested. If the character desires, the Safe Place can include traps that cause intruders lethal damage equal to a maximum of the Merit rating (player's choice as to how much damage a given trap inflicts). This requires that the character has at least one dot in Crafts. The traps may be avoided with a Dexterity + Larceny roll, penalized by the Safe Place dots.

Drawback: Just because a Deviant feels safe doesn't mean she is safe. Neighbors talk. Police arrest or evict squatters. Her conspiracy may even know what to look for. If a Deviant's Safe Place is invaded, the Merit becomes Overt for the rest of the story, but her player gains a Beat.

Status (• to •••••) (Overt)

Effect: Your character has standing, membership, authority, control over, or respect from a group or organization. This may reflect official standing, or informal respect. No matter the source, your character enjoys certain privileges within that structure.

Each instance of this Merit reflects standing in a different group or organization. Each affords its own unique benefits. As you increase your dot ratings, your character rises in prominence in the relevant group.

Status only allows advantages within the confines of the group reflected in the Merit. Status (Organized Crime) won't help if your character wants an official concealed carry firearms permit, for example.

Status provides two major advantages: First, your character can add her Status to any Social roll involving those over whom she has authority or sway. Second, she has access to group facilities, resources, and funding. Dependent on the group, this could be limited by red tape and requisitioning processes. It's also dependent on the resources the particular group has available.

Drawback: Status requires upkeep, and often regular duties are required. If these duties are not upheld, the Status may be lost. The dots will not be accessible until the character re-establishes her standing. In our Organized Crime example, your character may be expected to pay protection money, offer tribute to a higher authority, or undertake felonious activities.

Striking Looks (• or ••) (Overt)

Effect: Your character is stunning, alarming, commanding, repulsive, threatening, charming, or otherwise worthy of attention. Determine how your character looks and how people react to that.

For one dot, your character gets a +1 bonus on any Social rolls that would be influenced by his looks.

For two dots, the benefit increases to +2. Depending on the particulars, this might influence Expression, Intimidation, Persuasion, Subterfuge, or other rolls.

Drawback: Attention is a double-edged sword. Any rolls to spot, notice, or remember your character gain the same dice bonus. Sometimes, your character will draw unwanted attention in social situations. This could cause further complications, especially for a Deviant.

Voice of the Wild (•• or •••)

Prerequisite: Deviant

Effect: Your character feels more at home communicating with animals than with other humans. Your character receives a +2 bonus to Animal Ken rolls to soothe animals and Manticores.

At three dots, your character can also communicate with Manticores as though she and they shared a common language, even if the Manticore is neither sapient nor capable of speech.

Fighting Merits

Choke Hold (••)

Prerequisites: Brawl ••

Effect: When grappling, your character can use the Choke move:

- **Choke:** If you rolled more successes than twice the victim's Stamina, he's unconscious for (six - Stamina) minutes. You must first have succeeded at a Hold move. If you don't score enough successes at first, you can Choke on future turns and total your successes.

Defensive Combat (•)

Prerequisite: Brawl • or Weaponry •; choose one when this Merit is selected

Effect: Your character is trained in avoiding damage in combat. Use her Brawl or Weaponry to calculate Defense, rather than Athletics. Your character can learn both versions of this Merit, allowing you to use any of the three Skills to calculate Defense. However, you cannot use Weaponry to calculate Defense unless she actually has a weapon in her hand.

Fighting Finesse (••)

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••, a Specialty in Weaponry or Brawl

Effect: Choose a Specialty in Weaponry or Brawl when you purchase this Merit. Your character's extensive training in that particular weapon or style has allowed them to benefit more from their alacrity and agility than their strength. You may substitute your character's Dexterity for her Strength when making rolls with that Specialty.

This Merit may be purchased multiple times to gain its benefit with multiple Specialties.

Firefight (• to •••; Style)

Prerequisites: Composure •••, Dexterity •••, Athletics ••, Firearms ••

Effect: Your character is comfortable with a gun. She's been trained in stressful situations, and knows how to keep herself from being shot, while still shooting at her opponents. This Style is about moving, strafing, and taking shots when you get them. It's not a series of precision techniques; it's for using a gun practically in a real-world situation.

Shoot First (•): In a firefight, the person shot first is usually the loser. Your character has trained herself to fire first in an altercation. If her gun is drawn, add her Firearms score to her Initiative.

If she has Quick Draw (p. XX), she can use Shoot First to draw and fire with increased Initiative in the first turn of combat.

Suppressive Fire (••): Sometimes, the purpose of a shot is to distract, not necessarily to hit. Your character is trained to fire off a handful of rounds with the intent to startle opponents and force impulse reactions. When using the Covering Fire maneuver (p. XX), her opponents cannot benefit from aiming against her. She can apply her Defense against incoming Firearms attacks, in addition to any cover bonuses. Additionally, her training allows her to use Suppressive Fire with a semi-automatic weapon.

Secondary Target (•••): Sometimes, shooting an opponent behind cover is all but impossible. However, a bullet can knock objects off balance, or cause ricochets. By using Secondary Target, your character opts not to hit her target, but instead strike them with any collateral objects that might be nearby. She causes bashing damage instead of lethal, but ignores all cover penalties to the roll. The weapon's damage rating does not add to the damage in this case.

Grappling (• to •••; Style)

Prerequisites: Stamina •••, Strength ••, Athletics ••, Brawl ••

Effect: Your character has trained in wrestling, or one of many grappling martial arts.

Sprawl (•): Your character can defend himself in a grapple. While in a grapple, the character's opponent cannot apply the Drop Prone or Take Cover moves.

Takedown (••): Your character can take an opponent to the ground rapidly. With a normal roll, you may choose to render an opponent prone instead of establishing a grapple. Also, you may choose to cause bashing damage equal to the successes rolled.

Joint Lock (•••): Your character can use joint locks and immobilizing tactics to limit her opponent's movement. She can use the Joint Lock move in a grapple. Next turn, her opponent suffers bashing damage equal to your successes. She can use Joint Lock as a lead-in to the Restrain move. In addition, any successful overpowering maneuvers your character uses cause 1L damage in addition to their normal effects.

Heavy Weapons (• to •••••; Style)

Prerequisites: Stamina •••, Strength •••, Athletics ••, Weaponry ••

Effect: Your character is trained with heavy weapons which require strength, wide range, and follow through more than direct speed and accuracy. This Style may be used with a two-handed weapon such as a claymore, chainsaw, pike, or an uprooted street sign.

Sure Strike (•): Your character doesn't always hit the hardest or the most frequently, but she guarantees a deadly strike when she does hit. You can reflexively remove three dice from any attack dice pool (to a minimum of zero) to add one to your character's weapon damage rating for the turn. These dice must be removed after calculating any penalties from the environment or the opponent's Defense.

Threat Range (••): Your character's weapon is immense and keeps opponents at bay. If you opt not to move or Dodge during your turn, any character moving into your character's proximity suffers one lethal damage and a penalty to their Defense equal to your character's weapon damage rating. This penalty only lasts for one turn. This cannot be used in a turn the character is Dodging.

Bring the Pain (•••): Your character's strikes stun and incapacitate as well as causing massive trauma to the body. Sacrifice your character's Defense to use Bring the Pain. Make a standard attack roll. Any damage you score with Bring the Pain counts as a penalty to all actions the victim takes during their next turn. So, if you cause four lethal damage, the opponent is at -4 on their next attack.

Warding Stance (••••): Your character holds her weapon in such a way as to make attacks much harder. If her weapon's drawn, spend a point of Willpower reflexively to add her weapon's damage rating as armor for the turn. This will not protect against firearms.

Rending (•••••): Your character's cuts leave crippling, permanent wounds. By spending a Willpower point before making an attack roll, her successful attacks cause one level of aggravated damage in addition to her weapon's damage rating. This Willpower point does not add to the attack roll.

Improvised Weaponry (• to ••; Style)

Prerequisites: Wits •••, Weaponry •

Effect: Most people don't walk around armed. While someone pulling a knife or a gun can cool a hostile situation down, it can also cause things to boil over — an argument that wouldn't be more than harsh words suddenly ends up with three people in the morgue. If your character is on the receiving end of someone pulling a knife, it helps to have something in his hand as well.

Your character is good at making do with what he's got. Sometimes he's lucky — if your character's in a bar, he's got a lot of glass bottles, or maybe a pool cue, to play with. If he's in the lab, he can wield beakers and cables with a deadly precision. However, he's got something like a sixth sense, and can find a weapon almost anywhere.

Always Armed (•): Your character can always get his hands on something dangerous, and he has an instinctive understanding of how to put it to good — and deadly — use. At the start of your turn, make a reflexive Wits + Weaponry roll to grab an object suitable for use as a weapon in pretty much any environment. (The player is encouraged to work with the Storyteller to determine an appropriate item — a large, jagged rock in the wilderness, for example, or a heavy glass ashtray with one sharp, broken edge in a dive bar.) Regardless of what he picks up, the weapon has a +0 weapon modifier, -1 initiative penalty, Size 1, Durability 2, and Structure 4. On an exceptional success, increase the weapon modifier and Size by 1, but the initiative penalty increases to -2. Whatever your character grabs doesn't cause you to suffer the normal -1 penalty for wielding an improvised weapon.

In Harm's Way (••): Your character's got a knack for putting his weapon in the way of an oncoming attack, no matter how small or inappropriate for blocking it might be. While he's wielding an improvised weapon acquired with Always Armed, you can treat the Structure of your character's weapon as general armor against a single Brawl or Weaponry attack. Any damage he takes inflicts an equal amount of damage to the improvised weapon, bypassing Durability. Your character can use the weapon to attack later in the same turn, but can only use this ability when applying his Defense to an attack.

Breaking Point (•••): One sure way to win a fight is to hit the other guy so hard that he doesn't get back up, even if that means losing a weapon in the process. When making an all-out attack with an improvised weapon acquired with Always Armed, you can reduce the weapon's Structure by any amount down to a minimum of 0. Every 2 points of Structure spent in this way

adds 1 to the weapon modifier for that one single attack. Declare any Structure loss before making the attack; this Structure is reduced even if the attack does no damage. If the weapon is reduced to 0 Structure, it is automatically destroyed after the attack. You can use this technique in conjunction with In Harm's Way, allowing your character to parry an attack made on a higher Initiative and then go on the offensive, provided that the weapon wasn't destroyed

Iron Skin (•• or ••••)

Prerequisites: Martial Arts •• or Street Fighting ••, Stamina •••

Effect: Through rigorous conditioning, or extensive scarring, your character has grown resistant to harm. She can shrug off shots that would topple bigger fighters. She knows how to take a strike, and can even move into a hit from a weapon to minimize harm. She gains armor against bashing attacks; one point of armor with ••, and two points of armor with ••••. By spending a point of Willpower when hit, she can downgrade some lethal damage from a successful attack into bashing. Downgrade one damage at ••, two with ••••.

Marksmanship (• to ••••; Style)

Prerequisites: Composure •••, Resolve •••, Firearms ••

Effect: When prepared and aimed, a gun is an ideal killing machine. Your character has trained to take advantage of the greatest features of a gun, usually a rifle, but this Style can be used with any gun. Because of the discipline and patience required for Marksmanship, your character cannot use her Defense during any turn in which she uses one of these maneuvers. These maneuvers may only be used after aiming for at least one turn.

Through the Crosshairs (•): Your character is a competent sniper, able to sit in position and steel her wits. Usually, the maximum bonus from aiming is three dice. With Through the Crosshairs, it's equal to her Composure + Firearms.

Precision Shot (••): With this level of training, your character knows how to effectively disable a victim instead of focusing on the kill. When attacking a specified target, you may reduce your weapon's damage rating one-for-one to ignore penalties for shooting a specified target (p. XX).

For example, if your character is using a sniper rifle (four damage weapon), and attacking an arm (-2 to hit), you could choose to use three damage for -1, or two damage to eliminate the penalty entirely.

A Shot Rings Out (•••): A master sniper, your character has no worries or lack of confidence. She can fire into a crowd and strike a specific target without penalty. If she misses, it's because her shot goes wide. She will never hit an unintended target.

Ghost (••••): Your character has trained to shoot unseen, and vanish without a trace. Her Firearms score acts as a penalty on any roll to notice her vantage point, or any Investigation or Perception roll to investigate the area from where she was shooting.

Shiv (• or ••)

Prerequisites: Street Fighting ••, Weaponry •

Effect: Your character carries small, concealable weapons for use in a tussle. Rolls to detect the concealed weapon suffer your character's Weaponry score as a penalty. With the one-dot version, he can conceal a weapon with a zero damage rating. The two-dot version can conceal a one damage rating weapon. Your character may use the Brawl Skill to use this weapon.

Street Fighting (• to ••••; Style)

Prerequisites: Stamina ••, Composure ••, Brawl ••, Streetwise ••

Effect: Your character learned to fight on the mean streets. She may have had some degree of formal training, but the methodology came from the real world, in dangerous circumstances. Many Deviants attained this Merit during their escape or while fighting off pursuers months or even years later. Street Fighting isn't about form and grace, it's about staying alive. These maneuvers may only be used unarmed, or with weapons capable of using the Brawl Skill, such as punch daggers, or weapons concealed with the Shiv Merit (above).

Duck and Weave (•): Your character has been beaten all to hell more than a few times. Now she dodges on instinct, not on skill. You can reflexively take a one-die penalty to any actions this turn to use the higher of her Wits or Dexterity to calculate Defense. If you've already made a roll without penalty this turn, you cannot use Duck and Weave.

Knocking the Wind Out (••): Shots to the center mass can shake an opponent, and your character knows this well. When your character makes a successful unarmed attack, the opponent suffers a -1 to his next roll.

Kick 'Em While They're Down (•••): The best enemy is one on the ground. Your character topples opponents, and keeps them down. Any time your successes on an attack roll exceed an opponent's Stamina, you may choose to apply the Knocked Down Tilt. Additionally, any time your character is close enough to strike when an opponent attempts to get up from a prone position, she can reflexively cause two bashing damage.

One-Two Punch (••••): Your character hits fast, and she follows through with every hit. Whenever she makes a successful attack, you can spend a point of Willpower to cause two extra points of bashing damage.

Last-Ditch Effort (•••••): In a street fight, every second could mean the loss of your life. A proficient street fighter is a remarkable survivalist. She bites, headbutts, trips, or does whatever it takes to prevent that last hit. Any time a character with this level of Street Fighting is about to take a hit or get overpowered when she's already suffering wound penalties, she can reflexively spend a Willpower point and sacrifice her Defense for the turn to make an attack against her would-be assailant. This can occur even if she's already acted in a turn, so long as she's not already spent Willpower. Resolve this attack before the opponent's action.

Variations and Scars

Divergence is an ugly and broken form of evolution — an imperfect transformation that warps its subjects through thoroughly unnatural selection. Every Remade is mutilated physically or spiritually by a Scar, and expresses an adaptation or mutation in the form of a Variation. Together, these changes form the core of what separates the Deviant from Baseline humanity.

Every Variation is a power, or set of powers, that manifests in a manner reflective of the Deviant's Clade. A Chimeric Deviant with the Flight Variation might extrude leathery wings from her back, or iridescent insect-wings, or stay aloft through grotesque air-sacs and spasming fronds. An Invasive Remade with the same Variation is borne on thrusters built into her back, a Cephalist by telekinetic energy, or a Coactive by squirming ephemera. Likewise, each Scar is a

drawback or disadvantage that impedes the Remade or hinders use of her Variations in some way.

The dot rating of a Scar or Variation is referred to as its **Magnitude**. Magnitude runs from one to five dots, with higher ratings indicating greater intensity of effect. Most can be acquired at various Magnitudes, but some are set at a specific dot rating that cannot be changed. It is not possible to acquire a Variation or Scar with a Magnitude of zero.

Entangling Variations with Scars

A Remade always possesses at least one Scar and one Variation. Every Variation must be combined or “**entangled**” with a Scar. A Remade with several Variations may possess multiple Scars to match, but it is also possible to entangle several Variations with each other through a single Scar.

The exception to this entanglement is the Scar-free dot of Magnitude granted to a character by their Origin. This can be used to increase the Magnitude of an existing Variation without raising the Magnitude of the entangled Scar. Alternatively, a character could use it to possess a one-dot Variation with no entangled Scar at all.

Both Variations and Scars come in three **activation methods**, depending on the extent to which the Remade can control their expression:

- **Controlled** Variations activate when the Remade calls upon them, and their Scars determine the price the Broken pays for doing so.
- **Involuntary** Variations activate when the Deviant calls upon them, but they sometimes activate of their own accord, obeying the parameters of their Scars.
- **Persistent** Variations are either active all the time or can be activated at will, and their Scars reflect permanent changes wrought upon the Deviant by his unnatural power.
- The activation method of a Variation is the same as the activation method of the Scar entangled with it. However, some **Deviations** can alter the manner in which a Scar and its associated Variations activate, changing them to another category or adjusting them in some way. A Deviation will state what types of Scar it can modify.

Scars come with specific hindrances, as noted in their entry. If this hindrance restricts or affects Variation use, it applies to all Variations combined with the Scar in question. In the case of Controlled Variations, the penalties from an entangled Controlled Scar only weigh in if the Deviant successfully activates the power. A Remade with Tribulation (p. XX), for example, only expends Willpower points if the roll to activate the entangled Variation succeeds. If it fails, she retains any Willpower points that would otherwise have gone towards fueling the power.

The choice of Scar also defines the Attributes used to determine dice pools and numerical effects of combined Variations. Scars are divided into Mental, Physical, and Social, and are associated with the following Attributes:

- **Mental:** Intelligence (Power), Wits (Finesse), and Resolve (Resistance)
- **Physical:** Strength (Power), Dexterity (Finesse), and Stamina (Resistance)
- **Social:** Presence (Power), Manipulation (Finesse), and Composure (Resistance)

Where a Variation makes use of these Attributes, it refers to them as **Scar Power**, **Scar Finesse**, or **Scar Resistance**. For example, a Remade with the Enhanced Speed Variation combined with Bane (a Physical Scar) would use Strength as his Scar Power, while one with Phobia (a Mental Scar) would use Intelligence as his Scar Power.

Most Variations and Scars use the same dice pools derived from Scar Power, Finesse, and Resistance.

- A **Scar Finesse roll** is always Scar Finesse + Variation Magnitude + Acclimation. If the Variation targets an unwilling character or one who doesn't know they are being targeted, the intended victim makes a contested Resistance + Supernatural Tolerance roll to avoid its effects. The Resistance Attribute often matches that of the Variation's Scar Resistance, but the Deviant's player may choose another, more appropriate Resistance Attribute when purchasing the Variation.

- A **Scar Resistance roll** is always Scar Resistance + Acclimation - Instability Penalty (p. XX). Scar Resistance rolls are used to resist or limit the effects of a Scar.

A Variation's Magnitude cannot exceed the Magnitude of its entangled Scar. A Scar can be entangled with multiple Variations as long as the Scar's Magnitude is *higher* than the highest-Magnitude, entangled Variation. The number of Variations entangled with a single Scar cannot exceed 1 + the difference between the Scar's Magnitude and the highest-rated Variation's Magnitude.

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Scar Magnitude	Maximum Number of Variations by Highest-Magnitude Variation				
	Mag 1	Mag 2	Mag 3	Mag 4	Mag 5
1	1 Variation	-	-	-	-
2	2 Variations	1 Variation	-	-	-
3	3 Variations	2 Variations	1 Variation	-	-
4	4 Variations	3 Variations	2 Variations	1 Variation	-
5	5 Variations	4 Variations	3 Variations	2 Variations	1 Variation

[END TABLE]

For example, a Remade with the Conspicuous Appearance Scar at Magnitude ••• could combine it with a single Variation of up to Magnitude •••; or with a Variation of Magnitude ••, plus an additional Variation of Magnitude •• or less; or a Variation of Magnitude ••, plus two more Variations of Magnitude •• or less; or four Variations each at Magnitude •.

A Scar-free Magnitude • Variation provided by the Deviant's Origin is not tied to a specific Scar. The Remade's player must choose whether the Variation is Mental, Physical, or Social, and whether its activation method is Controlled or Persistent.

Combining multiple Variations in a single Scar can keep the total Magnitude of Scars that the Broken carries to a minimum, and allows several Variations to conveniently key off the same

Attributes. However, it comes at the cost of linking all those Variations to a more formidable disadvantage.

While several Variations can be entangled together through combination with a single Scar, the reverse is not possible. A Variation cannot be combined with multiple Scars, except through the use of Deviations applied to the Scar.

Acquiring Variations

Deviants begin with a total Magnitude of Variations allocated by the chronicle threat level, plus any dots of Scar-free Variation from their Origin. These Variations are assigned during the character creation process, and represent the initial mutations, alterations, and changes inflicted by Divergence.

Variations are divided into six categories: Cephalist, Chimeric, Coactive, Invasive, Mutant, and Universal. Variation categories have the following effects:

- A Deviant must always have at least half of her total Magnitude assigned to Variations from her Clade and/or the Universal categories. A Cephalist with 5 Magnitude of Variations, for example, must have at least 3 Magnitude assigned to some combination of Universal and Cephalist Variations. Apart from this restriction, a Remade may possess Variations from any category.
- Broken of some Clades may temporarily increase or decrease the Magnitude of a Variation or Scar through a Clade Adaptation. These changes are always of limited duration, reverting back once the Adaptation's effects have ceased. See p. XX for further details.
- Instability can increase the Magnitude of Scars or cause an entirely new Scar to manifest. Usually, the new Scar or additional Magnitude fades away when the Instability heals, but the Remade's player may choose to make it permanent in order to increase the Magnitude of one or more Variations already entangled with the Scar (at no cost in Experiences) or to purchase a new Variation entangled with the Scar (by spending four Experiences). In this case, the new Scar or additional Magnitude of a Scar does not fade when the Instability heals. See p. XX for further details.

Variation Basics

- A **Controlled Variation** only activates when the Deviant wishes to use it but requires a successful Scar Finesse roll. Once activated, it remains active until the end of the scene or until the Remade deactivates it as an instant action.

Dice Pool: Scar Finesse + Variation Magnitude + Acclimation. If the Variation targets an unwilling character or one who doesn't know they are being targeted, the intended victim makes a contested Resistance + Supernatural Tolerance roll to avoid its effects. The Resistance Attribute often matches that of the Variation's Scar Resistance, but the Deviant's player may choose another, more appropriate Resistance Attribute when purchasing the Variation.

Action: Instant, unless otherwise noted

Roll Results

Success: The Variation activates. The Broken also suffers the effects of the entangled Scar.

Exceptional Success: As a success, but the transformed also heals a minor Instability.

Failure: The Variation fails to activate.

Dramatic Failure: The Variation fails to activate, and the Remade suffers a minor Instability.

- An **Involuntary Variation** can be activated with a Scar Finesse roll, but certain stimuli, based on the Scar, cause it to activate reflexively without the Deviant's permission or to behave without his direction. See p. XX for details.
- A **Persistent Variation** is available at any time and does not require a roll to activate. Some Persistent Variations (**Perpetual**) are permanently active and are only suppressed if an Adaptation or another Variation temporarily removes its entangled Scar. Others (**Toggled**) are only active when the Broken chooses to activate them as an Instant action and remain active until the end of the scene or until the Deviant deactivates them as an instant action.

Directed Variations

Directed Variations (or specific effects of certain Tiered Variations), follow special rules. Unless otherwise specified by a Variation's description, a Directed Variation works as follows:

- Once activated, the Variation remains active until the end of the scene. While it is active, the Deviant may direct the power of the Variation each turn as an instant action.
- Directing the Variation targets a character or object other than the Deviant herself. The initial target may be chosen as part of a Controlled Variation's activation roll. If the Variation is Persistent and Perpetual, it always requires an instant action to choose a target. If the Variation is Involuntary (or Persistent and Toggled), and the Deviant used an instant action to activate it, the target may be chosen as part of that action; if the power triggered as a result of events outside the Deviant's control, it requires an instant action to choose a target.
- The Remade may choose one new target each turn, as an instant action, which always requires a successful Scar Finesse roll. The maximum number of targets the Broken may have under the influence of a Directed Variation at a time cannot exceed Scar Power. If he would exceed this target limit, the Variation's effects end on enough previous targets to bring him back within this limit.
- A Directed Variation has a range of 10/20/40 yards/meters. The Deviant's player suffers a penalty on the Scar Finesse roll if the target is at medium or long range or is obscured by concealment (p. XX and XX). Directed Variations cannot ordinarily penetrate cover (p. XX).
- Unless targeting a willing target (one who is aware of the incoming Variation and wishes to be a target of it), the victim may make a reflexive Scar Resistance + Supernatural Tolerance roll to contest the Variation's effects.

Variation Keywords

Variations possess specific keywords that come with associated effects or limitations. Every Variation *always* has one of the Overt or Subtle keywords.

- **Directed:** The Variation targets a character or object other than the Deviant herself.
- **Discrete:** The Variation only grants the specific abilities of its current Magnitude rating, and does not grant lower-Magnitude benefits. It can often be bought multiple times at different ratings to access those further capabilities.

- **Overt:** The use of the Variation is particularly blatant or obvious. The use of this power increases the likelihood of a conspiracy noting the Deviant's activity. See p. XX for more details.
- **Perpetual:** If the Variation is Persistent, it is always active. If Overt, it attracts conspiracy attention even if the Remade didn't derive a benefit from it during the chapter. In addition, a Persistent Variation with this keyword grants the Deviant a +5 bonus on any Clash of Wills roll involving it.
- **Reflexive:** The Variation can be activated with a Reflexive action rather than an Instant action.
- **Subtle:** The use of the Variation is easy to conceal. The use of this power does not increase the likelihood of a conspiracy noting the Deviant's activity. See p. XX for more details.
- **Tiered:** The Variation grants the Deviant all its listed benefits up to the Variation's current Magnitude rating. In some cases, activating the Variation grants all of these abilities at once. In others, each effect requires a separate activation.
- **Toggled:** If the Variation is Persistent, it is only active when the character chooses to activate it, which requires an instant action (unless it is also Reflexive). Once activated, it remains active until the end of the scene.

Scar Basics

- Once per scene per Scar, a character's Scars grant her player a Beat whenever they cause her or her allies significant harm or setbacks. This is the primary purpose of Magnitude 1 Scars; the Scar only hinders the Deviant when it would be dramatically appropriate, so the Storyteller may *offer* the player a Beat at opportune moments to have the Scar kick in and make things harder for the character in a fun way if the player accepts. Similarly, the Storyteller may award a Beat to a player who plays his character's Scar in a way that creates a significant complication for the character or his cohort.
- Scars of higher Magnitude still grant Beats when they cause the character problems, but their impact is also governed by systems, noted in each Scar's text.
- Some Scars have effects that are mitigated either by the Remade's Scar Resistance or by a Scar Resistance roll (p. XX):

Dice Pool: Scar Resistance + Acclimation - Instability Penalty.

Action: Reflexive, unless otherwise noted

Roll Results

Success: The Broken mitigates or neutralizes the Scar's effects.

Exceptional Success: As a success, but the transformed also heals a minor Instability.

Failure: The Scar manifests at its full effect.

Dramatic Failure: The Scar manifests at its full effect, and the Remade suffers a minor Instability.

Unentangled Scars

Every Variation must be entangled with a Scar, but the reverse is not true. If a Deviant develops a new Persistent Scar during play as the result of Instability (p. XX), it need not be entangled

with a Variation. The Remade can entangle it with a Variation he develops later by spending Experiences. However, in order to develop a new Controlled or Involuntary Scar, the Deviant must immediately purchase a new Variation to entangle with it.

If the Deviant already has an unentangled Scar when he would manifest a new one due to healing or downgrading existing Instability (p. XX), any new, unentangled Scar must have a Magnitude at least equal to the total number of unentangled Scars (or a maximum of Magnitude 5). So, the player of a Deviant with two unentangled Scars who chooses to gain a third unentangled Scar in order to downgrade some of his Instability would have to choose a Persistent Scar of Magnitude 3 or higher.

During character creation, a Remade may have Scars whose Magnitude could potentially entangle additional Variations and may have one or more unentangled Scars, subject to the limits above.

Fused and Shifting Scars

If the player feels her character has too many Scars to reasonably play, or if a Scar that seemed interesting at the time impedes her ability to have fun (or makes it less fun for everyone in the troupe), the Storyteller may allow her to replace a Scar with one of equal Magnitude or to fuse two or more Scars into a single Scar. This must always result in a legal number of entangled Variations attached to each Scar.

Scar Keywords

Each Scar has several keywords defining its properties, as follows:

- The first keyword indicates whether a Scar falls into the **Mental**, **Physical**, or **Social** Attribute categories, or whether they're flexible enough for Variations in **any** category. In the latter case, the player chooses the Attribute category when the character acquires the Scar. A Scar's Attribute category determines the Power, Finesse, and Resistance Attributes of it and its entangled Variations.
- The second keyword indicates whether the Scar is **Overt** or **Subtle**. Overt Scars, like Overt Variations, attract conspiracy attention whenever they manifest during a chapter (p. XX). If a Scar has a Deviation that would apply secondary Scars, the primary Scar is considered Overt if *any* of the secondary Scars are Overt.

Some Scars also have one of the optional keywords:

- **Directed:** The Scar may only entangle Directed Variations (p. XX).
- **Repeatable:** A player can develop the Scar more than once. This allows several Controlled Variations to exact the same price even if entangled with different Scars. Some Repeatable Scars must apply different criteria each time. Each Repeatable Scar defines its criteria details.
- **Toggled:** The Scar may only entangle Toggled Persistent Variations (p. XX).

Deviations

A **Deviation** modifies a Variation or Scar in a particular way. Most Deviations are specific to a single Variation or Scar and are included in those entries. Those Deviations that can apply to multiple Scars are listed separately, beginning on p. XX.

A Deviation adds its rating to the Variation's or Scar's effective Magnitude for the purposes of entanglement. The Variation or Scar continues to function at its pre-Deviation Magnitude, but it also features the additional effects detailed by the Deviation. For example, a Magnitude •• Scar with a +1 Magnitude Deviation would count as Magnitude ••• for determining the maximum Magnitude of the Variations entangled with it.

A Deviation cannot increase the Magnitude of a Variation or Scar above •••••.

As well as further customization of a character, Deviations offer a straightforward method for modifying Variation or Scar Magnitude in the short-term due to the effects of Instability or Adaptations.

Supernatural Conflict

In the occult world of the Chronicles of Darkness, a Deviant may encounter strange and supernatural beings that are not Remade. When a Deviant is targeted by a supernatural ability that calls for a contested roll and would allow a victim to add a supernatural trait such as Blood Potency, Primal Urge, or Gnosis to the roll, the Deviant may instead add dice equal to her highest-Magnitude Variation + Acclimation.

Clash of Wills

When the supernatural powers of two Deviants conflict over the particular aspect of a target they're both affecting, situations can arise where it is unclear which will overcome the other. When the effects of Variations clash directly in this manner, a Clash of Wills takes place.

The players of all characters using conflicting powers enter a contested roll-off, each using a pool of her Variation's Magnitude plus her Acclimation. Ties reroll until one player has accrued more successes than all others. The effect invoked by that player's character wins out and resolves as usual, while all others fail. The victory of one Variation in a clash does not mean the immediate cancellation of the others, except in cases where only one power can possibly endure.

Clash of Wills also applies to power conflicts with other supernatural creatures. The traits involved depend on the creatures in question. Vampires use Blood Potency in the contest, for example.

A Persistent Variation with the Perpetual keyword grants the Deviant a +5 bonus on any Clash of Wills roll involving it.

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Variations

The extraordinary abilities of the Broken manifest in countless ways, as varied as the Remade themselves. Although Clade influences the way their Variations manifest, in principle, every Deviant can exhibit any Variation, regardless of his Clade. A minority of Variations (**Cephalist Variations**, **Chimeric Variations**, **Coactive Variations**, **Invasive Variations**, and **Mutant Variations**) are considerably more commonplace among Broken of a particular Clade, a fact conspiracies use to their advantage when attempting to assess the best way to bring a Renegade into custody. The rest (**Universal Variations**) do not make the taxonomical classification of one of the Broken any easier.

At the end of each Variation, we've included a few examples (in *italics*) to illustrate potential ways to re-flavor them based on Clade. These are far from the only possibilities, and players are encouraged to reskin their characters' Variations and Scars to fit each Deviant's Clade, concept, and history.

Universal Variations

Universal Variations are not strongly associated with a single Clade. They include most Deviant abilities conspiracies have catalogued over the years.

Aquatic (• to •••)

Subtle

Perpetual, Tiered

The Remade can function in water as easily as on land.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant cannot drown and suffers no penalties to Speed, Defense, or rolls due to wading, swimming, or diving in fresh or salt water. She is still vulnerable to strong currents, decompression, and wildlife, as well as the hazards of the deep ocean — cold, darkness, and crushing pressure.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Habitat:** Marine predators usually ignore the Broken unless provoked, and even then, they are more likely to flee than attack unless given no other choice. Gentler sea life responds to her more favorably, granting him a +2 bonus on Animal Empathy rolls to gain their cooperation. Finally, the Deviant operates at any depth with equal ease, unimpeded by sunless abysses with crushing pressure, near-freezing temperatures, or even the intense heat of hydrothermal vents.
- **Speed:** The Remade operates more easily underwater than do undersea vehicles. Her Speed is equal to 20 times Scar Power. She can navigate whitewater rapids and even swim up waterfalls, albeit at a reduced speed.

At Magnitude •••, the Broken enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •• effects.

The Chimeric has gills inside her throat, which conceals them from view, but they make it difficult for her to speak above a whisper (Silence; Persistent).

Flippers unfold from the Invasive's feet, but her internal oxygen tank eventually runs out (Depletion; Controlled; Dexterity; Deviation: Disfiguring Scar).

The Mutant can breathe through her skin but can't endure low-humidity environments (Native Environment; Persistent).

Bioluminescence (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade's body is capable of generating light.

Any Directed effects created by this Variation do not suffer range penalties.

At Magnitude •, the Broken projects a beam of light no greater than that of a bright flashlight from his body. With appropriate Scar Finesse rolls, she can exercise minute control over this Variation, such as to brighten or dim her light, or change the colors and patterns of the light she generates.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade's light rivals that of a floodlight. As a Directed effect, she may shine the light into a target's eyes to impose the Blinded Tilt (in both eyes, on an exceptional success), unless the victim is wearing protective eyewear.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade can produce light as bright and intense as direct sunlight. This bioluminescence has the same effects as sunlight, which includes triggering the vulnerability of certain supernatural creatures. If successfully Directed into a target's unprotected eyes, it imposes the Blindness Tilt in both eyes (only one eye, if he has protective eyewear).

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade can project Intensity 4 ionizing radiation (Intensity 5, in action scenes), which can be Directed at a living target (p. XX).

Deviations

- **Aura (+1 Magnitude):** The Deviant can make her whole body glow, illuminating the entire area within her light's range. Paired with the Magnitude •• or ••• effect, she can create the Blazing Light Environmental Tilt, which affects anyone within short range, other than herself.

The Cephalist's psychic powers include conjuring light, but she can only maintain it for short periods (Cooldown; Controlled; Manipulation).

The Chimeric generates bioluminescent chemicals, but she lost an arm to infection during her Divergence (Missing Limb; Persistent).

The Coactive burns with terrible light, which she cannot keep hidden for long and which causes tales of an angel to crop up wherever she goes (Power Build-Up, Involuntary; Deviation: Wild Variation).

Boneless (• to ••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant's skeleton is pliable and flexible, and her organs can tolerate a great deal of compression and distortion without ill effects.

The Remade can contort her body.

If the Variation ends while the Deviant is in a position that would be impossible for human anatomy, her body returns to its natural shape if it is not actively harmful to do so — moving up to one yard/meter beforehand if necessary. If returning to her natural shape would cause a human body harm (such as if she is stretched out in a 3-inch wide pipe), she is ejected into the nearest space that can accommodate her normal shape and suffers a medium Instability.

At Magnitude •, the Remade can dislocate joints and contort her body as expertly as a circus performer. She automatically escapes from any mundane bonds without a roll. The Deviant adds Scar Power to all grapple rolls.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant's body behaves more like that of an octopus — able to stretch and squeeze through narrow spaces. This allows her to fit into places whose dimensions are not normally large enough for a human or to wriggle through pipes. These actions are usually automatic. Grapple rolls made against the Deviant suffer a penalty equal to Scar Power.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade can become a true liquid, albeit one that looks unhealthy or unearthly. While in this state, she can flow uphill at her normal speed and will not suffocate. Although she cannot pass through certain barriers like water filters, ordinary grilles and grates present no obstacle to her, and most weapons have little or no effect. Fire and electrocution still pose real risks, as do purely supernatural attacks.

At Magnitude ••••, the Deviant can take the form of a sickly vapor. This gas hugs the ground rather than rising into the air, although the Remade can move uphill along the ground at her normal Speed. Most weapons have no effect on a Deviant in this state, but Environmental Tilts frequently have their normal, full effects.

The Chimeric's cephalopod anatomy allows her to squeeze and stretch into impossible shapes, but she heals more slowly when injured (Sluggish Metabolism; Persistent).

The Coactive submits to the occult energies within, which cause her body to lose its cohesion, but this can range from mere flexibility to transformation into vapor (Fluctuating Variation; Controlled; Manipulation).

When the Mutant assumes a liquid form, she become exceptionally vulnerable to electricity (Persistent Drawback [Bane]; Controlled; Dexterity).

Brachiation (• to •••)

Overt

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant is capable of incredible athletic feats.

At Magnitude •, choose one of the following at the time the Deviant develops this Variation:

- **Bounding:** The Deviant may, as an instant Athletics action, leap up to twice Scar Power in yards/meters. Further, when using a Dexterity + Athletics roll to mitigate damage from falling (p. XX), the Remade gains one additional success, with each success reducing falling damage by one. This can reduce the lethal damage from a fall at terminal velocity.

- **Wall Crawling:** The Remade can climb sheer, vertical surfaces as quickly and as easily as he walks on flat ground — at her normal Speed and without preventing the use of her hands.

In most cases, such movement is automatic, but especially slippery surfaces may require Athletics rolls to avoid complications that resemble the Knocked Down Tilt (p. XX), except affecting the character's movement on a vertical surface.

At Magnitude ••, choose one of the following at the time the Deviant develops this Variation:

- **Generalist:** The Deviant enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude • effects — Bounding and Wall Crawling.
- **Leaper:** This is only available if the Remade's player has chosen Bounding as her Magnitude • effect. The Deviant suffers no damage from falls unless she lands on a dangerous surface. She may also leap up to five times Scar Power in yards/meters.
- **Spider:** This is only available if the Remade's player has chosen Wall Crawling as her Magnitude • effect. The Deviant can cling to the bottoms of horizontal surfaces, including ceilings — moving at her full Speed while retaining the use of both her hands.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade enjoys the benefits of all the Magnitude • and •• effects.

The Chimeric's leg and arm muscles have been overlaid with artificial sinews derived from rabbit and monkey DNA, granting him incredible climbing and jumping abilities, but he must regularly engage in specialized limbering exercises to keep them functional (Maintenance; Persistent).

The Coactive generates a gravitational field that allows her to stand, sit, or crawl on any surface, regardless of its orientation to prevailing gravity. However, this gravitational field often activates while she sleeps, causing her to wander up the sides of buildings or wake up lying on the ceiling (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Resolve; Deviation: Indelible Mark [Alternate Persona]).

The Invasive can fire a grapple from one arm, granting her the ability to climb vertical surfaces and make incredible leaps, although she can't use the arm to do anything else when it is active (Persistent Drawback [Missing Limb]; Controlled; Dexterity).

Camouflage (•• to ••••)

Subtle

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade can hide from the human eye, blending into the background.

This Variation conceals the Deviant, as well as his clothing and immediate possessions.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant fades into the background as long as he does not move more than one yard/meter or draw attention to himself (by yelling, waving his arms, etc.) during the turn. Within these limits, his Stealth rolls to avoid detection enjoy a bonus equal to Scar Power.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and choose one:

- **Mobile:** The Deviant retains his camouflage even while moving.
- **Invisible:** The Remade does not register on the visible light spectrum. Casual observers are reduced to a chance die on Perception rolls to detect him. Even those who suspect an unseen presence suffer a -5 penalty to all rolls that rely on being able to see the Remade (including attack rolls). If it's possible to locate the Deviant by indirect means, this penalty is instead -3

(such as if he is leaving a trail of blood or walking across fresh snow), -2 (if engaged in close combat or making a lot of noise) , or -1 (when “outlined” by a fire extinguisher, sprinkler system, or similar). This affords no protection against alternate means of detection or those more sensitive than the human eye. He can still be tracked by scent, still shows up on infrared sensors, and enjoys no special protection from supernatural senses. The Remade can also run afoul of low-tech physical security like trip wires or covered pit traps.

At Magnitude •••, the Broken enjoys both Magnitude •• effects.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and choose one, both of which provoke a Clash of Wills against supernatural means of detection:

- **Multi-Sensory:** The Deviant cannot be detected by scent, echolocation, or accidental noise. In addition, he may mask any scent or sound originating from within one yard/meter, whether it is breaking glass or a sentry’s shouted alarm.
- **Wavelengths:** The Remade’s invisibility extends to the full electromagnetic spectrum, including infrared, ultraviolet, and radar.

At Magnitude •••••, the Broken enjoys both Magnitude •••• benefits.

The Cephalist vanishes from view at random and without warning (Power Build-Up; Involuntary; Composure; Deviations: Uncontrollable Variation).

The Chimeric’s skin changes color like that of a chameleon, and she cannot turn off this effect except by focusing on not matching her environment (Relentless Variation [Concentration]; Persistent).

When the Mutant assumes the transparency of air, light is unable to interact with her eyes, blinding her (Persistent Drawback [Sensory Deprivation]; Controlled; Wits).

Carapace (• to •••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual

The Deviant possesses a defensive shell or protective shield that protects her from harm.

When this Variation is active, the Remade possesses an armor rating. This armor is not cumulative with other kinds of armor; only the best armor rating applies.

At Magnitude •, choose one:

- **Kevlar:** The armor rating is 1/3.
- **Leathery:** The armor rating is 2/0.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Flak:** The armor rating is 2/4.
- **Steel:** The armor rating is 3/0.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and choose one:

- **Bulletproof:** Increase the Broken’s ballistic armor rating by two, and she never takes damage from firearms that lack the armor piercing quality.

- **Dense:** Increase the Remade's general armor rating by one, and she doesn't suffer the automatic point of bashing damage if this Variation reduces damage from a source to zero.

At Magnitude ●●●, the Deviant enjoys both Magnitude ●●● effects.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●●, but the Deviant shrugs off terrible blows. After applying armor against a source against which armor provides protection, reduce any remaining damage to one. If a source would inflict multiple types of damage (bashing, lethal, or aggravated), it inflicts one point of the worst type of damage.

The Cephalist generates a nearly impenetrable protective shield around herself, but this requires an intense level of concentration that she can't maintain for long (Concentration; Controlled; Wits).

The Coactive's skin turns into bronze in response to an injury that causes at least one level of lethal damage (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Stamina; Deviation: Disfiguring Scar).

The Invasive can deploy nanobots under his skin to provide him with protection, but doing so interferes with his agility and fine motor skills. This protection deploys automatically whenever the Deviant sees someone draw a gun or other deadly weapon (Involuntary Stimulus, Involuntary; Resolve; Deviations: Indelible Mark [Suppression]).

Electrokinesis (● to ●●●●●)

Overt

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant has influence over electronics and electricity. While the Variation is active, the Deviant can affect objects in range with a Size no greater than the Variation's Magnitude times Scar Power.

Choose a number of the following effects equal to Magnitude when purchasing this Variation:

- **Conductivity:** The Deviant increases or decreases the conductivity of the air surrounding a target. This can shield electronic and non-electronic targets (including people) from electricity and EMPs, reducing electrocution damage by twice Scar Power. Alternatively, it can direct an existing source of electricity at a nearby target, potentially damaging a device (by overloading it or exposing it to a localized EMP) or inflicting damage no greater than twice Scar Power (dependent on a viable source within range).
- **Input:** The Deviant can spoof passwords and other access credentials, bypassing local security protocols. This cannot grant network access (including via VPN) unless the server where the target data is stored is also within range, although if the device has passwords to remote servers stored locally (including ones unlocked with a fingerprint or by facial recognition), these still function normally.
- **Output:** The Remade can alter the output of an electronic device, causing it to display whatever the Broken wishes, within the device's limits. She can alter the images and sound coming from a TV, cause a phone to ring and produce the sound of a voice when answered, or any number of other tasks. Particularly complex feats, such as fabricating a convincing news broadcast out of whole cloth, may demand Scar Finesse rolls and/or relevant Skill rolls to make believable, at the Storyteller's discretion.

- **Power:** The Broken can feed or starve an electronic device, powering it on or off even in the absence of a viable power source. This can “hotwire” a device that usually requires a physical component, such as a switch, button, lever, or ignition. If the device controls other devices (such as a control terminal that directs an entire assembly line of robots, or the ignition of a car that is otherwise in operational condition), it is possible to control much larger machinery, as long as the subordinate devices have an existing power source.
- **Research:** The Deviant can rapidly analyze an electronic device to which she has gained access (or which lacks security), locating any data on it that she is seeking as long as it is stored on the target device. This reduces the interval of relevant extended actions by a full step — from hours to minutes or from minutes to turns.

The Cephalist wields electrokinetic influence, but doing so sends damaging electrical currents through her arms (Deterioration; Controlled; Dexterity).

The Chimeric has the electricity-generating powers of an electric eel, but he cannot stop generating constant electric shocks unless wearing wire mesh gloves (Relentless Variation [Power Failure]; Persistent).

The Invasive’s cybernetic generator allows her to project electricity from her hands, but if she does not discharge the built-up power regularly, it eventually lashes out on its own (Power Build-up; Involuntary; Stamina).

Enhanced Speed (• to ••••)

Overt

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Remade moves with incredible grace and speed, easily outpacing pursuers.

At Magnitude •, the Broken enjoys a bonus to Initiative rolls equal to Scar Power. In addition, she doubles her Speed when moving under her own power — whether running or relying on other Variations such as Flight or Aquatic.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant receives a bonus to Defense equal to half Scar Power (rounded up), and attacks against her do not reduce her Defense against subsequent attacks in the same turn.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Alacrity:** Once per scene, the Broken may choose to take her action at any time during a turn — whether to act first each turn, to interrupt another character’s turn, or to hold her action until everyone else has acted for the turn. Other characters using preempting powers provoke a Clash of Wills.
- **Fleetness:** The Remade instead multiplies her Speed by Scar Power plus one when moving under her own power. She may also employ her Defense (and Dodges) against firearms attacks, as long as she is aware of them and capable of responding (not tied up, grappled, etc.).

At Magnitude ••••, the Broken enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude ••• effects.

The Coactive exists in a pocket of compressed time, such that the world seems to move in slow motion around him, but he needs more five times as much food and oxygen to survive (Dependency; Persistent).

Mystical quicksilver sheaths the Invasive's skeleton, making her movements swift and graceful, but the substance is toxic and frequently sends her to the hospital (Genetic Disorder; Persistent).

The Mutant's hollow bones play an important role in his ability to achieve such incredible speeds, but they also make him especially vulnerable to trauma (Thin Skin; Persistent).

Environmental Adaptation (• to •••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

The Deviant is particularly hardy and resistant to environmental hazards.

Choose a single broad type of environment, such as mountains, deserts, cold, swamp, or subterranean. The Deviant enjoys a bonus equal to Magnitude to all Survival rolls in that environment. In addition, in the chosen environment, he may either to ignore a number of Environmental Tilts equal to Magnitude, to reduce the level of an Extreme Environment by Magnitude, or a combination of the two.

At Magnitude • and ••, this cannot reduce the level of a level 4 Extreme Environment.

At Magnitude ••• or ••••, this can reduce the level of a level 4 Extreme Environment.

Deviations

- **General (+1 Magnitude):** The benefits of this Variation instead apply to all Extreme Environments and Environmental Tilts, regardless of the type of environment, as long as they are not wholly supernatural phenomena. The Broken may shrug off a thunderstorm summoned by a sorcerer, for example, but not an Environmental Tilt imposed by a cloud of pure necrotic energy summoned from the Underworld.

By means of biofeedback techniques, the Cephalists insulates himself against extreme heat, but he is emotionally distant (Frozen Heart; Persistent).

The thumb-sized magical ruby embedded in the hollow of the Invasive's throat allows her to sheath herself in the appropriate survival equipment for any environment (Conspicuous Appearance; Persistent).

The Mutant's thick hide and redundant organs allow him to weather bitter cold, but he heals more slowly (Sluggish Metabolism; Persistent).

Face Thief (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade can disguise himself as another person (the subject) as a Directed effect, although the target does not contest this effect, and the Deviant can only mimic one person at a time. This disguise lasts until the end of the scene, but the Remade may spend a point of Willpower to extend its effects until the beginning of the next chapter (potentially allowing her to wear the disguise for several consecutive chapters).

At Magnitude •, The Deviant can only mimic a single part of the subject's body — such as a face or hand.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant can mimic any bodily features that he can see or has identified during a previous examination of the target. This makes faces and hairstyles easy to match, but the Remade's disguise may not fool someone who checks his body for a scar or tattoo that the Broken knows nothing about. The transformed can imitate the target's voice, too, but as with identifying features, he must already be familiar with the target's dialect and vocal mannerisms. The Deviant cannot change Size, nor can he adopt the clothing or other trappings of the target. Within these limits, however, the disguise is almost flawless, granting the Remade the rote quality on Subterfuge rolls to successfully apply a disguise.

At Magnitude •••, the disguise perfectly replicates the target's body in appearance, sound, and even scent. Furthermore, he may take on the target's current costume or even appear of a Size up to two higher or lower than his own. These are not functional features, however. Riot gear created by this disguise offers no protection, for example, and an increase in apparent Size does not grant more health levels.

At Magnitude ••••, the Deviant's transformation also grants him access to useful fragments of the target's memories that make it more difficult to recognize him as an imposter:

- The Remade is able to speak the target's native tongue (or tongues, if he was raised multilingual) with the proper accent.
- The Deviant automatically recollects names, recognition signals, and the right responses to questions meant to establish his identity. This isn't an active awareness, but it works to prevent his being found out. For example, if greeted by one of the target's friends, the Remade can return the greeting without hesitation, suddenly recollecting that person's name. The same is true of secret handshakes and passwords. The Deviant could not tell anyone what the target's laptop password is, but as soon as he sits down in front of the login screen, his fingers seem to move of their own volition.
- The Remade becomes aware of the target's Social Merits and may gain temporary access to a number of dots of these equal to Scar Power. He recollects bank account credentials, the contact information for allies who owe the target favors, and so forth. The Deviant can, instead of reaping the benefits of a Social Merit, sabotage it such that the target loses access to it until the end of the chapter. The Deviant may benefit from this effect for a given target only once per chapter.

Deviations

- **Recollection (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken may also adopt an appearance based on a photograph of the subject, although low resolution images impose a penalty to the Scar Finesse roll to apply the disguise. Further, she may adopt the appearance of anyone she has previously mimicked.

The Coactive dabbles in games of mistaken identities, in keeping with the nature of the trickster god whose essence she drank, but its final curse plagues her daily (Misfortune; Persistent).

The Invasive's skin contains pinhole holographic projectors, and his voice box contains a sound modulator. Together, these allow him to imitate anyone. However, this equipment is delicate and requires regular repairs (Maintenance; Persistent).

The Mutant literally rearranges his face, molding the flesh like putty, but it takes time to complete this transformation (Preparation; Controlled; Dexterity).

Flight (• to •••••)

Overt

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can fall safely, glide, or fly under his own power.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant may turn any fall into a controlled descent, taking no falling damage.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade may glide with a horizontal Speed of 10 + Scar Power. He cannot gain altitude and must descend at least three yards/meters per turn of gliding — although the Storyteller may allow exceptions to this if local conditions are just right for riding thermals and updrafts. The Deviant may opt for a steeper descent, diving at a rate of up to 30 yards/meters per turn.

At Magnitude •••, The Broken may initiate flight. His horizontal air speed and diving rate are the same as for the gliding effect above. In addition, he may ascend a number of yards/meters each turn equal to Scar Power as an instant action. Certain Tilts and Environmental Tilts might also complicate flight or make it impossible for the Deviant to stay aloft (at the Storyteller's discretion).

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Grace:** The Deviant flies as easily as walking. The Remade can hover, and his ascents are part of his normal movement, instead of requiring an instant action.
- **Velocity:** The Broken's flight is swift. His horizontal air speed is equal to 20 times Scar Power.

At Magnitude •••••, The Deviant possesses both the Magnitude •••• effects.

The Cephalist uses her telekinetic powers to fly, but she is prone to hallucinations (Glitch; Persistent).

The Chimeric's arms have been replaced with wings (Missing Limb; Persistent).

Retractable rocket jets extend out of the Invasive's arms and legs, but remaining aloft is a constant balancing act that requires his full attention. (Concentration; Controlled; Wits).

Gigantic (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant is a true giant when this Variation is active. This grants several effects:

- Once per chapter, when the Variation's effects end, the Deviant heals some of the damage she sustained while it was active. This is equal to the difference between her normal Size and the Size the Variation granted her. The least serious injuries always heal first — bashing damage before lethal damage and lethal damage before aggravated damage — and this will not heal injuries the Remade suffered before activating the Variation. Any damage remaining in extra health boxes that disappeared because of a reduction in Size is applied to remaining health boxes as additional damage, potentially wrapping around to more severe types of damage (see p. XX).

- The Remade enjoys the 8-Again quality on Strength and Stamina rolls that benefit from her increased mass and adds four dice when spending Willpower on these rolls instead of three.
- The Broken receives a bonus equal to half the Magnitude of Gigantic (rounded up) to derived traits or static effects based on Strength or Stamina — such as Speed, thrown weapon calculations, and resistance to Tilts (whether personal or environmental). When spending Willpower to resist an unwanted effect targeting Stamina, she gains +3 instead of +2.
- The Deviant can lift, push, or slowly drag objects of up to her current Size, wield objects of up to half that (rounded up) with both hands, and wield objects of one-third her current Size (rounded up) one-handed. This does not require a roll unless the object in question is exceptionally dense (such as solid gold, lead, or uranium).

At Magnitude •, the Deviant's natural Size increases by 1, granting an additional health box.

At Magnitude ••, Size instead increases by 2 or 3.

At Magnitude •••, Size instead increases by 4 or 5.

At Magnitude ••••, Size instead increases by between 6 and 10.

At Magnitude •••••, Size instead increases by between 11 and 15.

The Chimeric is huge and can do nothing to reduce his size (Relentless Variation; Persistent).

The Coactive channels the power of a titan, growing to enormous heights but descending into a bestial state (Persistent Drawback [Alternate Personality]; Controlled; Manipulation).

The Mutant's body expands to an enormous size, but her Progenitor used the threat of immolation as a means of controlling her, instilling her with a fear of fire (Phobia; Persistent).

[CHART]

Size	Object
0	Insect
1	Handheld object or tool, rodent
2	Infant, cat, sword, sawn-off shotgun, skateboard
3	Mid-size dog, child, window, two-handed tool, stool
4	Spear, teenager, chair
5	Adult, door, electric scooter
6	Very large adult, deer, bicycle
7	Alligator, bear, motorbike, coffin
8	Vault door, compact car
10	Sports car, moose
12	Shark, luxury car
15	SUV, elephant
20	Light airplane, yacht, semi-truck

25 Dump truck, houseboat, tour bus, semi with trailer

30 Whale

[END CHART]

Healing Touch (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can repair injuries and cure other physical ailments with a touch.

No patient can benefit from the same effect of this Variation more than once per chapter, regardless of how many Broken attempt to use it on her, although the healer can use an Adaptation to overcome this limit. This Variation does not heal damage caused by a Scar (such as Perilous Variation) or Adaptation (such as Adrenaline Surge or Overclock).

At Magnitude •, the Remade alleviates symptoms, cures minor ailments, and takes away pain, reducing the patient's wound penalties by half Scar Power (rounded up) until the end of the scene.

At Magnitude ••, the Broken may heal a patient of all bashing damage or temporarily neutralize the effects of a drug, poison, or injury. This removes a number of Tilts (such as Poisoned, Sick, or Leg Wrack) equal to Scar Power, but doesn't cure any underlying Conditions.

At Magnitude •••, the transformed may heal a patient of lethal damage equal to Scar Power or remove a Condition caused by bodily injury, exhaustion, or illness (such as the Fatigued Condition). This does not affect Persistent Conditions.

At Magnitude ••••, once per chapter, the Deviant can heal a patient of aggravated damage equal to half Scar Power (rounded up), remove a Persistent Condition, or replace/restore function to a missing or destroyed limb or organ. This does not affect Scars.

At Magnitude •••••, the Remade can restore a dead patient to life. Such resurrection is often traumatic for the patient, who may not be entirely himself after the experience. If his death took place prior to the current story, his body was not largely intact, he patient died of natural causes, and/or he does not wish to be brought back from the dead, the risk of trauma is higher, and the Variation may fail entirely (at the Storyteller's discretion). The Broken may perform one such resurrection per story without personal cost. Each additional miracle she performs in the same story causes a medium Instability.

The Coactive redirects the life energy around him into his patient, healing her but at the expense of his own health and leaving a trail of withered plants and dead insects behind (Perilous Variation; Controlled; Dexterity; Deviation: Identifier).

The Invasive injects medical nanites into her patient, which effect rapid healing, but the electrical impulses generated by these nanites in her blood also slow her reaction times (Suppression; Persistent).

The Mutant Transmissible's saliva has healing properties, allowing him to close wounds, mend bones, and even restore life to the dead by licking them. However, using this ability frequently carries a high cost. Further, resurrection introduces a high probability of triggering Divergence in the newly arisen (Cooldown; Controlled; Dexterity).

Holographic Projection (• to •••••)

Overt

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can conjure illusions.

The Remade may generate holograms of up to Size 5 (or with a one-yard/meter radius). This illusion is static unless directed during the turn and disappears at once if the Deviant moves out of range of it. Simple holograms do not require a roll, but especially detailed illusions may demand Skill or Scar Finesse rolls as the Storyteller deems appropriate.

At Magnitude •, the hologram is obviously unreal. Visual illusions are translucent or occasionally flicker, and the noises they generate are tinny or obvious reproductions — like orchestral music played through the speaker of a cellphone. Detailed illusions — even if flawlessly rendered — suffer from low resolution or visual or audio artifacts.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant generates convincing audio-visual illusions. Most observers cannot distinguish them from the real thing until they or some other object passes through the hologram. Although the sensory stimulus provided by the Remade's illusions cannot inflict Tilts, they can illuminate a small room or generate enough white noise to discourage eavesdroppers.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade can give his holograms substance. Holographic objects have a Durability of 1 and Structure equal to Size + Durability. Characters within the affected area can pick up these illusory objects and use them as tools or weapons, although complex machines and electronics will require Skill and Scar Finesse rolls, often with significant penalties.

Deviations

- **Expand (+1 Magnitude):** The Deviant may generate holograms with a radius in yards/meters up to Scar Power or of a maximum Size equal to five times Scar Power.
- **Control (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken's illusions do not vanish when he moves out of range, and he may direct a number of holograms equal to Scar Power as a reflexive action, each turn.

The Cephalist can conjure illusions of anything she can imagine. Her Divergence involved being injected with spider eggs from a Fae world, which hatched thousands of gossamer spiders that crawled out of her body — an experience that she relives in dreams each night and which makes her intensely arachnophobic (Phobia; Persistent; Deviations: Nightmares).

The Coactive can pull images of objects and creatures that exist in parallel dimensions into his own. However, tapping into these otherworlds can draw the attention of their unseen, meddling denizens (Paranoia; Persistent).

The Invasive Amalgam has hologram projectors implanted in his body, placed there through meticulous and agonizing procedure that would have shattered his mind were it not for a fellow test subject's constant support — a test subject who only ever existed in his imagination (Glitch; Persistent).

Hyper-Competence (• to •••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

The Deviant possesses superhuman adroitness within a narrow field.

Choose a Skill when purchasing this Variation. This Variation can be purchased multiple times, and each time its benefits apply to a different Skill.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant is always treated as having an applicable Specialty when using the chosen Skill. She also achieves an exceptional success on three successes instead of five with that Skill.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade enjoys a bonus on rolls involving the chosen Skill equal to Scar Power.

At Magnitude •••, the Broken enjoys the rote quality on rolls with the chosen Skill.

The Chimeric's specialized education allows her to build, maintain, and repair virtually anything even while blindfolded, but the masters did not consider her ability to express her emotions a sufficiently useful skill (Frozen Heart; Persistent).

The Coactive is the vessel of a ghost, and it will aid him with tasks it could perform in life, although not always the way he expected (Persistent Drawback, Alternate Persona; Controlled; Manipulation).

The arcane circuitry in the Invasive's brain reroutes resources that he would normally use for self-expression to first aid and surgery (Silence Scar; Persistent).

Immunity (• to •••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

The Remade enjoys complete immunity to a certain impairments or sources of harm — whether due to alien anatomy, mystical protection, or some other factor.

While the Variation is active, the Deviant enjoys an immunity chosen at the time this Variation is purchased. This Variation can be purchased any number of times, and each purchase grants an additional immunity (or immunities). The immunity the Broken possesses determines the Variation's Magnitude:

At Magnitude •, the Remade is immune a number of Tilts equal to Scar Power, as well as to any Condition that operates on the same premise. A Deviant who is immune to the Leg Wrack Tilt cannot gain the Crippled Condition, for example. This does not include Environmental Tilts, however, and the Broken cannot make himself immune to a Scar.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant possesses immunity to a number of the following equal to Scar Power: Caustic Chemicals (such as acids and bases), Cold, Disease, Electricity, Falling Damage, Fire, Drugs/Poison, or Radiation. The Storyteller may allow alternative immunities at her discretion.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade demonstrates a substantial resistance to the powers of a single category of supernatural being such as ghosts, wizards, vampires, demons, or werewolves. Any attempt to target the Remade with one of these abilities must defeat him in a Clash of Wills.

The adaptations of the Chimeric's animal half manifest as a resistance to cold, disease, and drugs, but her pedigree also comes with a thinness of the blood (Hemophilia; Persistent).

The Invasive has cybernetic arms and legs, which are nearly unbreakable, if almost impossible to overlook (Conspicuous Appearance; Persistent).

A lifetime of controlled exposure to food and drink imbued with sorcerous powers has allowed the Mutant to resist magic at need, although it has come at the cost of needing to consume these substances to survive whenever the Variation is active (Dependency; Persistent).

[Descriptor] [Skill] Lash (• to •••••)

Overt

Discrete, Toggled

This Variation allows the Remade to attack enemies with an arsenal other than a Baseline's punches and kicks. The manifestations of this Variation are as varied as the Broken themselves. Some lash out with telekinetic force, others with a hail of glass shards or a blast of necrotic shadow, and still others have wicked claws, fangs, or horns. This Variation may be purchased any number of times to represent different means of attack.

- Lashes have a descriptor chosen at the time of purchase — Bruising (deal bashing damage), Cutting (deal lethal damage), or Gentle (deal no damage).
- Choose a combat Skill when purchasing this Variation — Athletics, Brawl, Firearms, or Weaponry. This determines the dice pool used to resolve attacks with the Lash (Dexterity + Athletics/Firearms - target's Defense, or Strength + Brawl/Weaponry - target's Defense) and whether the attacks are ranged (Athletics/Firearms) or melee (Brawl/Weaponry). Each attack with a Lash requires an instant action.
- A ranged Lash has a range of 30/60/120 yards/meters. Although not Directed, Scars and Deviations that cannot entangle Directed Variations cannot entangle a ranged Lash, and ones that may only entangle Directed Variations can entangle a ranged Lash.
- In order to apply their Tilts, Cutting Lashes must inflict at least one point of lethal damage after armor, and Bruising Lashes must inflict at least one point of damage in excess of the target's general armor rating (before applying armor). Gentle Lashes apply their Tilts on any successful attack, regardless of the target's armor.

At Magnitude •, the Lash has a damage rating of 0 and deals damage as part of an attack. In addition, choose one of the following effects at the time of purchase:

- **Blasting (Ranged Lash Only):** The Lash behaves as a short burst (p. XX).
- **Caustic:** The Lash splashes the target with a caustic chemical (p. XX) with an intensity of +0 and coverage of 1 (2 on an exceptional success).
- **Channel:** Choose one of the Remade's Directed Variations. On a successful attack with Lash, the Deviant may reflexively activate that Variation as though she had touched the target. Variations that can affect multiple targets only affect the target of Lash, however. The Lash gains the Exclusive keyword.
- **Conjured:** The dice pool for attacks made with the Lash is instead Scar Finesse + Acclimation - the target's Defense.
- **Deadly:** The Lash has a damage rating no greater than the lower of Scar Power or Magnitude and has an equal Initiative penalty.

- **Deafening:** The Lash inflicts the Deafened Tilt in both ears.
- **Disabling:** When attacking a specified target (p. XX) with the Lash, reduce the penalty by one, and increase the damage by Scar Power for the purpose of applying Tilts. A Gentle Lash also adds successes on the attack roll to this effective damage.
- **Envenomed:** The Lash causes the Poisoned Tilt.
- **Forceful:** The Lash inflicts the Knocked Down Tilt.
- **Grappling (Melee Lash Only):** On a successful attack, the Deviant may also initiate a grapple against the target as a reflexive action.
- **Immolating:** The Lash causes the target to catch fire as though exposed to a flame (p. XX) with a size of 1 and a heat of +0 (size 2, on an exceptional success).
- **Insidious:** The Lash ignores Defense. However, attacks with it are instead resisted by a Resistance Attribute chosen at the time the Lash is created.
- **Obscuring:** The Lash inflicts the Blinded Tilt (in both eyes, on an exceptional success).
- **Piercing:** The Lash has the Armor Piercing quality equal to the lower of Scar Power or Magnitude.
- **Reach (Ranged Lash Only):** The Lash instead has a range of 100/200/400 yards/meters.
- **Sickening:** The Lash inflicts the Sick Tilt.
- **Soporific:** The Lash inflicts the Drugged Tilt.
- **Touch (Melee Lash Only):** The Lash is delivered via touch attacks, rolling Dexterity + Brawl/Weaponry - the target's Defense.
- **Versatile:** Your Lash becomes Tiered, allowing you to call upon fewer of the effects and Deviations you chose. A Lash with Sickening and Soporific, for example, may inflict the Sick Tilt, the Drugged Tilt, both, or neither, as you decide before making an attack with it.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, but choose three effects, instead.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but choose five effects, instead.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but choose seven effects, instead.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but choose nine effects, instead.

Deviations

None of the following Deviations has one of the similar effects above as its prerequisites. Corrosive does not require Caustic, and only the more powerful effect applies. Additionally, Deviations that increase the damage rating do not stack (only the best one applies).

- **Blinding (+1 Magnitude):** The Lash inflicts the Blinded Tilt in both eyes.
- **Burst (Ranged Lash Only; +1 Magnitude):** The Lash behaves as a medium burst (p. XX).
- **Circle Strike (Melee Lash Only; +2 Magnitude):** The Lash attacks every viable target within one yard/meter of the Deviant — friend or foe. Resolve each attack separately.

- **Corrosive (+1 Magnitude):** As Caustic, but the chemical's intensity bonus is instead equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).
- **Debilitating (+1 Magnitude):** As Disabling. Additionally, if the Broken does not specify a target, it still hits one chosen at random based on the face value of a single die, potentially imposing a Tilt: Arm (1-3), Leg (4-6), Head (7-8), or Heart (9-10).
- **Devastating (+1 Magnitude):** As Deadly, but use the *higher* of Scar Power or Magnitude.
- **Explosive (Ranged Lash Only; +2 Magnitude):** The Lash instead generates an explosive with a range of 10/20/30. It has a blast area is equal to Scar Power + Magnitude and a Force equal to the lower of Scar Power or Magnitude. Its damage rating is unchanged, but extra successes on the attack roll do not increase damage.
- **Full Auto (Ranged Lash Only; +2 Magnitude):** The Lash behaves as a Long Burst (p. XX).
- **Gunshot (Ranged Lash Only; +1 Magnitude):** The Lash ignores Defense as though it were a firearm attack.
- **Horrendous (Cutting Lash Only; +1 Magnitude):** The Lash instead deals aggravated damage.
- **Immobilizing (+2 Magnitude):** The Lash imposes the Immobilized Tilt on the target. Escape attempts treat this as a restraining item with a Durability equal to half Scar Power (rounded up). This restraint further imposes a -2 penalty on the escape attempt (-4 if the Deviant achieved an exceptional success on the attack).
- **Incinerating (+1 Magnitude):** As Immolating, but the fire's heat bonus is instead equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).
- **Line-of-Sight (Ranged Lash Only; +1 Magnitude):** The Lash can strike any target not completely hidden by cover, regardless of the distance.
- **Penetrating (+1 Magnitude):** Armor affords no protection from the Lash's damage.
- **Scrambling (+1 Magnitude):** The Lash inflicts the Insensate Tilt.
- **Stunning (+1 Magnitude):** The Lash inflicts the Stunned Tilt.
- **Terminal (+1 Magnitude):** The Lash inflicts the grave Sick Tilt.
- **Toxic (+1 Magnitude):** The Lash inflicts the grave Poisoned Tilt.

[FULL-PAGE SIDEBAR — HALF FOR RANGED LASHES AND HALF FOR MELEE LASHES, SO MAYBE MAKE IT TWO COLUMNS OR TWO HALF-PAGE SIDEBARS ON TOP OF EACH OTHER.]

Example Lashes

Ranged Lashes

Magnitude •

The Cephalist's psionic strike dulls the target's senses (Bruising Firearms Lash; Soporific).

The Chimeric spits venom (Gentle Athletics Lash; Envenomed)

The Coactive unleashes a directed scream seeming from the pits of hell (Bruising Athletics Lash; Deafening).

The Invasive shoots lasers from his eyes (Cutting Firearms Lash; Immolating)

The Mutant fires shards of bone out of specialized organs on each side of her skull (Cutting Firearms Lash, Deadly).

Magnitude ••

The Cephalist's lightning-quick telekinetic strike grapples her foe (Bruising Athletics Lash; Channel [Telekinesis], Gunshot).

The Chimeric fires a burst of quills that can penetrate body armor (Cutting Firearms Lash; Burst, Piercing)

Arcane darkness envelops the Coactive's opponent (Cutting Athletics Lash; Blinding, Insidious [Composure]).

The Invasive fires stunning energy from his hands (Gentle Firearms Lash; Deadly, Stunning).

A terrifying, short-lived winged gremlin bursts out of the Mutant's skin and bites the target (Cutting Athletics Lash; Devastating, Soporific)

Magnitude •••

The Cephalist unleashes a wave of telepathic control that plunges one or more victims into a reverie of vivid memories of trauma or ecstasy (Gentle Firearms Lash; Conjured, Burst, Scrambling).

The demonic ovipositor under the skin of the Chimeric's left arm sends forth a barrage of hungry larvae that burrow into the target's flesh (Cutting Athletics Lash; Blasting, Horrendous, Toxic).

Tendrils of blue energy burst out of the Coactive's body, lashing out in every direction (Cutting Firearms Lash; Deadly, Full-Auto)

The Invasive's right hand folds back to reveal a small cannon (Cutting Firearms Lash; Piercing, Devastating, Gunshot).

The Mutant exhales a plume of pure pestilence (Bruising Athletics Lash; Soporific, Terminal, Toxic).

Magnitude ••••

The Cephalist projects intense psychic energy that causes brain hemorrhages (Cutting Firearms Lash; Insidious [Resolve], Horrendous, Penetrating).

The Coactive lobes a ball of explosive, white-hot ectoplasm (Cutting Athletics Lash; Deadly, Conjured, Immolating, Devastating, Explosive)

The Mutant showers the victim in deadly acid (Gentle Athletics Lash; Conjured, Burst, Corrosive, Devastating)

Magnitude •••••

The Chimeric generates a powerful bolt of electricity (Bruising Firearms Lash; Forceful, Devastating, Forceful, Reach, Gunshot, Penetrating, Stunning)

The Invasive's body contains a whole arsenal of weapons suitable for any occasion (Cutting Firearms Lash; Deadly, Disabling, Forceful, Immolating, Obscuring, Piercing, Reach, Soporific, Versatile).

Melee Lashes

Magnitude •

The Cephalist sheaths her hands in tiny forcefields that allow her to land bone-shattering blows (Bruising Brawl Lash; Disabling).

The Chimeric has razor sharp, retractable claws (Cutting Brawl Lash; Deadly).

The Coactive conjures a main gauche of coruscating energy (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Piercing).

The Invasive deploys canisters that project sand into a nearby target's eyes at high velocity (Gentle Weaponry Lash; Obscuring).

The Mutant's teeth are sharpened and envenomed like those of a cobra (Cutting Brawl Lash; Envenomed).

Magnitude ••

The Cephalist touches her opponent, sending a knife of psychic fire into his brain (Bruising Brawl Lash; Deadly, Insidious [Resolve], Touch).

The Chimeric's prehensile tail is covered in bony hooks as sharp as shark's teeth (Cutting Brawl Lash; Forceful, Deadly, Grappling)

The Coactive's touch burns white hot (Gentle Brawl Lash; Touch, Incinerating).

The Invasive has an electrified sword for an arm (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Channel [Electrokinesis], Devastating).

The Mutant's claws drip with foul substances (Cutting Brawl Lash; Sickening, Corrosive).

Magnitude •••

The Cephalist's punches literally strike fear into the heart of his target, sapping away the will to fight (Bruising Brawl Lash; Channel [Creeping Dread], Scrambling).

The Chimeric explodes into a berserk whirlwind of claw, fang, and horn (Cutting Brawl Lash; Deadly, Circle Strike).

The Coactive's touch freezes the target in a block of ice (Gentle Brawl Lash; Touch, Immobilizing).

A chain of small teeth protrudes from the Invasive's right arm, moving like a chainsaw (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Piercing, Debilitating; Devastating).

The Mutant bites off chunks of his victim's flesh and swallows them (Cutting Brawl Lash; Channel [Inhuman Digestion], Deadly, Grappling, Horrendous).

Magnitude ••••

The Chimeric sprays the target with toxic and highly caustic black ink (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Blinding, Corrosive, Deadly, Toxic).

A needle in the Invasive's finger injects the victim with aggressive nanites with effects ranging from light-headedness to the formation of super-fast-acting cancer

cells that harden into tumors throughout the victim's body (Gentle Brawl Lash; Piercing, Sickening, Soporific, Toxic, Venomous, Versatile).

The Mutant wields a dozen, grasping, memory-devouring tentacles (Bruising Brawl Lash; Channel [Memory Thief], Deadly, Grappling, Circle Strike).

Magnitude ••••

The Cephalist conjures flaming swords of varying sizes and intensities, and the fires they ignite are under her command (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Channel [Pyrokinesis], Deadly, Immolating, Versatile, Devastating, Incinerating).

The Coactive conjures a spear with a point made of pure necrotic energy (Cutting Weaponry Lash; Deadly, Debilitating, Devastating, Obscuring, Penetrating, Stunning).

Miniaturization (• to ••••)

Overt

Discrete, Toggled

The Remade shrinks.

This miniaturization has a less drastic effect on the Remade's mass than one might expect. As a result, if the Remade adopts a Size that is less than Scar Power, she uses Scar Power instead of her Size when calculating the number of boxes in her health track. A Deviant with a Scar Power •• and Stamina •• who shrinks to Size 2, for example, would have five health boxes, not four.

At Magnitude •, the Remade shrinks to Size 4. This grants her a +2 bonus on any rolls to remain unnoticed or to gain access to or operate in places where being small is an advantage — such as in a crawl space or while seeking cover from enemy gunfire.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant can shrink to as little as Size 1. The bonus to rolls above is instead equal to (6 - Size), and she enjoys a bonus to Defense equal to half that bonus (rounded up). However, the species factor to the Remade's Speed is equal to her new Size instead of being five, and she cannot wield any weapon whose Size is equal to or greater than her own.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade becomes Size 0, which ranges from the size of a moderately large cockroach to that of a fruit fly. Anyone not actively looking for her rolls a chance die to notice she is present, and even if successful, they are likely to assume she is an unimportant insect. Those searching for the Deviant suffer a -5 penalty, while she enjoys a +5 bonus to attempts to elude notice. However, the Remade's Speed is reduced to 1, and she cannot lift or manipulate objects larger than a sugar cube without additional Variations.

At Magnitude •••• the Deviant becomes microscopic. He is undetectable without a combination of scientific instruments and dumb luck or without supernatural abilities. He cannot move more than a few millimeters without piggybacking on a moving object.

Slipping inside the body of an enemy and then returning to full size is a messy but effective tactic at Magnitude ••• and ••••, inflicting aggravated damage to the victim equal to the Deviant's new Size, but this inflicts a medium Instability on the Deviant.

The Coactive has a strange relationship with space that allows him to take up less of it, adopting a wide variety of sizes, but even at full size, he never quite has the mass of other human adults (Fragility; Persistent).

Subdermal pumps inject a shrinking potion into the Invasive's veins when she gives a mental command. The Remade learned the formula of the cocktail that activates her miniaturization, but it still takes time to brew and does not have a long shelf life (Maintenance; Persistent).

The Mutant can fold her body on a subatomic level, but doing so weakens her hold on reality further (Unstable Variation; Controlled; Wits).

Out of Phase (• to ••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant's body does not interact with matter in the ordinary way.

At Magnitude •, the Remade may render part of a limb — such as a finger, a hand, or an arm from elbow to hand — insubstantial to material with a Durability of 1 or less. The entire affected region remains insubstantial until the end of the scene or until the Broken ends the Variation as an instant action. He therefore can't reach into an enemy's chest and crush her heart in a fist, for example. However, he could reach through a wooden door to unlock it from the other side using the metal doorknob, since it would still be solid to his hand. If this Variation ends while the Deviant still intersects a solid object, he is ejected from it and suffers a medium Instability.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Stone:** The Remade's insubstantial body parts can pass through material with a Durability of 2. He must decide how insubstantial to make himself at the time he activates the Variation, but he can change this density as an instant action during its duration — ignoring either Durability 1 or Durability 2 and 1 materials.
- **Torso:** The Broken may render up to half the volume of his body insubstantial, allowing him to peek a head through walls or hide in places that are too small for him by dangling his legs inside a wall or floor. This can likewise afford him the benefits of partial concealment (p. XX) against weapons whose Durability does not normally interact with his body. Further, his clothing and possessions in contact with the affected body parts likewise become insubstantial, as long as they consist entirely of materials whose Durability is less than the maximum he can penetrate (Durability 0 if he could normally pass through Durability 1 materials, for example). He cannot, however, separate these items from his body. He cannot stick a glass dagger in a target and then let go of it so that it is no longer in his hand when the Variation ends, for example.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Balance:** The Broken enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •• effects.
- **Steel:** This is only available if the Deviant chose Stone as her Magnitude •• effect. The Remade can become insubstantial enough to pass through Durability 3 materials. Only rare, super-hard or mystical substances are beyond his ability to penetrate.
- **Body:** This is only available if the Remade chose Torso as her Magnitude •• effect. The Broken may render his entire body insubstantial (as well as any clothing or equipment, per the

Torso effect at Magnitude ••). Moreover, he can leave behind immaterial objects, which become material again when the transformed does. However, insubstantial items that intersect with other objects when the Variation ends are ejected from them into the nearest empty space large enough to accommodate them, inflicting a minor Instability on the Deviant.

At Magnitude ••••, the Broken enjoys the benefits of all Magnitude ••• effects.

Deviations

- **Defensive (+1 Magnitude):** The Deviant may become insubstantial or regain solidity as a reflexive action but may only do so once per turn.

The Cephalist achieves material harmony through this psionic discipline, allowing him to pass through solid objects, but the Divergence has left him sickly (Genetic Disorder; Persistent).

By using advanced technology to rearrange the matter in his body to line up with the empty space of an object, the Invasive passes through it. This only functions in the presence of certain frequencies of sound, however, and its efficacy varies widely (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Stamina; Deviations: Short Circuit [Power Fluctuation], Uncontrollable Variation).

The Mutant's body responds to matter strangely, but this also renders her particularly fragile (Fragility; Persistent).

Pyrokinesis (• to •••••)

Overt

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Remade controls nearby flames.

This affects flames within range whose total damage due to size and heat does not exceed Scar Power. For example, with Scar Power 3, the Remade can affect a fire the size of a torch with the heat of a Bunsen burner (1 + 2), a bonfire-sized fire with the heat of a torch (2 + 1), or an inferno with the heat of a candle (3 + 0) — as well as smaller and less intense flames (see p. XX).

At Magnitude •, choose one:

- **Influence:** The Remade can direct a fire, moving at Speed no greater than the Scar Power. Attempting to engulf an enemy in range requires a Scar Finesse roll, that is resisted by Defense (instead of contested by Scar Resistance + Supernatural Tolerance). If successful, the target suffers lethal damage based on the fire's size and heat. The Deviant may instead prevent a target fire from spreading to new fuel or protect a creature or object from fire, reducing fire damage by Scar Power.
- **Pyrotechnics:** The Broken can exert limited influence over the fires under her control, shaping them to largely cosmetic ends — such as creating pyrotechnic displays, causing the flames to give off more or less light, or making the fire produce more or less smoke. However, she can also prevent the fire from spreading to new fuel, including allowing creatures to walk amid the flames safely.

At Magnitude ••, the Broken benefits from both Magnitude • effects.

At Magnitude •••, the Deviant can increase or decrease the size or heat of a fire by one step. This can cause the fire to rage beyond her further control. If the fire is already of minimal heat (inflicting one damage due to its size and heat), further reduction extinguishes it.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Ignite:** The Remade can ignite a fire of any combination of size and heat that she can control (or a smaller and/or cooler one, if she prefers). She may choose to ignite a living target, inflicting lethal damage based on the size and heat of the fire.
- **Extinguish:** This is only available if the Deviant selected Suppress as her Magnitude •• effect. The Remade can extinguish a fire.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade benefits from both Magnitude ••• effects.

The Cephalist can shape and direct fire with his mind, but anyone holding a lit match can issue commands to him that he must obey (Subliminal Conditioning; Persistent).

The ifrit's skin fused to the Chimeric's own grants her an ifrit's command over flame, but she cannot abide cold environments (Native Environment; Persistent).

The Mutant's fire powers lash out when the ambient temperature falls below freezing, filling him with a desire to do violence (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Composure; Deviation: Indelible Mark [Murderous Urge]).

Shadow Selves (• to ••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant shatters into identical shards like images of a broken mirror, only one of them real.

The Remade creates a number of copies of himself (not counting the original) equal to Scar Power — all of them within one yard/meter. The character's player must decide which is the original at the time the Broken activates the Variation. Copies have the Deviant's Defense and benefit from active Variations that increase maneuverability (such as Flight or Enhanced Speed). However, they vanish the first time they would suffer damage, regardless of the type. Copies likewise disappear if they are more than 30 yards/meters from the original, if the Remade activates this Variation again, or at the end of the scene. If an attack or targeted power meant for the Broken could potentially hit a copy, instead, the Storyteller determines at random which is targeted.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant has very limited control over the copies and does not see through their eyes. On each of his turns, as a reflexive action, he can direct each copy's movement. If he cannot perceive the copy, he can mentally direct it only to stay where it is, move away from him, or return to him. The copies make excellent decoys, but they cannot take any actions other than to move. Swinging from a rope or opening a door represents the upper limit of their ability to interact with the world. Therefore, if the Remade takes any other action beyond moving, it can spoil the illusion, allowing observers an Intelligence + Wits roll to identify the original.

At Magnitude ••, the Broken has a greater awareness of the copies' positions and situations. These are usually only vague sensory impressions, but he can, as an instant action, take direct control of a copy, experiencing its senses as his own while his body behaves like a copy. If a copy is destroyed while the Deviant is riding it in this way, he suffers a minor Instability.

At Magnitude •••, the copies have a degree of self-direction. Each copy counts as a Retainer (p. XX) with a rating equal to half Scar Power (rounded up) whose areas of expertise include those

Skills in which the Remade has at least three dots. They possess any mundane weapons, armor, or equipment the Broken is currently carrying.

Deviations

- **Prism (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken may choose for his shadow selves to have an appearance different from his own. This cannot result in a change in Size, but he may create copies that do not share his race, sex, attire, or other qualities. These cannot convincingly mirror another person, being instead a rather generic collection of physical traits. However, the Deviant may choose for any of these alternate selves to be the original.
- **Superposition (+1 Magnitude):** The Remade exists in a superposition with all his copies. The character's player may decide which is the original at the beginning of the Deviant's next turn instead of deciding when activating the Variation. In addition, the Broken may, as an instant action, change which one is the original. Paired with Prism, the Remade's current self changes back to his original appearance when the Variation ends.

The Cephalist clouds the minds of onlookers, causing them to see her in places she is not, but she also sees people who are not there while this Variation is active (Persistent Drawback [Glitch]; Controlled; Manipulation).

The Coactive summons alternate versions of himself from parallel dimensions, but he isn't the one in charge when they're around (Persistent Drawback, Alternate Persona; Controlled; Wits).

The Mutant is able to be in several places at once, but she has a difficult time staying in only one place for too long (Power Build-Up; Involuntary; Stamina).

Shadows of the Past (• to •••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant glimpses the past.

This Variation targets either a character within range or the Deviant's current location. The visions it grants can last anywhere from a single turn to several hours — depending on the duration and importance of the events the Broken witnesses. During this time, the Remade is in a trance and is non-responsive.

The Broken cannot target the same person/object with this Variation more than once per chapter, although Adaptations can overcome this limitation.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant may choose to glimpse random moments in the target's past. These impressions are too hazy and scattered to derive a complete history from them, but they always reveal something relevant to the Remade's current goals, granting a bonus on the next relevant roll equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).

At Magnitude ••, the Broken may choose a time or event in the target's past — whether a fixed time (“last Tuesday at 9 a.m.”) or a specified event (“his honeymoon”). She receives a vision of something that took place during that time or within 24 hours before or after it. This means that although she will always see something of importance to her, it might not be the event she intended to watch. She might not witness the murder, but she will see how the decedent's spouse responded when he found the body, for example, or she might not see the target's exotic

honeymoon destination, but she'll get to hear the argument the newlyweds had the day before they went to the airport.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Living History:** Once per chapter, the Remade may project herself into an echo of a target's past. This works similarly to the Magnitude •• effect, except she may fully explore the events as though she had been there — either as one of the original participants or as a vaguely familiar stranger to those who were there. She can interact with these shadows of the past to interview witnesses or perform surveillance on her enemies. Nothing she does in this echo has any impact on the present, and so no one else will remember what happened in it when the Deviant exits her trance.
- **Precision:** The vision of the past the Broken receives is no more than one hour before or after her target time (rather than 24 hours).
- **Shared Vision:** The Remade may share her vision with several willing companions within 10 yards/meters. All of them arrive at the same place in time and remain for the same length of time and typically see the same things — although some may notice different details than their companions.

At Magnitude •••, choose two of the Magnitude •• effects. Living History paired with Shared Vision allows each companion to occupy a different participant in the vision, such that they can pursue multiple lines of investigation simultaneously.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade benefits from all Magnitude •• effects.

The Cephalist probes the target's memories or reads its psychometric properties. Her memory of her own past before her Divergence is filled with gaps, however, and even this Variation cannot lift these veils (Amnesia Scar; Controlled; Wits).

The Chimeric's senses pick up important, relevant details about the target's recent whereabouts. The process of Divergence left the Remade prone to bouts of illness (Genetic Disorder; Persistent).

The alien power within the Coactive reveals what has come before, making him better-prepared to meet to trials ahead. Seeking too much knowledge in this way can leave him blind to the present, though (Deterioration; Controlled; Dexterity).

Specialized Sense (• to •••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

The Deviant has special senses beyond those of Baselines.

This Variation may be purchased any number of times to represent additional senses.

At Magnitude •, choose one:

- **Animal:** The Broken possesses sensory advantages in common with other members of the animal kingdom. She might have the long-distance vision of a bird of prey, for example, or the olfactory acuity of a bloodhound. When this sense affords her an advantage on a Skill roll or allows her to compensate for adverse environmental factors (such as using echolocation while suffering the Blinded Tilt), she enjoys a +2 Equipment bonus. The Deviant possesses a number

of such senses equal to Scar Power. Her player may choose all of these when she purchases this Variation or may “reveal” a new sense up to once per chapter until she has assigned all the available senses.

- **Technology:** The Deviant can mimic a scientific instrument (such as a microscope, telescope, or metal detector), chosen at the time of purchase. This includes instruments that project energy and build images from the way the signals bounce, such as radar, sonograms, and x-ray machines. When this sense affords her an advantage on a Skill roll, the Remade enjoys a +3 Equipment bonus, or it can completely negate an appropriate sensory-based penalty (such as using sonar to pinpoint the location of an invisible opponent).

- **Sixth Sense:** The Broken can sense the proximity and pinpoint the location of one type of supernatural creature (such as Deviants, faeries, or ghosts), chosen at the time of purchase. The Remade’s range is limited to 10 yards/meters, and this sixth sense fails if the creature is concealing its nature using a special power to do so.

At Magnitude ••, as the Sixth Sense Magnitude • effect, and the Broken possesses senses to observe one class of ordinarily undetectable signals and forces (such as ghosts, temporal anomalies, or astral projections), chosen at the time of purchase. These are fully visible to the Deviant, who may analyze them as though they were ordinary phenomena. In addition to providing useful context during supernatural encounters, these senses provide a +2 Equipment bonus to relevant Occult rolls.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the Broken’s supernatural senses also function as specialized equipment designed for measuring and analyzing the chosen class of phenomena. The Equipment bonus is instead +3, and once per chapter, the character’s player can describe something in the current environment that is relevant to the class of phenomena and might reasonably be there. This detail is present in the scene and immediately obvious to the Deviant.

The Cephalist can detect the psychic waves generated by creatures native to or projecting into the Astral plane, but she cannot hear the sounds of the material world (Sensory Deprivation; Persistent).

The Chimeric’s yellow eyes can see in low light as easily as in full daylight (Conspicuous Appearance; Persistent).

The Mutant’s nose can distinguish creatures by the scent of their DNA sequences. However, she cannot do so if the evidence is tainted by the DNA of six or more other creatures of the same species (Power Failure; Controlled; Wits).

Storm-Caller (•• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade can create highly localized environmental phenomena.

The Deviant may transform the area within 10 yards/meters of him, transforming it into an Extreme Environment (p. XX) and imposing one or more compatible Environmental Tilts on the area. When activating this Variation, the Remade must decide whether the environment it creates remains in place or whether its center “follows” him. The Broken does not enjoy any special immunity to the Environmental Tilts or damage inflicted by this Variation.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade may create a level 1 Extreme Environment with a single Environmental Tilt.

At Magnitude •••, once per chapter, the Broken may create an Extreme Environment with a level and number of Environmental Tilts no greater than half Scar Power (rounded up).

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Control:** This Variation may instead affect an area up to 30 yards/meters from the Deviant. The Remade can also “spend” levels of his Extreme Environment and/or his Environmental Tilts to neutralize an existing, contrary Extreme Environment or Environmental Tilts (although supernaturally generated environments provoke a Clash of Wills). A Storm-Caller could create cold to counter heat, for example. As an instant action, the Deviant may exchange one Environmental Tilt for another.
- **Intensity:** The Deviant may create a level 4 Extreme Environment with up to four Environmental Tilts. The Remade may call upon this effect once per story without adverse effects, but each additional catastrophic environment he creates in the same story causes a medium Instability.

At Magnitude •••••, the Broken enjoys both Magnitude •••• effects.

The Cephalist sends telekinetic shockwaves into the surrounding area, simulating an earthquake, but this dangerous effect manifests continually unless she wears headgear lined with gold foil, and the damage it leaves behind is easy to identify (Relentless Variation [Power Failure]; Persistent; Deviations: Identifier).

The Coactive summons rain, wind, and storms, but this requires he perform an elaborate dance to call upon the local weather gods (Preparation; Controlled; Dexterity)

Darkness and cold cloak the Mutant wherever she goes, extinguishing lights and sources of heat in his vicinity. The Broken can be compelled to do violence by hearing a ghost story or the invocation of an urban legend such as Bloody Mary (Subliminal Conditioning; Persistent).

Superhuman [Attribute] (• to •••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

The Remade possesses the potential to exceed the talents of even the most competent Baseline human.

Choose one Attribute when purchasing this Variation. This Variation increases the target Attribute by its Magnitude, or to a minimum rating of (Magnitude + 3) — whichever is higher. This can raise the Attribute’s rating higher than five — to a maximum rating of 10. However, any bonus this Variation grants never affects the calculations or effects of supernatural abilities, including the activation of Variations or computations of the Remade’s Scar Power, Finesse, or Resistance. Improved Resistance Attributes still apply when resisting or contesting supernatural effects.

This Variation can be purchased multiple times, but each time it applies to a different Attribute.

At Magnitude •, this is a +1 bonus or a minimum rating of 4.

At Magnitude ••, this is a +2 bonus or a minimum rating of 5.

At Magnitude ●●, this is a +3 bonus or a minimum rating of 6, and the Deviant enjoys a special benefit based on the Attribute the Variation enhances:

- **Intelligence:** The Remade knows things he could not possibly know and draws correct conclusions even in the absence of all the facts. Once per chapter, the Deviant's player may introduce a bit of lore or trivia. She could describe the club that just opened across town, for example, or describe a rare species of insect that has markings strangely similar to those on the giant insect the Remade is investigating. This piece of information becomes a fact that the character can immediately share to grant the Informed Condition to her allies regarding the topic.
- **Wits:** The Deviant has a preternatural ability to pick up on relevant details in his environment. Once per scene, the character's player can describe something in the environment that might reasonably be there — a fire escape leading to the roof of the building, for example, or the butt of an unusual brand of cigarette enjoyed by the subject of the Remade's investigation. This detail is present in the scene and immediately obvious to the Deviant. In addition, once per chapter, when the Remade uncovers a Clue, it has one additional element (see p. XX).
- **Resolve:** If a supernatural effect would control the Deviant's emotions, mind, or actions (or one that is resisted or contested by her Resolve or Composure), it automatically provokes a Clash of Wills with this Variation. If the Remade wins this contest, the source of the effect cannot target her with it again during the current scene. If she loses, she may spend a point of Willpower to force a new Clash or Wills on a later turn.
- **Strength:** The Deviant is capable of impossible feats of strength. The Remade can dead lift, shove, or slowly pull objects whose Size does not exceed five times Scar Power. In addition, his Brawl and Weaponry attacks gain the armor piercing quality equal to the half Scar Power (rounded up) and ignore Durability equal to the half Scar Power (rounding up), allowing him to splinter a door with a single kick or ram a knife through armored plates.
- **Dexterity:** The Remade possesses perfect balance and incredible grace. Whenever an outside force would push, pull, or drag the Deviant off a precipice, he catches himself before the fall occurs and can pull himself safely back onto the ledge as an instant action. If the Remade would fall due to a slippery horizontal surface — such as in an area affected by the Ice Environmental Tilt (see p. XX), he may choose either not to fall or to fall but to rise to his feet at the beginning of his next turn as a reflexive action. Finally, when making an autofire attack against multiple targets, the Remade may opt not to benefit from the usual bonus to the attack roll, in which case he also does not suffer a penalty to the attack roll if he attacks multiple targets in a single action.
- **Stamina:** If a supernatural effect would degrade, transform, or disable the Deviant's body, it provokes a Clash of Wills with this Variation. If the Remade wins this contest, the source of the effect cannot target her with it again during the current scene. This affords no protection from supernatural powers that merely inflict damage. If she loses, she may choose to suffer a point of bashing damage to force a new Clash or Wills on a later turn, but she cannot suffer more than one point of bashing damage per turn in this way.
- **Presence:** The Remade is a veritable people magnet. Once per chapter, the character's player can describe someone (or a small group) who is reasonably likely to be there — from a group or revelers in a college town on a Saturday night or a state trooper pulling over a speeder

on the side of the highway, to an old enemy mentioned in the Deviant's backstory or someone linked to one of his Social Merits. This person is present or arrives almost immediately.

- **Manipulation:** The Remade has a remarkable ability to convince strangers to do small favors for him. Once per chapter, the Broken's player may designate one stranger or small group of strangers as a connection to temporary dots of Allies, Contacts, Resources, or Retainer equal to half Scar Power (rounded up). This person must be a Baseline who is not currently hostile to the character. The Remade can, with a few minutes of flattery, begging, or con artistry, convince the target to perform one minor favor for him that is consistent with who they are and the Merit they represent. The Deviant could get a cop to let him off with a warning for a minor offense, for example, or he could invent a believable premise to convince a passerby to deliver an envelope to the woman waiting for a bus on the other side of the street. The Merit granted by this Variation isn't cumulative with any existing Social Merits, and its effects only last until the end of the scene, but it lacks the Overt keyword. This Variation does not cause a person with the desired connections to appear on the scene. The Deviant must work with the people she finds nearby.

- **Composure:** The Deviant remains cool under pressure, even in the face of failure. Each time the Remade spends a point of Willpower to add dice to an action or to increase a Resistance Attribute, he regains the spent Willpower if the extra effort does not pay off. For a roll enhanced by Willpower, this means he achieves no successes. For a Resistance Attribute, this means that the phenomenon the Remade attempted to resist still overcomes his Resistance.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and the bonus is +4 with a minimum rating of 7.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude •••, and the bonus is +5 with a minimum rating of 8.

The Cephalist possesses an impossible intelligence, but it has caused his muscles to atrophy (Suppression; Persistent).

The Chimeric is an exceptional physical specimen, capable of feats impossible for Baselines, but she can be forced into submission by threatening her with a common housecat (Phobia; Persistent).

The Mutant's Divergence involved the excision some of her base animal instincts, leaving her calm, if cold, even under intense pressure (Frozen Heart; Persistent).

Narrative Control

Supernatural Attributes often grant the Remade's player the ability to introduce a narrative element to the scene. The Storyteller can always veto these details if they are inappropriate or contradict what she knows about the scene. If he does so, treat it as if the character did not use it at all and can therefore attempt to introduce a different detail.

Telekinesis (• to •••••)

Overt

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can exert raw telekinetic force to lift, throw, or strike without the need for physical action.

The Broken can affect targets in range with a Size no greater than the Variation's Magnitude times Scar Power. Targeting an unattended object succeeds automatically. Attempting to grab a living target works like initiating a grapple (p. XX), using a Scar Finesse roll instead of Strength + Brawl, and so must contend with Defense, not a Resistance Attribute.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant arrests the target's motion until she releases it as a reflexive action, until it is torn free (or escapes the grapple), or until the scene ends. The telekinetic grapple is only capable of the hold, restrain, and drop prone maneuvers, although it is immune to all maneuvers other than break free (p. XX).

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant can push, drag, lift, or operate the target at a Speed no greater than Magnitude times Scar Power. When calling upon the Magnitude • effect, the Remade's telekinetic grapple is also capable of the control weapon, damage, and disarm maneuvers (p. XX). She can instead manipulate an object as though her telekinesis were extensions of her hands, using Scar Power as its Strength and Scar Finesse as its Dexterity.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Throw:** The Deviant can throw the target with enough force to damage it and/or anyone unfortunate enough to be in its path. If throwing an object at an opponent in range, this is a Scar Finesse roll, penalized by one-fifth the object's Size (rounded up) and resisted by the target's Defense. If successful, it inflicts lethal damage equal to half the object's Size (rounded up). If throwing an opponent, it requires a successful Scar Finesse roll and is treated as a fall from a height no greater than Magnitude times Scar Power in yards/meters, and this can be mitigated normally.

- **Deflect:** As a reflexive action, the Remade may turn aside attacks — be they fists, knives, or bullets. Whenever the Remade (or another character within range) is targeted by an attack with some physical component (not purely supernatural assaults, Environmental Tilts, or explosions), she may call upon this effect before the attack roll. Her successes on a Scar Finesse roll subtract from the attacker's successes on the attack. Each use of this effect imposes a -1 penalty on the Scar Finesse rolls of later deflection attempts during the same turn.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Versatility:** The Deviant is capable of both Magnitude ••• effects.

- **Crush/Dismember:** This is only available if the Remade chose Throw as her Magnitude ••• effect. The Deviant is capable of crushing or tearing apart objects in his telekinetic grip. This deals Scar Power + Acclimation Structure damage to inanimate objects (reduced by Durability). Against living victims, the Remade's telekinetic grapple deals lethal damage instead of bashing damage with its damage maneuvers.

- **Force Field:** This is only available if the Deviant chose Deflect as her Magnitude ••• effect. The Remade may erect a transparent barrier of pure telekinetic force — either an immobile, 10-foot-by-10-foot wall (3-meter-by-3-meter), or a protective sphere around herself or a target in range (which moves with the target). The force field provides cover as though it were a non-transparent object with Durability equal to half Scar Power (rounded up). Armor piercing bullets enjoy their usual effect against it, and it blocks the passage of objects in both directions (and so can potentially inconvenience the Deviant, as well). It does not have Structure, however, and so conventional means of destroying it usually fail.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade is capable of all the Magnitude ••• and •••• options.

The Cephalist can hurl large, heavy objects with her mind, but the exertion causes severe nosebleeds and terrible headaches (Perilous Variation; Controlled; Dexterity).

The Coactive Symbiote plays host to a violent poltergeist who refuses to be bottled up for long before demanding violence of him (Power Build-Up; Involuntary; Resolve; Deviations: Short Circuit [Murderous Urge]).

The Invasive has an experimental implant that manipulates gravity in a small area, but its effects are unpredictable (Fluctuating Variation; Controlled; Wits).

Translocation (• to ••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can travel between two points without passing through the intervening space in the material world.

While this Variation is active, the Deviant may teleport once on each of her turns as a reflexive action. Although this is not a Directed Variation, each translocation requires a successful Scar Finesse roll that suffers penalties for medium/long range and concealment. A dramatic failure on this roll either results in a medium Instability (instead of the usual minor Instability), as the Remade finds an object in her way and must abort the translocation attempt, or it means the Broken arrives at an unintended destination within range, chosen by the Storyteller.

At Magnitude •, the range of teleportation is 10/20/40 yards/meters and cannot penetrate non-transparent cover (p. XX).

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Blind:** The Remade can move to a destination blocked off by non-transparent cover, albeit at a -4 penalty to the Scar Finesse roll. She may either call upon her memories of the destination (if she has been there before) or stipulate a direction and distance.
- **Far-Reaching:** The range is instead 30/60/120 yards/meters.

At Magnitude •••, the Deviant enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •• effects.

Deviations

- **Conjuration (+1 Magnitude):** As a Directed effect, the Remade can instead teleport a creature or object within range (including one behind non-transparent cover, if the Remade is capable of Blind translocation) to a destination within range. This cannot affect objects with a Size greater than Magnitude + Scar Power and cannot place a target in immediate danger. Translocating an enemy into a cage or ambush is possible, but placing a target over a pit of molten steel or intersecting with another object is not.
- **Defensive (+1 Magnitude):** The Remade can activate this Variation and translocate as a reflexive action even when it is not her turn, such as to avoid an attack or explosion after it is announced, but before its damage is determined. Each reflexive translocation attempt after the first in the same turn imposes a -1 penalty on the Scar Finesse roll to target a destination.

The Cephalist briefly atomizes his body and causes it to reform somewhere else, but the process of reconstituting his brain is imperfect, resulting in temporary disorientation (Persistent Drawback [Glitch]; Controlled; Wits).

The Coactive steps out of the material world and steps into it again a short time later, but this fails if an object made of at least 14-carat gold and weighing at least one ounce is within 10 yards/meters of either her point of origin or her destination (Power Failure; Persistent).

Whenever the Invasive suffers at least one point of lethal damage, she disappears through a pinhole wormhole as a reflexive action (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Stamina).

Cephalist Variations

Although Psychics have the potential to manifest any ability they can imagine, including those that influence tangible objects in the material world, Cephalist Variations are extensions of the Deviant's mind or grant power over the thoughts, memories, and emotions of others.

Astral Travel (• to •••••)

Subtle

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade projects his awareness beyond his body — entering dreams or sending forth his senses.

At Magnitude •, the Remade may seek answers in his dreams that eluded him while he was awake. Once per chapter, the Remade may attempt to uncover a Clue while he sleeps or meditates for four hours. This is a Scar Finesse roll.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant's body may enter a comatose state, and his astral self steps out of it. This projection is invisible and insubstantial to all but a handful of supernatural creatures, and it can pass through solid objects as though they were no more than smoke. The Deviant may only travel under his own power when in this state. He cannot drive a car or hop on a subway train, for example.

This normally lasts until the end of the scene or until the Remade's awareness steps back into his body. In an emergency (or if a supernatural being destroys the projection), however, the Deviant may return to his body as a reflexive action, although the resultant psychic shock causes one minor Instability. The Remade's body suffers deprivation normally in the absence of his astral self, and if it dies, his consciousness vanishes at once.

At Magnitude •••, by merging his astral form with the body of a sleeping victim, the Broken may spy upon her dreams. This provides a bonus equal to half Scar Power (rounded up) to the next social maneuver or research action the Deviant takes against the victim, and it can often reveal other useful information, at the Storyteller's discretion.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Dream Walker:** The Deviant may bring his body with him on astral journeys, transforming it into invisible, insubstantial ephemera. Traveling in the flesh in this way carries its own risks, including astral predators, and destruction of the physical body while it sojourns results in death. Returning to material existence requires an instant action.

- **Dream Gates:** The Remade's astral form can jump from one dreamer to another. The new target must be someone with whom the current dreamer has a strong, existing relationship (not necessarily a friendly one), and that person must also be asleep. Once he completes this leap, the Broken's astral self may step out of the new dreamer's body to continue exploring her surroundings astrally.

At Magnitude ••••, the Deviant enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •••• effects.

The Cephalist projects his consciousness outward, leaving his body behind — a uniquely liberating sensation (Addictive Variation; Persistent).

With an act of will, the Chimeric sends forth her animal mind to explore her environs and enter the primal dreams of nearby animals (Tribulation; Controlled; Wits).

Whenever the Coactive rides the primordial currents of the Other Place, her blood loses its coagulating properties (Persistent Drawback [Hemophilia]; Controlled; Dexterity).

Body Snatcher (• to ••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can insert his consciousness into the body of another person.

At Magnitude •, the Remade chooses a target within range. The Broken rides the senses of his victim, leaving his body comatose until the scene ends or until he ends this Variation as an instant action. If the victim dies, the Variation ends immediately, and the Deviant suffers a minor Instability.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade can read the surface thoughts of the target he is riding. Further, he may leap from one body to another, as long as the new target is one within range of his current victim.

At Magnitude •••, the Deviant may control the actions of his ridden victim for a turn, but if this command causes her to suffer lethal damage or a breaking point, the victim is immune to this effect until the end of the scene.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Body Swap:** The Deviant may swap bodies with his victim until the end of the scene, until he transfers his consciousness to a new target, or until he chooses to return to his own body (as an instant action). Mental and Social Attributes and Scars, as well as all Skills, follow the transferred consciousness. Physical Attributes and Scars stay with the body.
- **Puppet Possession:** The Broken may seize full control over the victim's body, leaving her fully aware of the actions she takes while under its effects. If the victim suffers lethal damage or a breaking point while possessed in this way, this effect ends, and the victim is immune to it until the end of the scene. Otherwise, it lasts until the end of the scene, until the Deviant transfers his senses to a new victim, or until he chooses to withdraw his influence as an instant action.

At Magnitude •••••, the Remade develops a perfected version of his Magnitude •••• effect:

- **Body Swap:** The Deviant may spend a point of Willpower to maintain the body swap until the beginning of the next chapter, potentially maintaining it from chapter to chapter in this way. Any Physical Scars gradually spread to the possessed body at the rate of (6 - Acclimation)

Magnitude per chapter. Once the possession ends, the victim's Physical Scars fade at the same rate. The Remade may instead choose to make the body swap permanent, leaving his victim's awareness stranded in his old body while he lives out his life in the new one. The Broken may complete a permanent transfer of consciousness once per story without personal consequences, but each additional such transfer inflicts one medium Instability.

- **Puppet Possession:** The Remade may choose to suppress the victim's consciousness during the possession. A victim whose consciousness is suppressed will not escape control due to damage or other trauma and will not remember what she did while possessed. Further, the Deviant does not suffer a minor Instability if the host body dies.

The Cephalist perceives all minds as one mind and can easily superimpose hers over a target's. However, she is utterly dependent on a special serum for which only her Progenitor knows the formula (Dependency, Persistent).

A portion of the Chimeric's brain has been replaced by that of a telepathic subspecies of dolphin, allowing him to ride the senses of others,, but her body quickly atrophies while she spends time away from it (Deterioration; Controlled; Dexterity).

The Invasive surreptitiously plants a microscopic listening device on the target, which painlessly burrows into his skin, passes into his bloodstream, and takes up residence in the motor control centers of his brain, ready to seize control of his actions for as long as its battery holds a charge. However, the Deviant must physically touch the target and so cannot use it at longer range (Power Failure; Controlled; Dexterity).

Creeping Dread (• to •••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant inserts a growing terror in the mind of her victims.

At Magnitude •, a target within range suffers a penalty equal to Scar Power on breaking point rolls until the end of the scene, and attempts to intimidate or frighten him enjoy a bonus equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant selects an object of the victim's fear in the current scene, which they must be able to perceive. This can be the Remade herself, but it may also be another person, a place, or a discrete inanimate object. Victims cannot approach this frightening object except by succeeding on a Resolve + Composure roll. If a victim confronts his fear (willingly or not), he suffers a -2 penalty to all actions. This fear lasts until the end of the scene.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but whenever the victim comes into contact with the source of fear, he suffers the Frightened Condition (p. XX). In action scenes, if he can't escape the source, he suffers the Insensate Tilt (p. XX).

At Magnitude ••••, when credibly threatened with the source of fear, the victim suffers the Beaten Down Tilt (p. XX).

Deviations

- **Aura (+1 Magnitude):** The Variation inspires fear in *all* viable targets within range. Roll to target each one individually.

The Cephalist broadcasts dread telepathically but cannot predict the intensity of emotion it will inspire (Fluctuating Variation; Controlled; Wits).

The Invasive exudes a chemical mist through mechanical glands, which stimulates the production of fear hormones, but the residue of this chemical persists after she no longer calls upon it, causing everyone nearby to distrust her (Lying Eyes; Persistent).

The Mutant's horrifying appearance inspires terror in everyone he meets (Conspicuous Appearance; Persistent).

Memory Thief (• to •••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Remade can pluck memories from the minds of others, assimilating them as though they were his own, and leaving a blank spot in their place.

This Variation targets a character in range. The transformed gains the memory, while the victim loses it. However, human memory is elastic, and if the victim learns the details of the events or goals she has forgotten, she regains the memory. Mnemonic aids include audio and video recordings, written transcripts (including diaries), or even the retelling of events to the victim by other witnesses. The Deviant cannot affect any single target with this Variation more than once per chapter, although Adaptations can overcome this limit.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant may steal the victim's memory of an oft-repeated action or event — one day of her commute, for example, or a routine coupling with her long-term partner. The Remade's player may suggest the general nature of the stolen memory, but the Storyteller determines the details. Even randomly selected memories should have some bearing on the Broken's interests, revealing key details of the victim's personality (such as an Aspiration, Virtue, or Vice) or putting useful secrets into his hands.

At Magnitude ••, The Deviant may steal a recent memory no more than a scene in length. This allows the Remade to absorb a witness' impressions of an event while simultaneously erasing her memory of it. The Broken may stipulate the memory he targets with greater specificity — citing a specific time and/or place, or describing an event he believes the target may recollect.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Forgotten Goal:** The victim forgets the details of a single short-term Aspiration and everything she has done so far to achieve it. This can include goals she has already resolved, whether recently or long ago, either one chosen at random by the Storyteller, or one chosen by the Deviant's player. The Remade's player may choose to immediately replace his character's current Aspiration with the victim's.
- **Forgotten Milestone:** The victim forgets a significant memory — either one of serious emotional weight or one that involved a lot of preparation, although not both. This could include a friend's wedding, but not his own, for example, or a tough break-up, but not a divorce hearing. The victim forgets the event at the center of the memory, but not his anticipation of it nor his planning and preparations for it. The Broken may specify the time, place, and/or emotional tenor of the memory he wishes to steal.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Fickle Memory:** The Deviant enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude ••• effects.
- **Stolen Triumph:** The transformed must have selected Forgotten Goal as his Magnitude ••• effect. The Remade may steal a long-term Aspiration and all memories formed in the pursuit of fulfilling that goal. A detective who has pursued a criminal for months forgets the case entirely, for example. The Remade cannot acquire this stolen Aspiration, but he familiarizes himself with it. This can also target memories of past accomplishments, either one the Broken knows about or one chosen by the Storyteller.
- **Formative Memory:** The transformed must have selected Forgotten Milestone as his Magnitude ••• effect. The victim forgets a formative memory, such as a world-shattering trauma or a momentous event like the birth of a child, the death of a parent, or her wedding day. The Remade may target memories specifically (if he is aware of them), or based on their timing or emotional tenor, or he may let the Storyteller decide what he takes from his victim. If he steals a happy or affirming memory, the Deviant regains a point of Willpower. If he steals a traumatic or painful memory, the victim regains a point of Willpower. Truly mind-altering memories might impose a Condition or Tilt on the Remade, such as Broken or Insane, or inflict a minor Instability.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade enjoys the benefits of all three Magnitude •••• effects.

The Cephalist Amalgam has no memory of the time before her Divergence, only the memories of those she has stolen since (Amnesia; Persistent).

Whenever the Invasive hears someone recount a memory of an event, he can identify the exact parts of the brain where that memory is stored and project a sonic pulse that precisely destroys those memories (Power Failure; Controlled; Manipulation).

The Mutant lets out a terrifying, sucking shriek as he inhales the memory of a nearby victim, but he is incapable of exhaling while speaking, instead speaking as he inhales (Silence; Persistent; Deviation: Disfiguring Scar).

Telepathy (• to ••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered, Toggled

The Broken can hear the thoughts of those around her.

At Magnitude •, choose one:

- **Attune:** Once per chapter, the Deviant can read the surface thoughts of a target in range. She hears these as though the target were speaking his internal monologue aloud, and regardless of any ambient noise. In addition to any information volunteered by the Storyteller, her player may ask a number of the following questions each chapter equal to Scar Power (or others, as permitted by the Storyteller):

[QUESTION TABLE LIKE THE ONE IN CHRONICLES OF DARKNESS P. 60]

- What does your character want right now?
- What does your character fear most right now?
- What is your character hiding?

- What does your character want mine to do?
- What does your character know about [relevant topic at hand]?
- What turns your character on right now?
- What's something shameful or embarrassing about your character?

[END QUESTION TABLE]

- **Project:** The Remade can broadcast her thoughts into the mind of a target in range. An unwilling target may end this effect and block further contact until the end of the scene by spending a point of Willpower.

At Magnitude ••, the Broken enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude • effects. In addition, when using the Project effect, the recipient may respond telepathically as easily as speaking aloud. This connection lasts until the end of the scene or until the Deviant chooses to break contact. If telepathically connected to multiple targets, the Remade may choose either to act as a central switchboard (each target can only communicate with her) or to allow all targets to communicate with each other.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Network:** As a single Directed effect, the Deviant may establish telepathic connections with a number of targets equal to Scar Power. Further, she may maintain a total number of telepathic links equal to Scar Power times Variation Magnitude.
- **Recontact:** The Broken can use the Magnitude • Project effect to establish a telepathic connection with anyone she has previously had a telepathic connection with, even if they are hundreds of miles away, although the Scar Finesse roll suffers a -3 penalty if the distance exceeds the long range of her telepathy. The target is immediately aware that the Deviant is attempting to contact him, and if he refuses this connection, it automatically fails.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Balance:** The Remade enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude ••• effects.
- **Hivemind:** This is only available if the Deviant chose Network as her Magnitude ••• effect. Networked characters can borrow each other's knowledge. The recipient's rating in a Skill becomes that of the donor, both of whom must consent to this transfer of information. Each character may only donate and receive a transferred Skill once per chapter, and Adaptations cannot overcome this limitation.
- **Forceful:** This is only available if the Broken chose Recontact as her Magnitude ••• effect. As long as the Remade succeeds on the Scar Finesse roll against the target, the victim cannot refuse or terminate the connection until the end of the scene.

At Magnitude •••••, the Broken enjoys all three Magnitude •••• effects.

The Cephalist blurs the barrier between his mind and that of another person, but she never really knows peace except when she is drunk on an active telepathic connection (Addictive Variation; Controlled; Resolve).

The Coactive can perceive the electrical impulses in the human brain, which he can interpret as spoken language or manipulate to simulate hearing his voice in return.

An alien chemical that coats the Mutant's skin sets up a connection between anyone on whose skin it has been smeared, but simply washing off this substance ends the effect (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Composure; Deviation: Short Circuit [Power Failure]).

Chimeric Variations

Their tendency to emulate the adaptations of animals in the wild does not limit the Chimerics' diverse capabilities; after all, many human technological advancements are no more than an attempt to mimic designs Nature worked out eons ago. Chimeric Variations often facilitate their mastery of two different natures, whether this duality manifests physically, mentally, or socially.

Animal Transformation (•• to •••••)

Overt

Discrete, Toggled

The Deviant transforms into an animal.

This Variation allows the Deviant to take the shape of a single animal chosen at the time of purchase. In animal form, she takes on the animal's Physical Attributes, as well as its Size, Speed, and Health. She can move, sense, and attack in any way that the animal can. She may be unable to use some Merits or take certain actions, at the Storyteller's discretion.

This Variation may be purchased any number of times, and each time it allows the Remade to transform into a different animal.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant can transform into a small (up to Size 2) animal — such as a cat, sparrow, spider, frog, or mouse.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Medium:** the Remade's form can be a mid-sized (Size 3-5) animal — such as a wolf, owl, rattlesnake, or mountain lion.
- **Swarm:** The Broken's form is a swarm of Size 1 or 0 animals a number of yards/meters across equal to the Variation's Magnitude plus Scar Power. Swarms are difficult to harm. After rolling attacks against the swarm as normal, factoring in armor and other modifiers, the swarm takes one point of damage of the appropriate type, two points with an exceptional success on the attack. Fire, explosions, chemical sprays, and other area effects cause normal damage. Anyone caught within the swarm, whether friend or foe, suffers from panic and limited visibility and hearing, which imposes a -2 penalty to all actions.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Large:** The Deviant becomes a larger animal (Size 6-9) — such as a horse, alligator, bear, tiger, or gorilla.
- **Biting Swarm:** As the Magnitude ••• Swarm effect, but those in the area also suffer bashing damage each turn equal to half Scar Power. Armor provides protection from this damage but at half its normal rating (rounded up).

At Magnitude •••••, choose one:

- **Huge:** The Broken becomes a gigantic animal (Size 10-15) — such as moose, great white shark, small whale, or elephant.

- **Lethal Swarm:** As the Magnitude •••• Biting Swarm effect, but the damage is instead lethal.

Deviations

- **Shapeshifter (+1 Magnitude):** The Variation becomes Tiered, instead, allowing the Remade to take the form of any appropriate animal (or swarm). However, the Broken can only activate the Variation once per chapter.

The Chimeric can take the form of a bear, but sometimes his bear-mind seizes control of him (Alternate Persona; Persistent)

The Coactive Symbiote is infused by the spirit of a snowy owl, whose form she can take at will, but she suffers frequent hallucinations as a side-effect of the Divergence (Glitch; Persistent).

The Mutant turns into a swarm of cockroaches each night and cannot do so by day (Involuntary Stimulus; Stamina; Deviations: Uncontrollable Variation).

Hybrid Form (•• to •••••)

Overt

Discrete, Toggled

The Deviant transforms into a half-human, half-something-else monster that walks upright like a person but possesses some of the abilities of its inhuman half.

This Variation allows the Remade to take a single hybrid form chosen at the time of purchase. This Variation may be purchased any number of times, and each time it allows the Deviant to transform into a different hybrid form, but only one can be active at a time.

The hybrid form possesses a number of Scar-free Variations based on Magnitude, chosen at the time of purchase. The Magnitude of Variations this grants can be lower than the maximums, but the number of Variations based on the highest-Magnitude, Scar-free Variation cannot be. All these capabilities must fit the profile of the inhuman form the Deviant assumes.

When Hybrid Form activates, so do all its nested Variations, although Directed Variations still require an action to target.

At Magnitude ••, this is two Magnitude • Variations.

At Magnitude •••, this is two Magnitude •• Variations or three Magnitude • Variations.

At Magnitude ••••, this is two Magnitude ••• Variations, three Magnitude •• Variations, or four Magnitude • Variations.

At Magnitude •••••, this is two Magnitude •••• Variations, three Magnitude ••• Variations, four Magnitude •• Variations, or five Magnitude • Variations.

The Cephalist unfurls all her considerable psychic talents at once, hovering above the ground while manifesting telekinetic and telepathic powers. However, she cannot fully contain this power and must unveil it more frequently than is safe (Power Build-Up; Involuntary; Resolve).

The Chimeric transforms into a dangerous wolfman, but he can be mortally wounded by silver (Bane; Persistent).

The Coactive becomes a portrait of angelic glory, but this transformation lasts only a few seconds, after which she must say a prayer before invoking its power again (Depletion; Controlled; Manipulation).

Mimicry (• to •••••)

Subtle

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can partially and temporarily hide her nature.

When the Deviant activates this Variation, her player may choose any number of Scars of a current Magnitude (i.e. after increases or decreases due to Adaptations or Instability) equal or lower to the Magnitude of Mimicry. This Variation suppresses these Scars and any of their entangled Variations until the end of the scene. While Mimicry lasts, the Deviant does not suffer any of the effects of the suppressed Scars and loses the benefits of the suppressed Variations. Remade with this Variation often undergo a terrifying metamorphosis when its effects end.

This Variation cannot suppress the Scar that is entangled with Mimicry. However, the Untamed Adaptation (p. XX) can diminish or suppress even this Scar, at least temporarily. If a suppressed Scar's Magnitude becomes higher than that of this Variation (typically due to Instability), it immediately manifests, although this also makes its entangled Variations accessible.

The Cephalist can temporarily isolate those parts of her mind affected by her Divergence, but this leaves her with no memory of what she did during her mental sequester (Tabula Rasa; Controlled, Wits).

The Chimeric possesses an exceptional ability to blend in among Baselines, erasing signs of her Scars. However, on a subconscious level, they sense something “off” about her (Lying Eyes; Persistent).

As other Invasives redirect power away from their Variations to rebuild damaged tissue, he accepts substantial tissue damage to temporarily neutralize problematic Scars (Perilous Variation; Controlled; Dexterity).

Hybrid Form vs. Mimicry

Although both these Variations reflect a transformation from one form to another, each has a different flavor.

Use Hybrid Form to portray a rapid unveiling of several capabilities. This is useful for activating multiple Toggled Variations that are best brought into play quickly, such as Lash and Supernatural Strength for combat or Enhanced Speed and Flight for escaping enemies.

Use Mimicry to conceal the Deviant's nature, allowing him to blend in among Baselines. This is useful for hiding several “unsightly” Scars so that they only cause problems when this Variation fails or when he must deactivate it to make use of their entangled Variations.

Pheromones (• to •••••)

Subtle

Directed, Tiered

The Remade causes other animals (including humans) to treat her as one of their own kind.

This Variation targets an animal within range, including humans and Manticores.

At Magnitude •, the animal responds to the Deviant the way it would to a member of its family unit. Against human targets, her impression level increases by one when using the social maneuvering system (see p. XX). Most impressions are good, and even sworn enemies find it impossible to ignore her entreaties entirely (impression level is poor instead of hostile). The Remade also achieves an exceptional success on three successes instead of five on Social actions targeting the victim.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Communication:** The Remade can understand and be understood by the target. Although she does not exercise any direct control, she may attempt to bargain with these creatures for information or favors, as well as ignoring language barriers between humans.
- **Status:** The target treats the Remade with respect — or even deference — as though she had dots equal to half Scar Power (rounded up) in the Status Merit associated with the in-group the victim most admires or wishes to earn the respect of. This can be a great advantage, but it can also inspire victims to beg favors of the Deviant that she cannot grant. It can also be problematic when wielded against supernatural beings who have their own societies, since they will naturally assume the Remade is capable of belonging to that organization (and so is clearly a wizard, werewolf, or other creature like themselves, if one in disguise).

At Magnitude •••, the Broken enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •• effects.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade may direct the actions of the target in a general way, one he could convey in a short sentence or two. Most non-sapient animals will obey this command without hesitation, even if it is clearly suicidal. Sapient animals (and some especially intelligent, but non-sapient, ones) will ignore suicidal compulsions, and those who suffer lethal damage or a breaking point while under its effects may make a Scar Resistance + Supernatural Tolerance roll to escape control until the Deviant reestablishes it.

Deviations

- **Aura (+1 Magnitude):** The Variation affects *all* viable targets of the same species within range. For sapient animals, roll to target each one individually. Non-sapient animals usually fall under its effects automatically when the Variation is active.

The Cephalist broadcasts a psychic signal that fosters feelings of camaraderie toward him, but being the center of attention in this way is addictive (Addictive; Controlled, Wits).

The Chimeric emits a scent that grants her undue influence over the creatures around her unless there is a strong odor present (Power Failure; Persistent).

The Mutant exudes a pheromonal odor, but she reeks of strong and distinctive perfume that lingers for hours after she leaves (Conspicuous Appearance; Persistent; Deviation: Identifier).

Predator's Cunning (• to ••••)

Subtle

Perpetual, Reflexive, Tiered

The Deviant possesses an uncanny situational awareness. She always manages to stand with some object between herself and the enemy sniper. Guards searching for her always seem to arrive moments after she turns a corner and ducks out of sight. And her gun clears the holster a split second before the ambush.

At Magnitude •, if a guard or searcher would make a roll to notice, find, or tail the Remade, the roll suffers a -2 penalty. In addition, the Deviant enjoys a bonus equal to half Scar Power (rounded up) to rolls to identify, avoid, and disarm traps — whether it is a trip wire that sets off a rockslide or an improvised explosive device.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade enjoys the following benefits in combat as long as she is aware of her opponent:

- The Deviant enjoys the benefits of concealment that levies a -1 penalty to enemies' ranged attacks.
- She may ready a weapon as a reflexive action before anyone else acts.
- Her Defense against hand-to-hand attacks increases by one.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Alert:** The Broken retains her Defense and enjoys the benefits of the Magnitude •• effect even if ambushed. In addition, even if the Deviant is not aware that she is being watched, tailed, or searched for, she often eludes notice. She may make a reflexive Stealth roll in such circumstances using her normal dice pool.
- **Uncanny:** The Remade applies her Defense against firearms attacks, anticipating these with uncanny instinct.

At Magnitude ••••, the transformed enjoys the benefits of both the Magnitude ••• effects.

The Cephalist can sense the intentions of those who mean him harm, allowing him to better evade them. However, he sometimes has difficulty distinguishing real intent to harm from mere temptation (Paranoia; Persistent).

The Chimeric carries the instincts of an apex predator but she suffers an irrational fear of mice and rats (Phobia; Persistent).

The Mutant's flesh distorts light subtly, giving him the appearance of being a few feet away from his actual location. However, he has an especially difficult time trusting people (Paranoia; Persistent).

Coactive Variations

Coactive Variations represent the influence of worlds beyond the material one. These places teem with strange, unseen entities, pulse with alien energies unknown to human physicists, and obey natural laws that contradict those of Earth.

Blessing (• to •••••)

Subtle

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant is the recipient of a blessing that attracts good fortune to herself or unhappy accidents to those who stand in her way.

This Variation never affects rolls related to supernatural powers (such as Scar Finesse or Scar Resistance rolls).

At Magnitude •, whenever the Broken rolls a chance die, it is instead treated as a single die — succeeding on an 8 or 9 and benefiting from 10-Again. She may also spend a point of Willpower to add three dice to a roll *after* seeing the results (but before the result is applied), instead of before.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Lucky:** Once per chapter, the transformed may choose to benefit from a stroke of good fortune of moderate improbability. She could correctly guess a spin of a roulette wheel or win a raffle, for example, but not win a lottery jackpot. If applied to a roll, she enjoys a bonus to a single roll equal to the Magnitude of Blessing.
- **Unlucky:** Once per chapter, the Deviant may choose for a misfortune to befall someone of her choosing who is present in the current scene. In addition to any narrative effect, this may impose a penalty to the victim's next roll equal to the Magnitude of Blessing.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Balanced:** The Remade benefits from both Magnitude •• effects.
- **Charmed:** This is only available if the Deviant selected Lucky as her Magnitude •• effect. Once per chapter, the Broken's player may suggest a beneficial plot twist in the current scene or request that the Storyteller introduce one. This may instead allow the Remade to evade a misfortune entirely — such as the effects of a single supernatural power (with a successful Clash of Wills) or all the damage inflicted by an attack.
- **Albatross:** This is only available if the Remade selected Unlucky as her Magnitude •• effect. Once per chapter, the transformed's player may suggest a plot twist that adversely affects another character in the current scene, or request that the Storyteller introduce one. In addition to any narrative effect, this converts the victim's next failure on a roll to a dramatic failure.

At Magnitude ••••, choose one:

- **Destiny's Chosen:** The Broken benefits from all three Magnitude ••• effects.
- **Near Miss:** This is only available if the Deviant selected Balanced or Charmed as her Magnitude ••• effect. Once per chapter, the Remade may choose to leave a scene she is in without her departure being noticed, allowing her to avoid an ambush, capture, or socially awkward situations. If she has not made an impact that another character could not have made, her player may decide that she was never present in the scene to begin with — as long as she can invent some rationale for being elsewhere.
- **Supernatural Aid:** This is only available if the Deviant selected Balanced or Albatross as her Magnitude ••• effect. Once per chapter, the Remade's player may choose for her to be unexpectedly present in a scene that does not currently involve her, as long as her player can invent some rationale for her presence or prompt arrival (subject to Storyteller approval). This allows the transformed to provide reinforcements where none are expected or to serve as eyes and ears where none would otherwise be, although the target scene must be one of which the player is aware, whether because it involves another member of her cohort or because she is in communication with a Storyteller character who is present.

At Magnitude ••••, the Broken enjoys all three Magnitude •••• benefits.

The Cephalist implants self-doubt in the minds of her victims, which soon becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, but she is only imposing her own self-doubt upon them (Misfortune; Persistent).

Fae energies infuse the Coactive so that the web of Fate preserves him from many misfortunes. However, these faerie energies also project an untrustworthy air that poisons all his social interactions (Lying Eyes, Persistent).

The Invasive makes complex probabilistic calculations that only give the appearance of being luck, but the supercomputer displaces parts of her brain's emotional center (Frozen Heart; Persistent).

Fate's Agent (• to ••••)

Subtle

Perpetual, Reflexive, Tiered

This Variation protects the Deviant from unwanted supernatural influence and scrutiny.

At Magnitude •, the Remade is automatically aware whenever a supernatural power attempts to target her or an area containing her, as well as the source of the effect. Supernatural powers that attempt to peer into the Deviant's future, read her fate, gather information about her, or spy on her from afar provoke a Clash of Wills with her. If the Remade wins this contest, the supernatural power fails, and further attempts to use it on her during the current scene automatically fail. If the triggering power attempted to observe an area that contained the Deviant, it does not fail entirely, but its vision doesn't register the Remade's presence.

At Magnitude ••, choose one:

- **Counter:** Once per chapter, at any point before the Broken's action, she can choose to counter a supernatural power as her target attempts to initiate it. Doing so takes up his normal action. If she defeats her target in a Clash of Wills, the target's power does not take effect, although it still carries its normal cost in Willpower, actions, or occult currency.
- **Dispel:** Once per chapter, as a Directed effect, the Deviant may neutralize a single supernatural effect in range. If the source of the supernatural effect still exerts control over it, the Broken must defeat her in a Clash of Wills. This usually ends short-duration effects (including most Variations), but longer-lasting ones only cease to function until the end of the scene. This Variation has no effect on extremely powerful occult phenomena, such as those created by godlike beings.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude •• effects.

At Magnitude ••••, when a purely supernatural effect would target him and he successfully counters it using the Magnitude •• Counter effect, the Broken may attempt to turn the power against the assailant. If the Deviant defeats the target in a Clash of Wills, the power turns back on the initiator with its full, original effects. If the power cannot normally affect the target, it has no effect. The Remade cannot redirect indirect or area-affecting powers in this way.

At Magnitude •••••, once per chapter, when the Deviant successfully turns back a supernatural power using the Magnitude •••• effect, he may instead direct the effect at any target as though it

were a Directed effect (albeit one that doesn't require an instant action). In addition, he may discharge the same effect repeatedly during the current scene as a Directed effect. Any variables this stolen power has remain fixed until the end of the scene.

Such are the Cephalist's powers of imagination that she can bring them to bear against unnatural powers and influence, but this pushes her mind further out of alignment with her body (Unstable Variation; Controlled; Wits).

Those who try to scry upon the Chimeric often find themselves instead examining one of the animal donors from which his flesh came, but he is missing parts of his memory (Amnesia; Persistent).

The Coactive is a living gateway to a realm of pure sorcerous energy, granting her a measure of influence over all forms of supernatural power, although she cannot sustain an active connection with this source of energy for long periods before it begins to drive her mad (Cooldown; Controlled; Manipulation).

Onomantic Influence (• to •••••)

Subtle

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant possesses an intense awareness of the relationship between a person and the names they use.

At Magnitude •, whenever someone introduces himself to the Remade by name, she immediately recognizes whether the proffered name is his true name (one that serves as a true identifier of him on a supernatural level) or a pseudonym, nickname, or title. If the target introduced himself by his true name, the Broken learns a number of pieces of information about the target equal to Scar Power. This might include a Virtue, Vice, or Aspiration, but it could also be some other useful detail such as a birthdate, home address, relationship status, or work phone number. This will always be something the Deviant can use to her advantage, chosen by the Storyteller.

At Magnitude ••, once someone has introduced himself to the Deviant, she can always recognize him by it regardless of any disguises, illusions, or alternate forms he may use to hide his identity (although not those that conceal his presence). This does not allow the Remade to see through any disguise he might have worn at the time of introduction (nor does it grant knowledge of his true name if he offered a pseudonym). But she can tell that the nondescript man she encounters at the pharmacy is the same as the masked figure who taunted her at the warehouse the previous night.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Invoke Name:** Whenever someone mentions the Deviant by her true name in spoken conversation, they invite her attention, regardless of how near or far away they are. Usually, she only hears the speaker's voice and a sentence or two that follows her name. If she recognizes the speaker by his true name, however, she also sees his face, immediate surroundings, and the individual(s) he is addressing. Once per chapter, the Broken's player may suggest the existence of a conversation that invokes her name. Although the Storyteller decides on the exact nature of this conversation, it should always be something the transformed can use to her advantage.

- **True Name:** At the moment of introduction, the Broken learns the target's real name, regardless of the name the target gives her. This is usually but not always synonymous with his legal name, and this information can be an especially powerful weapon in the hands of those with the right occult powers. In addition, by speaking a person's true name aloud, the Deviant can cause him to hear her voice for several seconds as though she were whispering in his ear — as long as the target is someone who previously introduced himself to the Remade.

At Magnitude ●●●, the Broken enjoys both Magnitude ●●● benefits.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as a Directed effect, the Deviant may temporarily erase the true name of a target, although she must know his true name. A nameless person loses his true name and so cannot be targeted by supernatural effects that rely on his connection to that true name, including many of the effects of Onomantic Influence. The Deviant may spend a point of Willpower to maintain this effect until the beginning of the next chapter, potentially maintaining it from chapter to chapter in this way. He may instead choose to make the effect permanent. The Broken may permanently erase a true name once per story without personal consequences, but each additional erasure inflicts one medium Instability.

When he meets someone new, the Cephalist often receives flashes of information that leave him with an impression of that person's character. However, he must also make physical contact (such as a handshake) with the target (Power Failure; Controlled; Manipulation).

The astral worm implanted in the Chimeric Symbiote's ear, when she hears a name for the first time, whispers the speaker's true name to her. It also lets her know when the voice she hears is one she has heard before — however disguised it might be — and reminds her of who it is. However, the worm requires regular meals of uncooked primate brains, and if it does not receive these, it starts eyeing its host's brain hungrily (Dependency; Persistent).

Mere knowledge of a person's name entangles the Coactive in her victim's fate. The Deviant is highly vulnerable to harm inflicted by anyone whose true name she knows (Bane; Persistent).

Otherworldly Connection (• to ●●●●)

Subtle

Perpetual, Tiered

The Deviant has a connection to an alien world.

Establish an origin at the time the Remade develops this Variation. This could be ghosts, animistic spirits, angels, faeries, or anything else — subject to Storyteller approval. This Variation may be purchased any number of times, but each time it applies to a different supernatural origin.

At Magnitude •, the Remade can perceive entities, places, things, and forces connected to the chosen origin. Although this does not come with any specialized knowledge of these phenomena, it serves as an important first step in studying (or avoiding) them.

At Magnitude ●●, the Deviant can also communicate with beings who share this origin. In addition, these creatures recognize her inherent connection to their kind, granting her an effective Status among them equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).

At Magnitude ●●●, the Remade and her immediate possessions can touch or strike these phenomena, even if they are normally insubstantial to the material world. The Broken is still

tangible to those in his native world, and he is as vulnerable to the alien entities as they are to him.

At Magnitude •••, as a Directed effect, the Deviant can exorcize any of these phenomena that has invaded his native world. He can drive the demon out of the boy it is possessing, for example, or banish the abyssal residue that has leaked into the old factory. If driving out a mindless force, this requires an instant action but automatically succeeds — although particularly large or virulent manifestations might require more time and/or a successful Scar Finesse roll, at the Storyteller's discretion. Exorcising a hostile alien intelligence is a series of Clash of Wills rolls, each requiring an instant action. A loss in this contest causes the combatant to lose a point of Willpower. If the Remade runs out of Willpower, he cannot continue the contest. If the entity runs out of Willpower, it is forced to leave the Deviant's native world and cannot return until the beginning of the next story (at the earliest).

At Magnitude ••••, the Deviant can force these phenomena into phase with his native world as an instant action. If directed at a sapient entity, this always requires a successful Clash of Wills, and if the attempt fails, the Remade cannot attempt to draw that target into the material world again during the current scene. The Broken can summon one otherworldly phenomenon per story, but each additional summoning during the same story causes a medium Instability.

The Cephalist can interact with otherwise insubstantial beings who have a strong connection to the dreaming world, interacting with them as he does through telepathic senses, but he suffers chronic pain that magnifies the pain of his injuries (Fragility; Persistent).

The Coactive can hear, speak to, and even touch angels that are invisible to everyone else, but their voices are the only ones she can hear. (Sensory Deprivation; Persistent).

The Invasive's implants include experimental sensors that allow him to see nearby ghosts, although it sometimes interferes with his mental faculties (Glitch; Persistent).

Precognition (• to ••••)

Subtle

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant sees glimpses of the future that allow him to change the course of events.

At Magnitude •, after seeing the results of a roll, the Remade's player may reroll one or more dice that do not show an 8, 9, or 10 — including a dramatic failure on a chance die. He may only reroll each die once and cannot reroll more dice during a chapter than Scar Power, although Adaptations can grant more rerolls during the same chapter (but never for the same action).

At Magnitude ••, the Broken may peer into the likely futures of a target he touches. His player may ask one question per turn of physical contact between Deviant and target — to a maximum number of questions per chapter equal to Scar Power (although Adaptations can grant more questions during the same chapter, but never during the same scene). Although the Remade can attempt to peer far into the future, distant events tend to be hazier than those in the immediate future, unless they carry exceptional temporal weight.

At Magnitude •••, once per chapter, when the Broken would fail on an action (whether or not it involves a roll), he may choose to take a different action, instead. The player must invoke this effect immediately after the action fails (usually after seeing the result of a roll but before its

consequences play out). This can affect an instant action, a single roll of an extended action, or even a particular tack taken in a social interaction that turns out to be a serious faux pas. He can and must change the action he takes, however minutely (attacking a different opponent, for example, or using intimidation instead of subtlety in a social situation), for otherwise everything will unfold exactly as it did in his vision.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Bifurcation:** Once per chapter, as a reflexive action, the Deviant may force a target to take a different action than the one she just took. This is a Directed effect, albeit one that does not require an instant action. This is similar to the Magnitude •• effect, but it can also target a successful action — including one that would otherwise incapacitate or kill the Remade. The Broken’s player must declare this after seeing the immediate consequences of the target’s action, but before anyone else has taken their turn.
- **Prophecy:** The Remade may look upon a single scene he anticipates will take place before the end of the current story. This can be narrowly defined (“when we break into the secure facility”) or more generally described (“the next fight I’m involved in”), but he cannot initiate it in a way that affects events of a scene already in progress. At any point during the designated scene, the Broken’s player may “reset” its events and replay the scene from its beginning — even if this Variation is not currently active or if the transformed is incapacitated or dead at the time. The Deviant can invoke this effect safely once per story, but each additional use during the same story causes a medium Instability.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade enjoys the benefits of both Magnitude ••• effects.

The alien organisms that swim in the Chimeric’s blood possess precognitive powers that he can tap into, but doing so is physically painful (Perilous Variation; Controlled; Dexterity).

The branching pathways to the future lie open to the Coactive, and she can see them clearly. However, she suffers dark twists of fate in all her possible futures (Misfortune; Persistent).

As a consequence of her bizarre biology, the Mutant can loop short distances backward in time, but doing so only worsens her Divergence (Unstable Variation; Controlled, Dexterity).

Invasive Variations

Although not all Cyborgs’ capabilities share a technological basis, many express their Variations as super technology virtually indistinguishable from magic. Invasive Variations tend to maximize the effectiveness of the Deviant’s available tools, whether it is a piece of special equipment or the Broken herself.

Computer-Aided Processing (• to ••••)

Subtle

Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant has access to vast libraries of information and can mimic the muscle memory of specialized training.

Choose a number of the following effects equal to Magnitude when purchasing this Variation, each of which lasts until the end of the scene:

- **Biokinesis:** Once per chapter, the Broken may assign a number of dots of Physical Merits equal to 1 + Scar Power.
- **Combat Programming:** Once per chapter, the Broken may assign a number of dots of Fighting Merits equal to 1 + Scar Power.
- **Data Warehouse:** Once per chapter, the Broken may assign a number of dots of Mental Merits equal to 1 + Scar Power.
- **Human Clay:** Once per chapter, the Remade may shift a number of dots no greater than 1 + half Scar Power (rounded up) from one Physical Attribute to another.
- **Mind Hack:** Once per chapter, the Deviant may shift a number of dots no greater than 1 + half Scar Power (rounded up) from one Mental Attribute to another.

For any of the above effects that grant Merit dots, the Deviant need not meet the Attribute or Skill prerequisites for this Merit, but he must meet any Merit or Specialty prerequisites. The Merit granted by this Variation cannot serve as the prerequisite for another Merit (other than those also granted by Computer-Aided Processing). This Variation cannot emulate the effects of Professional Training or those with Deviant as a prerequisite.

Effects above that move Attribute dots cannot reduce an Attribute to 0. Although they can raise an Attribute's rating higher than five (to a maximum rating of 10), any rating in excess of five never affects the calculations or effects of supernatural abilities, including the activation of Variations or computations of the Remade's Scar Power, Finesse, or Resistance. Improved Resistance Attributes still apply when resisting or contesting supernatural effects.

Although Adaptations can grant more Merit dots (or move more Attribute dots) during the same chapter, they may not do so during the same scene.

Connected as she is to all the minds in the world, the Cephalist can call upon bits of their knowledge whenever she needs it, but accessing this information requires a considerable act of will (Tribulation; Controlled, Wits).

The Chimeric's Progenitor tried to pass on everything she knew to the Deviant — at least until she betrayed him (Paranoia Scar; Persistent).

The Invasive can access the combat knowledge contained on the hard drive in his skull, but someone with the right passphrase can direct him to use that knowledge in ways he does not want (Subliminal Conditioning; Persistent).

Hidden Compartments (• to •••••)

Subtle

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant has hidden compartments from which he can pull a wide variety of useful equipment.

At Magnitude •, once per scene, the Remade may remove a weapon, piece of equipment, or materials of Size 1 and Availability no greater than half Scar Power (rounded up).

At Magnitude ••, once per chapter, the Broken may remove an object of Size 1 and Availability no greater than Scar Power.

At Magnitude •••, the Deviant may remove an additional object of Size 1 and Availability ••••• or less. At the Storyteller's discretion, this may instead be a Size 1 object of occult origin or with supernatural properties, the details of which are determined by the Storyteller (but always relevant to the Broken's current situation). The Remade may invoke this effect once per story without adverse effects, but each additional such item he produces during the same story causes a medium Instability.

Deviations

- **Extra Capacity (+1 Magnitude):** The objects the Broken removes from these hidden compartments can be as large as Size 2.
- **High Capacity (+2 Magnitude):** As Extra Capacity and exclusive with it, but the objects can be as large as Size 3.

The Chimeric has a pouch similar to those of marsupials, in which he secrets all the small objects he compulsively steals. Its contents are a jumble, however, so he must spend time rummaging around among the junk to find what he needs (Preparation; Controlled; Dexterity).

With a few moments of thought, the Coactive can draw together threads of ectoplasm out of the air in order to construct a solid object, but the Divergence made her less tolerant of pain (Thin Skin; Persistent).

The Invasive's chest slides open, revealing a hollow, steel chamber suitable for storage. Of necessity, this has forced her internal organs closer to the surface, making them more vulnerable (Hemophilia; Persistent).

Integrate Technology (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Deviant can interface with tools and other devices, achieving a unity between them and himself.

At Magnitude •, tools in the Remade's hands become extensions of his body, granting him the 8-Again quality on all rolls on which it would grant him an Equipment Bonus.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant can absorb an object, tool, weapon, or device — both concealing it from searches and allowing him to replicate its functions. The target object's Size cannot exceed half the Scar Power (rounded up), and the sum Size of all objects he has integrated at any given time cannot exceed Magnitude times Scar Power. While these objects are integrated, the Remade may employ them normally, exactly as if she had her hands free. She can fire bullets out of her hands if she has integrated a pistol, for example, and an integrated laptop would allow her to perform tasks ranging from web surfing to operating engineering software. This requires the same amount of time and degree of concentration as they would normally. In addition, objects can be used up while integrated. Batteries run down. Nail guns run out of nails. Pens run out of ink.

At Magnitude •••, the Broken can “feed” devices while they are integrated, such that they remain in the same state as when he absorbed them. The battery of an integrated cellphone never goes dead, for example, and an integrated gun never runs out of ammunition. This cannot be used to

place new bullets in an empty revolver, but a gun with even a single bullet remains lethal while integrated and still has a bullet in it when the Invasive ejects it.

At Magnitude •••, instead of absorbing a machine into his body, the Remade merges his body with a machine with a Size no smaller than his own and no larger than Size 30, such as a car, boat, or small server room. While so integrated, the Broken has a perfect awareness of the machine and can direct it to take any action it normally could. While integrated, any damage to the object's Structure causes an equal amount of lethal damage to the Deviant, and if he loses consciousness, he is expelled from the machine and suffers a medium Instability.

Deviations

- **Battery (+1 Magnitude):** The Deviant's body can generate as much electricity as a standard wall socket — enough to power or charge one or more small electric devices such as a cellphone, laptop, a TV, or a box fan. Further, it is possible to plug such devices into his body directly in order to supply them with current, such as along an extension cord. The maximum number of sockets he can support at a given time cannot exceed Magnitude times Scar Power.

Taking an object into her hands, the Cephalist renders it down to its component concepts, which she then emulates, reconstituting it when the Variation's effects end. This process takes some time to initiate, however (Preparation; Controlled; Wits).

The Invasive contains a tiny fusion reactor that produces electricity and allows her to synthesize small objects like bullets, ink, or gumballs. She must bleed off this power regularly, lest it escape containment (Power Build-Up; Involuntary; Stamina).

The Mutant's flesh has a putty-like quality to it that allows him to graft objects onto it or slide them into his body. When the Variation is active, however, his flesh becomes a mass of unsettling distortions and bulges (Persistent Drawback [Conspicuous Appearance]; Controlled; Manipulation).

Omnicompetence (• to •••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

This Variation grants rudimentary understanding of a wide range of skills.

Any Skill dots granted by this Variation do not satisfy the prerequisites for Specialties, Merits, or the purchase of additional dots in the Skill.

At Magnitude •, the Deviant does not suffer untrained penalties on Skill rolls.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, plus choose one:

- **Jack of All:** Once per chapter, the Remade is considered to have a single dot in every Skill in which he has no dots.
- **Journeyman:** Once per chapter, the Broken is considered to have three dots in a single Skill of his player's choice.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude •, plus choose one:

- **Balanced:** The Deviant benefits from both Magnitude •• effects, each of which can be invoked once per chapter.

- **Polymath:** Once per chapter, the Broken is considered to have three dots in every Skill in which he has fewer than three dots.
- **Mastery:** Once per chapter, the Remade is considered to have five dots in a single Skill of his player's choice.

At Magnitude ●●●, as Magnitude ●, plus the Deviant benefits from the Polymath and Mastery Magnitude ●●● effects, each of which can be invoked once per chapter.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●, plus the Deviant is considered to have a single dot in every Skill in which he has no dots.

The Cephalist steals the knowledge of someone nearby but also picks up some of his personality quirks, at least temporarily (Alternate Persona; Persistent).

The Chimeric's ancestral memory allows her draw on the experiences of predecessors a thousand years dead, allowing her to achieve things she normally could not, but she can never remember how she did them, precisely (Tabula Rasa; Controlled; Wits).

The Invasive downloads immense quantities of information through any available cellular or open wi-fi, but this is not possible without web access. Additionally, this connection leaves data traces that are identifiable as his (Power Failure; Controlled; Wits; Deviation: Identifier).

Sensor Array (●● to ●●●●●)

Subtle

Perpetual, Tiered

The Deviant can calibrate her senses to perceive greater details, protect herself, or to observe otherwise undetectable forces.

Once per scene, the Remade may recalibrate her senses as an instant action. She must be aware of the existence of the phenomena she is attempting to observe or protect herself against. Most people know that fingerprints can be used in an investigation, for example, but someone who doesn't know that animistic spirits exist cannot easily guess how she must calibrate her senses to see them. The Storyteller may call for Intelligence + Science or Occult rolls if the Broken attempts to calibrate her senses to detect phenomena that are beyond her knowledge and experience. The Deviant cannot benefit from more than one sensory enhancement at a time, and this enhancement must be narrowly defined (magnifying vision or enhanced hearing, for example, but not both).

At Magnitude ●, the transformed may filter out or protect herself from a source of extreme sensory input — such as blinding light, nausea gas, or the roar of a jet engine — allowing her to operate normally in situations that would ordinarily impose Tilts. This reduces penalties due to such environments by three and may prevent certain Tilts from affecting the Remade if she isn't already suffering from them. It couldn't remove the Deafened Tilt caused by a flashbang grenade, for example, but it could prevent a flashbang grenade from deafening her during the scene.

At Magnitude ●●, the Remade's ordinary senses are greatly enhanced. Her eyes can function as binoculars or a magnifying glass, and she can see clearly in low light conditions or hear a whisper on the other side of a room. The Broken can calibrate his senses for a task that requires precision and attention to detail in order to apply a +2 Equipment bonus.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade can calibrate her senses to detect and interpret phenomena that would normally be undetectable to humans but measurable by technology — such as infrared or ultraviolet light, supersonic or subsonic sounds, or radio waves. The Broken can calibrate her senses to perceive anything ordinary technology could normally detect and measure, and she automatically puts numbers and units of measure to any observations she makes and has an eidetic memory where these details are concerned. This grants a +3 Equipment bonus to relevant Skill rolls but can also have other, practical effects — such as allowing her to see in total darkness or receive radio transmissions.

At Magnitude ••••, the Deviant can calibrate her senses to observe signals and forces that normally require supernatural senses to detect — such as ghosts, temporal anomalies, or astral projections. These are fully visible to the Deviant, who may analyze them as though they were ordinary phenomena. In addition to providing useful context during supernatural encounters, appropriately calibrated senses provide a +2 Equipment bonus to relevant Occult rolls.

Deviations

- **Rapid (+1 Magnitude):** The Remade may calibrate her senses as a reflexive action, no more often than once per turn.
- **Versatile (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken may make a number of sensory calibrations per scene equal to Scar Power, but no more than one per turn — and may benefit from a number of sensory enhancements at a time equal to Scar Power. Adaptations can grant additional calibrations during the same scene but not during the same turn.

The Coactive does not have a connection to a single arcane otherworld. She is enmeshed in a spider web of such links, which she can call upon to grant her special occult senses. These forces sometimes demand a personal sacrifice from the Remade in exchange for such gifts (Deterioration; Controlled; Dexterity; Deviation: Wild Variation).

The Invasive's body is rigged with countless tiny cameras, microphones, and other sensors. These are delicate and finicky pieces of equipment, however, and so require regular recalibration (Maintenance; Persistent).

The Mutant enjoys a highly adaptable anatomy capable of adjusting his senses at a moment's notice, although doing so carries some physical cost (Perilous Variation; Controlled; Dexterity).

Mutant Variations

Grotesques suffer frequent comparisons to cancers, in part because they are the Clade most prone to fatal deteriorating due to Instability, but also because Mutant Variations are disturbing perversions of normal bodily functions.

Anomalous Biology (• to •••••)

Subtle

Perpetual, Tiered

The Remade's body does not require all the essentials most human bodies demand.

The Deviant enjoys a bonus equal to the Variation's Magnitude on all attempts to feign death or otherwise pretend to be inanimate.

At the time the Deviant develops this Variation, choose a number of the following based on Magnitude — one at Magnitude •, two at Magnitude ••, four at Magnitude •••, six at Magnitude ••••, and all nine at Magnitude •••••.

- **Ageless:** This may only be chosen if the Variation is Persistent. The Deviant does not age. Unless his life is cut off by violence or accident, he is functionally immortal.
- **Bloodless:** The Remade's injuries — whether external or internal — do not bleed. She does not bleed out when her health track is filled with lethal damage, and she gains a ballistic armor rating equal to Scar Power, which stacks with any armor she wears.
- **Breathless:** The Deviant does not need to breathe. She cannot drown, choke, or suffocate. She enjoys a bonus equal to Scar Power on Stealth rolls where the sound or motion or her breath might give away her presence.
- **Heartless:** The Remade's heart does not beat. She is immune to poison and disease.
- **Hungerless:** This may only be chosen if the Variation is Persistent. The Deviant does not require food or water to survive and so does not suffer the effects of starvation or dehydration.
- **Lifeless:** The Remade's body does not generate heat. He treats extreme environments based on heat or cold as one level lower and does not show up on heat-based sensors.
- **Mindless:** Although the Deviant is capable of thought, she registers as brain dead. Attempts to analyze or manipulate her mind or emotions (or detect her lies) by mundane means (such as Empathy rolls) automatically fail, even if enhanced by physical equipment (such as a polygraph or truth serum). Supernatural powers of this kind provoke a Clash of Wills, but work normally otherwise.
- **Painless:** The Remade does not experience pain in a way that interferes with his behavior. This halves any wound penalties he suffers (rounding penalties down). Additionally, he does not need to succeed on a Stamina roll to remain conscious if his health track is filled with bashing or lethal damage, although any actions made while suffering wounds that would otherwise incapacitate the Deviant suffer a -3 wound penalty (which is not halved).
- **Tireless:** This may only be chosen if the Variation is Persistent. The Remade does not need to sleep and never suffers fatigue.

The Cephalist's mind commands his body in ordinarily impossible ways, although it requires a concerted effort to maintain this control (Concentration; Controlled; Wits).

Several of the Invasive's autonomic biological functions have been replaced by cybernetic equivalents, but she is utterly dependent on replacement batteries (Dependency; Persistent).

The Mutant's body violates known laws of biology, lacking as it does many metabolic functions normally essential for living things. However, she is highly vulnerable to bright light (Bane; Persistent).

Deadly Ichor (• to •••••)

Overt

Discrete, Reflexive, Toggled

Acid, liquid nitrogen, poison, or some other dangerous substance courses through the Deviant's veins.

Whenever the Deviant suffers lethal damage from an opponent in melee range, her player may choose for her blood to spatter the attacker. This ichor is built like a melee Lash (p. XX) of equal Magnitude, but the Remade resolves the attack as a reflexive action. Multiple attackers can trigger these counterattacks during the same turn. The Deviant may choose the following as one of the Lash's effects (i.e. in lieu of one such as Deadly, Envenomed, or Forceful):

- **Contact:** The Ichor's counterattack responds to any successful Brawl or Weaponry attack, even if it inflicts bashing or no damage (such as a touch attack).

Deviations

- **Aura (+1 Magnitude):** The Ichor's counterattack responds to any Brawl or Weaponry attack, even one that does not succeed.
- **Pressurized (+1 Magnitude):** The ichor is instead built as a ranged Lash (p. XX) and can also be triggered by successful ranged attacks made by attackers within range.
- **Retaliatory (+2 Magnitude):** As Pressurized and exclusive with it, except even unsuccessful ranged attacks may trigger the Ichor.

For the first hour after she eats a full meal, the Chimeric's blood acts as a contact poison (Involuntary Stimulus; Involuntary; Stamina).

The steam-powered Invasive vents steam at his attackers, but once the pressure is released, it takes awhile to build up new steam (Cooldown; Controlled; Dexterity)

The Mutant's blood is a corrosive acid, and even a papercut sends it spraying out of the wound unless she actively stanches the flow (Relentless Variation [Depletion]; Persistent).

Inhuman Digestion (• to •••••)

Overt

Tiered, Toggled

The Remade is capable of consuming, digesting, and subsisting on food that could not normally sustain human life.

This Variation allows the Deviant to survive in the absence of ordinary food and to destroy evidence with ease. Nothing she eats causes her digestive distress or injury, whether it is rotten food, gasoline, or broken glass.

Although not Directed, this Variation can be paired with the Channel effect of a Lash (p. XX), allowing the Remade to bite (and potentially consume) objects and enemies without needing to grapple them first — or without being within melee range (if using a ranged Lash). Any armor-piercing rating or capacity to inflict aggravated damage granted by Inhuman Digestion applies to all attacks made with the Lash that channels it.

At Magnitude •, the Broken can consume substances with a Durability of 1, including foodstuffs that are normally inedible. Her teeth have a damage rating of 0L with armor-piercing 1.

At Magnitude ••, when the Remade successfully bites (and damages) another Deviant, she may gain one of the victim's Variations until the end of the scene, as well as its entangled Scar at its full Magnitude. She can choose the Variation she steals this way (if known). Otherwise, she takes one at random. This effect does not deprive the victim of the ability to use the stolen power.

At Magnitude •••, once per chapter, when the Broken uses the Magnitude •• effect, she may instead choose to gain the stolen Variation until the end of the chapter, during which time the victim loses the Variation. If all Variations entangled with the same Scar are stolen in this way, the victim also loses the Scar for as long as this effect lasts. Further, the Remade may spend Experiences to purchase the stolen Variation, acquiring it and the entangled Scar permanently (even if not currently suffering medium or major Instability), while stripping it away from the victim (although the Sanctity of Merits applies). Consuming all of a Deviant's Variations eliminates his Scars, but it does not reverse the other effects of the Divergence.

Deviations

- **Adamant Jaws (+1 Magnitude):** The Remade can devour objects and materials whose Durability is no greater than 1 + half Scar Power (rounded up), and her teeth have a damage rating of 0L with an armor-piercing rating equal to 1 + half Scar Power (rounded up).
- **Cannibalize (+1 Magnitude):** The transformed may devour the flesh of other humans and humanlike supernatural beings to fortify herself. The damage she inflicts with her bite is aggravated instead of lethal, and she heals one lethal or bashing damage for every point of aggravated damage she inflicts.

The Coactive fires a coruscating beam of light at his enemies that drains their lifeforce and renews his, but its energies are poisonous to both body and mind (Genetic Disorder; Persistent; Deviation: Nightmares; connected to a ranged Lash with the Channel effect).

The Invasive's stomach has been replaced with a gold-lined sac of powerful acids capable of dissolving most materials. This chamber can rupture when the Deviant suffers damage, however, leaking corrosive chemicals (Hemophilia; Persistent).

The Mutant's mouth, teeth, and jaws are comprised of organic, alien metal, but his appetite is not unlimited (Depletion; Controlled; Dexterity).

Rapid Healing (• to •••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Perpetual

The Deviant's body works tirelessly and unerringly to restore itself.

This Variation must be Persistent. This Variation cannot heal damage (or restore missing or damaged limbs or organs) caused by Scars (such as Perilous Variation) or Adaptations (such as Adrenaline Surge or Overclock).

At Magnitude •, the Deviant's natural healing times are halved.

At Magnitude ••, the Remade heals one bashing damage per turn in action scenes and heals all bashing damage at the end of each scene. This also removes minor ailments such as colds, food poisoning, or sprains.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the Deviant also heals all lethal damage at the end of each chapter. This also cures most diseases and purges the Broken's body of toxins.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the Deviant instead heals one bashing or lethal damage per turn in action scenes, heals all lethal damage at the end of each scene, and heals all

aggravated damage at the end of each chapter. This also regenerates damaged or destroyed limbs and organs, eliminating relevant Persistent Conditions such as Blind or Crippled.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the Deviant is nearly invulnerable to death, except as the result of Instability. Even if decapitated, dismembered, or incinerated, his body still makes itself whole. After being killed, the Broken's body can remain inert for as long as his player wishes, such as to wait for enemies to leave the scene or until he is no longer immersed in a vat of strong acid. When he rises from the dead, the Deviant heals points of aggravated damage equal to Scar Power.

The Coactive Symbiote doesn't remember the assassination missions her body carried out on behalf of her old employers because the spirits they coaxed into possessing her never let her — at least not until she convinced one to help her escape (Amnesia; Persistent).

The Invasive contains powerful nanites capable of rebuilding his body from a fragment, if necessary. They have done her mental health no favors, however (Murderous Urge, Persistent).

The Mutant possesses regenerative abilities that would make a starfish jealous. Although he heals quickly, he also feels pain more keenly (Fragility; Persistent).

Sacred Flesh (• to ••••)

Subtle

Discrete, Toggled

The Remade decants some of her power into a form that can grant others temporary access to miraculous powers.

This Variation allows the Deviant to impart a single, Scar-free secondary Variation chosen (including any optional effects and/or Deviations) at the time she develops Sacred Flesh. However, she cannot grant the secondary Variation to herself. The Broken may purchase Sacred Flesh any number of times, and each time allows her to grant a different secondary Variation.

- The character who gains the secondary Variation has full command of it, exactly as though she were a Deviant wielding it, and it lasts until the end of the scene. A Baseline who is unprepared for this power may suffer a breaking point (p. XX) or may cause unintended harm because he is unfamiliar with his new capabilities.
- The secondary Variation uses the user's traits to calculate Scar Power, Scar Finesse, and so forth. Non-Deviants always have an Acclimation of 0 and calculate Clash of Wills using the Magnitude of the secondary Variation.
- Although Sacred Flesh is a Subtle Variation, its secondary Variation can be Overt. However, any conspiracy attention a secondary Variation attracts usually falls on the one who consumes the material, rather than on the Deviant who harvested it.

At the time the Broken develops Sacred Flesh, choose one method by which the Remade bestows the secondary Variation:

- **Boon:** The Deviant bestows the secondary Variation to a target in range as a Directed effect.
- **Secretion:** Once per chapter, the Remade may produce a substance that another character may consume in order to gain the benefits of the secondary Variation. The material might be the

secretions of an alien gland below her chin, her saliva, or a small piece of a shoulder muscle, for example, but it could also be a pearl of pure thought, a spell placed on a talisman, or a blessing passed through the laying of hands. Material has no function other than giving form to a Variation, although the secondary Variation could manifest as a supernatural tool or weapon. The one seeking its benefits might need to eat, drink, inject, smoke, or spread the material on his skin to do so, or he might need to speak a prayer to activate the talisman or perform a short dance to call upon the Deviant's blessing. It is possible for someone to consume material without realizing he is doing so, such as a Variation delivered with a kiss or one baked into his food. In any case, the Broken's player must decide on both the form the secretion takes and the method by which it must be consumed when the Deviant develops Sacred Flesh. Any unused material loses its potency at the end of the next chapter. This method produces a number of doses of the substance equal to Scar Power.

- **Token:** As Secretion, except the Remade suffers a minor Instability when calling upon this method. However, the token remains potent until it is consumed or destroyed. This method produces a number of tokens equal to Scar Power.

- **Fragment:** As Token, but a fragment is reusable (and so more often takes the form of a weapon or jewelry). It can bestow the secondary Variation to a character who employs it once per chapter (Adaptations cannot overcome this). The Broken may create a single fragment per story without any personal consequences, but each additional such fragment during the same story inflicts a medium Instability.

At Magnitude •, choose a Magnitude • secondary Variation.

At Magnitude ••, choose a Magnitude •• secondary Variation.

At Magnitude •••, choose a Magnitude ••• secondary Variation.

At Magnitude ••••, choose a Magnitude •••• secondary Variation.

At Magnitude •••••, choose a Magnitude ••••• secondary Variation.

Deviations

- **Flexibility (+1 Magnitude):** The Deviant may bestow the secondary Variation by an additional number of methods equal to half Scar Power (rounded up).

- **Self-Cannibalism (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken can benefit from the secondary Variation granted by Sacred Flesh.

The Cephalist can produce a sword made of pure thought, which she may give to another person to wield (Tribulation; Controlled; Wits; Secondary Variation: Lash).

The Chimeric periodically sheds his skin like a snake, and those who pull this gauzy garment over their shoulders become invisible. (Power Build-up; Involuntary; Stamina; Deviation: Uncontrollable Variation; Secondary Variation: Camouflage).

The Mutant's flesh grants remarkable powers to those who eat it, but harvesting it requires cutting it out of him (Perilous Variation, Controlled, Dexterity; Secondary Variation: Any).

Scars

The price a Deviant pays for his Variations are Scars. Scars are divided by activation method — **Controlled Scars**, **Involuntary Scars**, and **Persistent Scars**. **Deviations** that can apply to multiple Scars are listed separately.

Controlled Scars

Controlled Scars are inextricably tied to the active use of their combined Variations.

Controlled Scars impose their price each time one of their Variations is activated. If a Scar is entangled with multiple Variations, the Scar's effect applies separately to each Variation.

Most Controlled Scars can be purchased more than once, exacting their price on all their entangled Variations. Repeatable Controlled Scars may have a different criteria for each purchase, if desired.

Concentration (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation demands constant, intense concentration to maintain, and any distraction can cause it to fail or to get out of control — or make it impossible to activate in the first place.

At Magnitude •, whenever an unexpected surprise or other distraction causes the entangled Variation to shut down (or prevents her from activating it) in a way that creates a complication for the Deviant, the player may take a Beat.

At Magnitude ••, whenever the Remade suffers lethal (or aggravated) damage not caused by a Scar or Adaptation, whenever she Falter, or whenever she suffers the Stunned Tilt or the Distracted Condition, the entangled Variation deactivates unless her player succeeds on a Scar Resistance roll. She may activate the Variation again on a future turn.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and choose one:

- **Tenuous:** Whenever an attack or hostile power successfully targets the Remade and either deals damage or imposes a deleterious Tilt, Condition, or other unwelcome effect, the entangled Variation deactivates unless her player succeeds on a Scar Resistance roll.
- **Unfocused:** The Broken cannot attempt to activate an entangled Variation if under the influence of a distracting Tilt or Condition (such as Deprived, Distracted, Frightened, Intoxicated, Insane, Insensate, or Stunned) except by first succeeding at a Scar Resistance roll, which is allowed once per minute (once per turn, in action scenes).

At Magnitude ••••, both Magnitude ••• effects apply.

Deviations

- **After-Effect (+1 Magnitude):** This is only available if all entangled Variations are Directed. Choose a negative temporary Condition. If the character concentrates on directing the Variation for consecutive turns greater than her Scar Resistance, she suffers that Condition when the entangled Variation deactivates.
- **Self-Doubt (+1 Magnitude):** If an entangled Variation deactivates because something broke the Deviant's concentration, she may not attempt to activate it again until the end of the scene.

- **Single-Minded (+1 Magnitude):** This is only available if all entangled Variations are Directed. If the Broken does not direct the Variation's effect at least once per minute (once per turn, in action scenes), it deactivates unless she succeeds on a Scar Resistance roll.

Cooldown (• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Directed, Repeatable

The Variation overheats, overclocks, or overwhelms the Remade whenever he directs it, requiring a cooldown period before he can safely direct it again.

At Magnitude •, each additional time the character directs the Variation after the first in a scene, he risks overheating it; the player may accept a Beat for the Variation to fizzle out or cause complications for him or his allies the more he uses it.

At Magnitude ••, whenever the character directs the entangled Variation without waiting one full minute (or turn, in action scenes) after the last time he directed it, each Scar Finesse roll his player makes to direct the entangled Variation suffers a cumulative -1 penalty. This penalty resets to 0 after one minute/turn without Directing the Variation.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but instead of resetting to 0, the penalty decreases by one each minute/turn the Remade goes without directing the entangled Variation.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and choose one:

- **Blackout:** If the roll to direct the entangled Variation results in a dramatic failure, the Variation deactivates at once and cannot be activated again during the current scene.
- **Ponderous:** The penalty decreases by one every two minutes/turns the Broken goes without directing the entangled Variation.

At Magnitude •••••, the Deviant suffers both Magnitude •••• effects.

Depletion (• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Remade uses up whatever powers the Variation quickly, requiring him to recharge or replenish it often. The Variation may literally run on batteries or electricity, or he may need to consume a particular fuel or reload a weapon.

Each instance of this Scar requires a different kind of recharge.

At Magnitude •, the Variation runs out of juice and deactivates at dramatic moments when the character needs it most. The player can accept a Beat to declare the Variation depleted when it would cause him or his allies problems.

At Magnitude ••, the Variation lasts a number of minutes (turns, in action scenes) after activation equal to the character's Scar Resistance before it needs recharging. Recharging the Variation takes an instant action.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the character loses his Defense while recharging the Variation, and each recharge within the same scene adds one additional instant action to the time it takes. If he stops recharging before the power is ready again, he loses all progress and must start over.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and choose one:

- The Variation only lasts one minute/turn before it needs recharging.
- Alternatively, recharging the Variation takes (6 - Scar Resistance) hours instead of one or more instant actions; the character still loses his Defense while recharging, doesn't replenish Willpower even if he sleeps during that time, and can't take non-reflexive actions and recharge at the same time. If this process is interrupted, he keeps the progress and can pick up where he left off.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude ••••, but *both* effects apply; effectively, the Variation can only be used once per scene.

Deviations

- **Hazardous Recharge (+1 Magnitude):** Recharging the Variation inflicts one point of lethal damage on the character; the fuel he must consume is poisonous, recharging the power electrocutes him, etc.

Deterioration (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Overt; Repeatable

The more the Broken relies on the Variation, the more her body deteriorates. Her parts might fall off or grow increasingly unmanageable tumors at an accelerated pace, her skin and organs might age too fast, turn inside out, or fester with decay, or she might melt into a foul-smelling gob of flesh little by little.

Each instance of Deterioration affects a different limb or sense.

At Magnitude •, upon activating the Variation, one or more of the character's body parts deteriorate. The Storyteller may offer a Beat to temporarily incapacitate the part at the wrong moment or cause horrified reactions in onlookers.

At Magnitude ••, upon activating the Variation, the character's player makes a Scar Resistance roll. On a failure, the Deviant suffers one of the following Tilts (p. XX) of the player's choice, depending on which body part deteriorates: Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened, or Leg Wrack. The Tilt fades at the end of the scene.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but choose one:

- **Lingering:** The Tilt's effects last until the end of the chapter, instead. Outside of action scenes, this imposes the Blinded, Deafened, or Crippled Persistent Conditions.
- **Painful:** The character also suffers a point of bashing damage upon activating the entangled Variation.
- **Severe:** The character instead suffers the Tilt in both arms, ears, eyes, or legs.

At Magnitude ••••, the character suffers from two of the Magnitude ••• effects.

At Magnitude •••••, the character suffers from all three Magnitude ••• effects.

Fluctuating Variation (•••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation is wild and unreliable, sometimes sputtering out and sometimes overflowing with uncontrollable power.

- When entangling this Scar, the Deviant's player must determine how it functions at every available Magnitude. For most Variations, this means choosing its configuration at Magnitude 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, but many Scars have a narrower range (1-3, 2-4, 1-4, 2-5, etc.). Whenever this Scar causes the Variation to change Magnitude, all its key variables follows this initial model. She must decide all the effects her Lash has at each Magnitude (p. XX), for example, or decide whether she gains access to Crush/Dismember or Force Field when her Telekinesis is at Magnitude •••• (p. XX).
- When first activated, an entangled Variation's Magnitude is equal to the successes on its activation roll.
- Every several minutes of activation (every turn, in action scenes), the Deviant's player declares whether she wishes to increase or decrease the current Magnitude of the Variation by 1 and makes a Scar Resistance roll. On a success, the Magnitude fluctuation obeys the Remade, but future such fluctuation rolls during the Variation's current activation suffer a -1 penalty. On a failure, it moves in the opposite direction, although future fluctuation rolls enjoy a +1 bonus.
- If fluctuation would have an impossible result (i.e. increasing Magnitude when it is already at the highest possible Magnitude for that Variation or decreasing it when it is already at the lowest), the Magnitude remains unchanged, but the resulting bonus or penalty to future fluctuation rolls is instead +2/-2.

Perilous Variation (• to ••••)

Keywords: Physical; Overt; Repeatable

The Variation is dangerous to the Deviant. It might come with a side effect like an energy backlash or psychic feedback, or it might involve an implant physically tearing through her flesh. Perhaps she channels power from a sinister force that wants to hurt her, or it takes so much effort to use that her body can't handle the strain. The effects are always outwardly noticeable, such as a nosebleed or uncontrollable trembling.

At Magnitude •, the Variation harms the character whenever he activates it, but the damage — while painful — is mostly cosmetic and doesn't stick around. The player may accept a Beat for the pain to be distracting enough to hinder the Broken or her allies.

At Magnitude ••, upon activating the Variation, the character takes a point of bashing damage.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the damage is lethal instead.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the damage is aggravated instead.

Deviations

- **Ongoing (+2 Magnitude):** This may only entangle Directed Variations. The Scar deals its damage upon the Variation's activation *and* every time the character directs its effects. This Deviation can't modify the Magnitude • version of this Scar.

Persistent Drawback (• to ••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation carries more insidious drawbacks than most Controlled Variations do.

Choose a Persistent Scar (p. XX) with Magnitude equal to this Scar's Magnitude. All Variations combined with this Scar also suffer that Persistent Scar, but only while one or more of those Variations are active.

Each instance of this Scar *must* apply a different Persistent Scar or one with the Repeatable keyword.

Deviations

- **Continual (+1 Magnitude):** The chosen Persistent Scar manifests whether the combined Variations are active or not.

Power Failure (• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation breaks down under certain circumstances, which the player chooses when he acquires this Scar. These circumstances are uncommon but not unusual — such as “when the Remade suffers lethal damage,” “when deafened,” or “inside a church.”

Each instance of Power Failure may have a different failure circumstance.

At Magnitude •, whenever the character is in the presence of his weakness, he may not be able to activate the entangled Variation. If it is already active, it gradually loses Magnitude until it falls below the Variation's minimum Magnitude, at which point it deactivates. Whenever the Broken is exposed to his weakness, the player may accept a Beat for an entangled Variation to lose potency, deactivate, or fail to activate.

At Magnitude ••, when the character encounters his weakness while the Variation is active, that Variation loses one Magnitude per minute (or per turn in action scenes) unless the player succeeds on a Scar Resistance roll. Scar Finesse rolls to activate the Variation in the presence of the weakness suffer a penalty equal to (6 - Scar Resistance).

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but when the failure circumstance comes into play, the Variation ends immediately rather than losing Magnitude (although a Scar Resistance roll is still allowed). The character can't reactivate it until the circumstance ends.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but once the Variation deactivates, it doesn't regain functionality and can't be reactivated for the rest of the scene.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but it can't be reactivated until the end of the *chapter*, instead.

Deviations

- **Rare (-1 Magnitude):** The situations that depower the Scar are very specific, such as “when a Loyalty Touchstone is a target” or “when special equipment is employed” or “while the Remade is in contact with a rare substance.”
- **Common (+1 Magnitude):** As Rare and exclusive with it, the vulnerability is instead commonplace — such as “when the character loses his temper,” “when he takes any damage,” or “when someone removes his mechanical limb with a successful disarm action.”

Preparation (•• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation requires preparation or charging up before the Broken can use it. For instance, she may need to concentrate or meditate, build up energy, perform a ritual, or bargain with an internal entity for the right to use the power.

Each instance of this Scar requires a different ritual.

At Magnitude ••, the character must perform an action that takes one minute (or one turn in action scenes) before activating the Variation.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the Variation's activation is an extended action with an interval of one minute/turn, requiring total successes on the activation roll equal to (Variation's Magnitude + Scar's Magnitude + 1), and the character loses her Defense during preparation.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but add two successes to the total required.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but instead add four successes to the total required.

Deviations

- **Lengthy (+1 Magnitude):** The ritual instead requires five minutes (two turns in action scenes).
- **Grueling (+2 Magnitude):** As Lengthy and exclusive with it, but the ritual instead requires 15 minutes (three turns in action scenes).

Tabula Rasa (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle

Whenever the transformed activates the Variation, it's only a matter of time before the stress cracks his mind, and memories fall into the space between. Once he has a moment to decompress, he forgets it all — everyone he met, every victory he won and loss he suffered, every goodbye he said.

At Magnitude •, the character forgets details about what happened while the Variation was active. The player can accept a Beat for his character to forget something important that comes back to bite him or causes complications.

At Magnitude ••, the Deviant's memories of events that happen while he uses the Variation are unreliable. Anytime he would need to remember such an event, his player must succeed on a Scar Resistance roll to do so. Other rolls to know or remember information he learned during those times suffer a -2.

At Magnitude •••, at the end of the scene in which the character activated the Variation, he forgets everything that happened in that scene after the point of activation. Later, he may spend a Willpower point to temporarily regain that memory for one scene, as long as something strongly reminds him of the missing events, such as an impassioned recap from someone who was there or another eerily similar event unfolding before his eyes. Once he's spent Willpower equal to the Variation's Magnitude this way, he regains the memory permanently. Any Conditions or supernatural effects imposed upon him during the missing time remain — he may not remember how they came about, but they still affect him.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but choose one:

- **Permanence:** The character can't spend Willpower to regain the memories, temporarily or otherwise; they're gone for good.

- **Rapid:** The character forgets everything at the end of every minute that passes while the Variation is active (or each turn in action scenes), losing track of what he was just doing with potentially disastrous consequences.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude ••••, but *both* effects apply.

Tribulation (••• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle; Repeatable

Using the Variation is a struggle. It requires extra effort — incredible focus, finding the perfect mindset, or overcoming traumatic memories, for instance.

At Magnitude •••, the player must spend a Willpower point each time the character activates the Variation.

Deviations

- **Meditation (+1 Magnitude):** Spending the Willpower to activate the Variation takes a separate instant action.
- **Draining (+2 Magnitude):** This can only entangle Directed Variations. The player must spend the Willpower each time the character activates the Variation *and* on any turn on which she directs it.

Unstable Variation (•• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation is more erratic than most, sending the Deviant spiraling toward a loss of control whenever he uses it.

At Magnitude ••, the first time the character activates the Variation in a given chapter, he gains one minor Instability.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the Instability is medium instead.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the Instability is major instead.

Deviations

- **Severe (+2 Magnitude):** The Broken gains the Instability the first time he activates the Variation in a given *scene* instead.

Involuntary Scars

Involuntary Scars plague transformed who don't have full — or any — control over their powers.

Most Variations with an Involuntary Scar can be activated with a successful Scar Finesse roll (p. XX). In cases where the Variation activates unintentionally, this initial activation is a reflexive action. Resisting the manifestation of an Involuntary Variation when it would normally occur (or regaining control of it once it has) is more complicated.

Involuntary Stimulus (• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation activates on its own under certain circumstances, which the player chooses when she acquires this Scar. These circumstances are uncommon but not unusual — such as “when exposed to freezing temperatures,” “under a full moon,” “when exposed to direct sunlight,” or “at the sound of chimes.”

Each instance of Involuntary Stimulus provides a different activating circumstance.

At Magnitude •, the Variation may activate on its own in the stimulus’ presence, possibly at highly inconvenient moments, for the Deviant. If the Variation is Directed, the Storyteller may offer a Beat to direct the Variation for a single turn on which the Remade does not do so (or select its target and effect at random). Once activated, the character can deactivate an entangled Variation as an instant action, even if the stimulus persists, but it might reactivate a short while later (turns in action scenes, minutes in other scenes) if the stimulus is still present.

At Magnitude ••, if the Scar activates due to exposure to the stimulus, it and all its entangled Variations are considered Overt, this scene. In addition, choose one:

- **Insistent:** The Variation(s) *always* activates in the stimulus’ presence unless the player makes a successful Scar Resistance roll. If exposure continues, the Storyteller might call for more Scar Resistance rolls — no more often than once per turn in action scenes, once every several minutes in non-action scenes — with a penalty equal to the number of consecutive, successful Scar Resistance rolls the Deviant’s player has made, this scene.
- **Reactive:** Once the Variation is active, the Broken cannot deactivate it while in contact with the stimulus. Getting clear of the stimulus often involves an instant action and a roll of some kind, depending on the circumstances. This might be Resolve + Composure to calm down in the face of an emotion-based stimulus, for example, or Wits + Survival to bundle up against a cold-based one.

At Magnitude •••, the Remade suffers both Magnitude •• effects.

Deviations

- **Rare (-1 Magnitude):** The situations that trigger the Scar are very specific, such as “while someone is singing a specific song” or “while the Remade is in contact with a rare substance.”
- **Common (+1 Magnitude):** As Rare and exclusive with it, the stimulus is instead commonplace — such as “at room temperature” or “exposure to fluorescent lighting.”
- **Uncontrollable (+2 Magnitude):** This is exclusive with Common and Rare; the Deviant’s player may define a stimulus that is more common or rarer, but doing so doesn’t increase or decrease the Scar’s Magnitude. The transformed can’t activate the combined Variation *except* involuntarily.
- **Unpredictable (+1 Magnitude):** The Variation activates according to the chosen stimulus *and* at other, unexpected times; the Storyteller may choose one or more additional secret stimuli that may or may not be discoverable.

Power Build-Up (• to ••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Remade's power wants to spill out at every opportunity, and it's all he can do to keep it bottled up inside. If he holds it back for too long, his internal volcano erupts and his power lashes out in catastrophic fashion.

At Magnitude •, if the character doesn't use the entangled Variation often enough, it sometimes explodes out of him and causes harm to him, his allies, innocent bystanders, and anything else unfortunate enough to be close by. The player can accept a Beat to make his power erupt in a way that hurts someone his character doesn't want to hurt or causes significant setbacks. If the Variation is Directed, the Storyteller may offer a Beat to direct the Variation for a single turn on which the Remade does not do so (or to select its target and effect at random). Once activated, the character can deactivate an entangled Variation as an instant action.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and all the Variations entangled with the Scar are considered Overt. In addition, choose one:

- **Insistent:** The Storyteller may activate one of the entangled Variations up to once per chapter. The Deviant's player may refuse this activation with a successful Scar Resistance roll. If this roll succeeds, the Storyteller may make another activation attempt in a later scene but may not attempt to trigger this Scar again during the current scene. Each consecutive successful roll to resist activation imposes a -1 penalty on future rolls to resist involuntary activation.
- **Volcanic:** Once activated, entangled Variations are difficult to bring back under control, requiring a successful Scar Resistance roll to deactivate it prior to the end of the scene. This roll is allowed once every several minutes (one per turn, in action scenes) and enjoys a bonus equal to the number of consecutive, failed Scar Resistance rolls that preceded it this scene.

At Magnitude •••, choose one:

- **Compounded:** The Remade suffers both Magnitude •• effects.
- **Uncontrollable:** The Broken must have chosen Insistent as his Magnitude •• effect. The transformed can only voluntarily activate a combined Variation once per chapter, and this limit cannot be exceeded by means of Adaptations. The Storyteller may attempt to activate an entangled Variation involuntarily up to once per scene. The Scar Resistance rolls to refuse this activation enjoy a bonus equal to the number of times an entangled Variation has been successfully activated during the current chapter.
- **Destructive:** The Broken must have chosen Volcanic as his Magnitude •• effect, and at least one entangled Variation must be Directed. The Storyteller may direct an entangled, Directed Variation on any turn on which the Remade does not do so (or randomly determine its target and effect). The Deviant may only deactivate a Directed Variation linked to this Scar by succeeding on a Scar Resistance roll with a bonus equal to the number of times the Storyteller has directed the Variation since it was activated, and a penalty equal to the number of times the player directed it since it was activated.

At Magnitude ••••, at least one entangled Variation must be Directed. The Deviant suffers from all three Magnitude ••• effects.

Character Design: Power Build-Up

If you add the Indelible Mark or Short Circuit Deviation (p. XX) to the Power Build-Up Scar, your character will pay a personal price or suffer an unpleasant side-effect each time her Variations activate of their own volition.

Persistent Scars

Persistent Scars never stop plaguing the Deviant, whether she's using her powers or not. A player may only combine them with Persistent Variations, except when a Deviation says otherwise.

Addictive Variation (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental, Physical; Subtle; Toggled

The Deviant's Variation acts as, or literally is, an addictive drug. She experiences a unique high whenever she uses it, and withdrawal whenever she goes too long without doing so.

At Magnitude •, the character suffers when she doesn't use the Variation often enough. The player can accept a Beat to activate the power just to get a fix at an inopportune moment, or labor under withdrawal symptoms that hinder her.

At Magnitude ••, the character suffers the Persistent Addicted Condition (p. XX) regarding the Variation, which reasserts itself at the beginning of each chapter after it resolves. If she doesn't activate the Variation for at least a scene once per chapter, she gains the Deprived Condition (p. XX).

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and choose one:

- **Disorienting:** Whenever the Variation is active, the character suffers the Intoxicated Condition (p. XX); during action scenes, this becomes the Drugged Tilt (p. XX).
- **Lingering:** The Deprived Condition resulting from this Scar is Persistent; the character earns a Beat whenever she uses the Variation at an inconvenient time just to get a fix or when her withdrawal symptoms cause problems, and it only resolves when she goes at least a story without toggling the Variation on at all or heals a medium or major Instability.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and choose one:

- **Compounded:** Both Magnitude ••• effects apply.
- **Severe:** The Deprived Condition's effects worsen, inflicting a -2 to the relevant rolls instead of -1, and also affect derived traits.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but the Remade suffers from all Magnitude ••• and •••• effects.

Alternate Persona (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental, Social; Overt; Repeatable

The Deviant sometimes becomes someone else. She prefers different aesthetics and fashions, different foods and activities — she may even join different organizations and have different mannerisms. The player should decide when she acquires this Scar what the Alternate Persona is like, and how they differ from the character herself. The change should be drastic enough that it's clearly noticeable to observers, although her physical appearance and traits (Touchstones,

Attributes, Skills, etc.) do not change. Each personality remembers what the other persona does while the Variation is active, but only vaguely or as dreams.

If developing this Scar multiple times, each one is tied to a different alternate persona.

At Magnitude •, the persona's basic goals are little different from the Remade's normal one, and the player determines when it takes (and relinquishes) control. Upon transforming, the Storyteller may assign a new Aspiration appropriate for the alternate persona. The player may accept a Beat to do something while portraying the new persona that sabotages the primary one, or for a relationship from whichever persona isn't currently dominant to cause complications.

At Magnitude ••, as the Magnitude • effect. In addition, once per chapter, at a time of the Storyteller's choosing, the alternate persona takes control until the end of the scene. The Deviant's player may make a Scar Resistance roll to resist this during the current scene, although this means the Storyteller can invoke it again in a later scene.

At Magnitude •••, as the Magnitude •• effect, but the Broken's player cannot deny this transformation.

Deviations

- **Forgetful Persona (-1 Magnitude):** The alternate persona doesn't remember anything that occurs while it is not dominant.
- **Blackouts (+1 Magnitude):** The primary personality doesn't remember anything the alternate persona does while it is dominant.
- **Cross-Purposes (+1 Magnitude):** The persona reallocates the character's Touchstones; they either treat all Loyalty Touchstones as Conviction ones, treat all Conviction Touchstones as Loyalty ones, or swap all Touchstones to the opposite track.
- **Bestial (+1-4 Magnitude):** When the Alternate Persona comes out, the Deviant loses touch with her humanity. Sapient thought eludes her, and her higher brain functions erode. At best, this causes stronger fight-or-flight instincts; at worst, it turns the Remade into a mindless beast.

At +1, the persona suffers the Insane Tilt (p. XX) whenever they participate in violent conflict. They can't take more than a few seconds to discuss or consider their next action at any time.

At +2, the persona suffers the Bestial Condition (p. XX) instead, which either resolves as normal or fades without granting a Beat at the end of the scene, whichever comes first. They can't build plans as equipment (p. XX) or plan ahead for a scene beyond the current one.

+3 functions as +2, but the Condition doesn't fade at the end of the scene, afflicting *both* personas until the Broken resolves it normally; and the alternate persona can't spend Willpower when taking actions that use Mental Skills.

+4 functions as +3, but the alternate persona can no longer tell friend from foe; the slightest provocation prompts a senseless rampage or sends them fleeing uncontrollably from their own Loyalty Touchstones.

Character Design: Alternate Persona

Make Alternate Persona the secondary Scar for an Involuntary Stimulus of "when the character sleeps" using the Indelible Mark Deviation (p. XX) to portray a

somnambulant Deviant who lives a whole other life while sleepwalking. You could even include the Nightmares Deviation (p. XX) to ensure this kind of sleep isn't restful.

Amnesia (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle

Important events in the Remade's history fade from his memory. Perhaps his Divergence wiped them from his mind, or his abilities take over so much of his consciousness that they push relationships and identity out. Inevitably, the missing moments come back to haunt him now when he least expects it.

At Magnitude •, scattered bits of the character's past slip from his mind. He suffers the Persistent Amnesia Condition (p. XX).

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and the character can't remember one key event from his pre-Divergence life at all. The player may work with the Storyteller to decide what it is, or let the Storyteller create one in secret to reveal over the course of the story. Rolls to remember details of events or facts he learned before his Divergence suffer a -2.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the character forgets several key events instead, and the penalty increases to -4.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the character forgets a large contiguous chunk of his life instead — at least several years. Revelations about his past inflict the Shaken or Guilty Condition when they come up, chosen by the Storyteller.

At Magnitude •••••, the character is a blank slate, and remembers nothing at all from before his Divergence. Revelations about his past force a Faltering roll for one of his Touchstones, chosen by the Storyteller, as shameful secrets and dark intrigues he doesn't remember affect his current relationships.

Bane (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle; Repeatable

Something that should be harmless is anathema to the Broken, or something already harmful (such as fire) is especially so for him. It could be a kind of substance or object, like ivory or mirrors; energy, like bright light or the sound of sirens; or entity, like children or ghosts. Exposure to his bane hurts and weakens him. It may be a side effect of the combined Variation, a deliberate weakness his Progenitor baked into her, or a reaction to some aspect of his Divergence that was so traumatic it causes physical pain to experience anything similar.

At Magnitude •, the character's reaction to the bane resembles an allergic response. He might suffer a rash, migraine, or eye irritation. You take a Beat whenever the bane complicates a scene or when you capitulate to the demands of someone who inflicts it upon you (or threatens to do so).

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and while the character touches the bane (or is otherwise directly exposed, such as clearly hearing an aural bane), he can't heal damage by any means. He takes a point of bashing damage every minute of direct exposure (per turn, in action scenes). If

the bane ordinarily causes damage, upgrade the type of damage it deals (bashing to lethal to aggravated).

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, but the damage is lethal, instead. A bane that is ordinarily harmful inflicts one additional point of damage.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the damage is aggravated, instead. A bane that is ordinarily harmful inflicts twice its usual damage.

Deviations

- **Rare (-1 Magnitude):** The bane is very specific, such as a rare substance or a form of radiation or supernatural energy not typically found outside of controlled settings.
- **Common (+1 Magnitude):** As Rare and exclusive with it, the bane is instead commonplace — such as temperatures above freezing or wood.
- **Draining (+1 Magnitude):** Exposure to the bane reduces the Magnitude of all entangled Variations by 1 per minute/turn until the end of the scene.
- **Paralyzing (+1 Magnitude):** Exposure to the bane inflicts the Insensate or Stunned Tilt, as the player decides when choosing this Scar.

Conspicuous Appearance (• to ••••)

Keywords: Physical, Social; Overt

The transformed stands out in a crowd. He leaves a clear trail of gossip and reports for conspiracies to follow, and flying under the radar is difficult. His monstrous or eerily inhuman appearance may frighten or revolt others.

Any Overt Variation or Scar is noticeable; this Scar is for characters whose permanent appearances are particularly grotesque or attention-grabbing. Conspiracy rolls for surveillance against the Deviant enjoy a bonus equal to half the Magnitude of Conspicuous Appearance (rounded up).

At Magnitude •, the character's features are uncommon, but forgettable. He may have heterochromatic eyes, a sixth finger on each hand, or an unsettling grace; part of his body may appear alien, gross, or terrifying. These features are easily concealable and have no mechanical effects, but whenever they complicate his social interactions, you take a Beat.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, but the character's features are notably strange and incite people to talk about him, and they're harder to conceal. He may have an odd skin color, like blue or green, or his eyes might glow. The oddity might be too extensive or bulky to hide, or his mannerisms or entire appearance might fall into the uncanny valley. In any scene in which the character could attract unwanted attention, the player must roll Wits + Subterfuge, contested by any observer's Wits + Composure, to conceal his appearance from them. His Social rolls against any Baseline character who notices his appearance lose the 10-again quality; in Social maneuvering (p. XX), worsen their impression of him by one level.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the change is barely concealable, inflicting a -3 to all rolls to disguise or hide the character's appearance. He suffers a Persistent version of the Notoriety Condition (p. XX) among *all* characters, not just Baselines; it grants a Beat whenever his appearance ruins his reputation or causes complications, and resolves only when he makes a

concerted effort to change a community's opinion of him for the better. It reasserts itself whenever he interacts with a new group or community after it resolves.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the character's features are wholly unconcealable and fantastical enough to make headlines, or he's clearly part human, part something terrible. He may have enormous wings or monstrous limbs and horns, float a few inches off the ground, or leave contrails or fire wherever he goes. Observers automatically notice his appearance. Choose one of the following when he acquires the Scar:

- **Terrible:** All Social rolls he makes against Baselines use a chance die. The exception is Intimidation rolls, which enjoy a +2 bonus. In Social maneuvering, any Baseline's impression of him is always hostile.
- **Monstrous:** He suffers the Persistent Hunted Condition (p. XX), which reasserts itself at the beginning of the next story each time it resolves. The hunters pursuing the Remade are not part of the Web of Pain. Rather, they are people or supernatural creatures that regard him as a dangerous threat that must be neutralized.

At Magnitude ••••, the character looks completely inhuman, suffering both Magnitude •••• effects.

Dependency (• to ••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle; Repeatable

The Deviant is dependent on a particular kind of fuel, food, or medication. Without it, her body's natural processes gradually cease. Satisfying the dependency might be as simple as pumping ordinary gasoline into the engine that powers her heart, or as precarious as needing an injection of a serum that only her Progenitor knows how to make.

By default, the Broken needs something moderately difficult to acquire or consume, requiring rolls of some kind, which always suffer a penalty equal to (4 - half Stamina, rounded up). It could be a kind of animal meat local stores don't sell, requiring her to hunt and kill it herself; a common but awkward substance like gasoline, requiring a Crafts roll to hook a gas pump up to her body properly, or an illegal drug requiring illicit dealings to acquire; or something that requires a Resolve + Stamina roll to keep down, like blood, pure capsaicin, or chemicals not meant for drinking. The player can only try once per scene.

Each instance of this Scar pertains to a different dependency.

At Magnitude •, the player may accept a Beat for the character to run out of the substance or end up in a place where she can't access it; for someone to steal her reserves; or for something to ruin her supply, forcing her to embark on a dangerous mission to get more or letting the consequences of missing a dose hinder her or her allies.

At Magnitude ••, if the Remade has not consumed a dose of the substance since the beginning of the current chapter, she suffers deprivation symptoms until she does so. Choose one symptom when developing this Scar:

- **Fatigued:** The character suffers the Fatigued Condition (p. XX), which cannot be resolved until she both sleeps and resumes the regimen.
- **III:** The character does not heal naturally, cannot be healed supernaturally, and suffers a point of bashing damage each day.

- **Sluggish:** The Broken suffers a -3 penalty to Initiative and Speed, and a -2 penalty to Physical actions.
- **Submissive:** The Deviant suffers the Broken Condition. In action scenes, this is instead the Beaten Down Tilt.

At Magnitude ••, choose two symptoms, instead.

At Magnitude •••, choose three symptoms, instead.

At Magnitude ••••, the Remade suffers all four deprivation symptoms.

Deviations

- **Common (-1 Magnitude):** What the Deviant needs is instead commonplace and easy to consume, like aspirin, cat food, or just five times the daily calories a Baseline human would require.
- **Rare (+1 Magnitude):** As Common and exclusive with it. The Remade instead needs something unique or hard to come by, like human flesh or a magical substance only found in one place, or something that requires highly specialized and expensive equipment to get into her body. Rolls to do so are always contested, representing some kind of opposition to obtaining what she needs.

Fragility (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The Variation takes a toll on the Deviant's body. It might sap his strength, transform his bones to glass, or bleed him dry. Even if the problem is internal, it always shows — perhaps he becomes deathly pale or unnaturally gaunt, or his skin literally turns to porcelain.

At Magnitude •, the character is unnaturally vulnerable to harm. The player may accept a Beat for the character to become distracted by pain or temporarily incapacitated at an inopportune moment, causing complications.

At Magnitude ••, the first time in a scene the character's wound penalty increases, he suffers the Stunned Tilt (p. XX) for one turn.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the character suffers the Tilt *every* time his wound penalty increases.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the character suffers the Immobilized Tilt (p. XX) instead, and it lasts (6 - Stamina) turns.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, and at the end of any scene in which the character took damage, he suffers the Disabled Condition (p. XX), which doesn't resolve until *all* of his damage is completely healed.

Deviations

- **Weakened (+1-4 Magnitude):** For each +1 Magnitude, subtract one box from the character's Health track, to a minimum of one box.

Frozen Heart (• to •••••)

Keywords: Social; Subtle

The Remade has more trouble than most expressing herself and letting other people in. A wall of mechanical programming, deadened empathy, or even literal ice locks away her feelings.

At Magnitude •, the character stumbles in situations where emotional vulnerability would help, or turns away support when she needs it most. The player can accept a Beat for the character to do something dangerous alone or make a sacrifice to avoid opening up to someone.

At Magnitude ••, the character's actions with untrained Social Skills take a -3 instead of the usual -1. Reduce her maximum ratings in Empathy, Expression, and Persuasion by half this Scar's Magnitude (rounded up).

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and the character gains the Stoic Condition (p. XX). It reasserts itself at the beginning of the next chapter each time it resolves.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the player may no longer choose to fail an appropriate roll or resistance to resolve the Stoic Condition — it must happen on its own. Also, when the character acquires this Scar, choose either Loyalty or Conviction Touchstones; whenever she would regain Willpower and heal Instability by upholding that type of Touchstone, she must choose one benefit or the other instead of gaining both.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but its effects apply to *both* types of Touchstones.

Genetic Disorder (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The Deviant's genes are defective, causing symptoms of a mysterious illness ordinary doctors can't properly diagnose or treat.

At Magnitude •, the character occasionally succumbs to bouts of fatigue and symptoms that hinder him. The player may accept a Beat for the character to suffer harm or a setback due to his illness.

At Magnitude ••, during action scenes, the character suffers the moderate Sick Tilt (p. XX). In non-action scenes, the Deviant suffers a penalty to equal to half the Magnitude of Genetic Disorder (rounded up) on actions that require physical strength or stamina.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and the character suffers the Fatigued Condition (p. XX) after staying awake for six hours instead of 24.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the character's Sick Tilt is grave instead.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, and the character suffers a point of lethal damage from the disease each day unless his player succeeds on a Scar Resistance roll. Supernatural or specialized medical treatment from someone who has studied the Remade's condition and has access to the same kinds of methods employed in his Divergence can grant an equipment bonus on this roll.

Glitch (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle

The Broken's train of thought experiences hiccups — moments of static, abrupt flashbacks, another being's thoughts intruding on hers, or just gaps during which her mind blanks. She hears voices, sees things that aren't there, and feels phantom sensations on her skin. When the Scar is at its worst, she completely loses time or invents companions and foes who don't exist.

Whenever she suffers a mental or emotional Condition, her glitches should incorporate its influence.

At Magnitude •, the character gets distracted at crucial moments and takes action based on nonexistent stimuli. The player can accept a Beat for the character to automatically fail at an important action or other goal due to these glitches.

At Magnitude ••, whenever the character spends a point of Willpower, she can't spend more within the current scene until the player chooses to automatically fail a roll first.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and whenever she spends Willpower, the character suffers the Insane Tilt (p. XX) in an action scene or the Distracted Condition (p. XX) in other scenes. The Distracted Condition imposed by this Scar resolves when the character heals any Instability or chooses to fail an important action due to the Scar.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the Distracted Condition doesn't resolve until the character regains all Willpower.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, and the character also suffers the Persistent Madness Condition (p. XX), which cannot be resolved except by suppressing the Scar.

Hemophilia (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The Deviant's blood is hungry to flow, pooling up inside him and pumping out of his veins any chance it gets. Injuries are particularly lethal, and even minor blows can cause internal bleeding.

At Magnitude •, the character has trouble stopping his wounds from bleeding, and getting injured is a serious concern. The player may accept a Beat for the character to suffer harm or a setback due to his condition.

At Magnitude ••, whenever the character takes bashing damage in a Health box that causes wound penalties, his leftmost point of bashing damage upgrades to lethal.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and whenever the character takes lethal or aggravated damage in a Health box that causes wound penalties, he takes another point of lethal damage automatically at the end of each subsequent turn. First aid or other medical attention halts the automatic damage, but if the character takes additional lethal or aggravated damage afterward, the Scar's effects kick in again.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, and at the end of any scene in which the character takes any damage, he suffers the Fatigued Condition (p. XX).

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but the effects apply when the character takes the appropriate type of damage in *any* box, not just ones that cause wound penalties.

Deviations

- **Sickly (+1-4 Magnitude):** For each +1 Magnitude, subtract one box from the character's Health track, to a minimum of one box.

Lying Eyes (• to •••••)

Keywords: Social; Subtle

The Deviant has trouble convincing others she's sincere even when she's being completely truthful. Something about the way she speaks or carries herself engenders mistrust, regardless of her actual intent. Many transformed with this Scar throw up their hands and become habitual liars to bury their frustration, but some refuse, choosing instead to let their actions speak for them.

At Magnitude •, trying to tell the truth or convince someone to trust her backfires on the character in ways ranging from inconvenient to disastrous. The player may accept a Beat for the character to come across as shady or deceitful when she's trying to be honest and benign, automatically dramatically failing a Social action without rolling.

At Magnitude ••, the character suffers the Notoriety Condition (p. XX) whenever she interacts with strangers or people who have met her for the first time within the current scene. It resolves when she wins a given person's trust through rolled actions or deeds, but applies again next time she meets someone new.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and reduce all first impressions the character makes on any stranger by one level; every failure on a Social roll dealing with people she just met is a dramatic one.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the Magnitude •• effects apply whenever she interacts with *anyone* other than close friends and those whose trust she actively earns.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but strangers and people who have just met the character automatically have hostile first impressions of her, and she can only improve them by appealing to their Vices or using leverage until she definitively earns their trust.

Maintenance (• to ••••)

Keywords: Mental, Physical; Subtle

The part of the Remade's body or mind that provides the Variation breaks down without regular care. He may require medical attention, mechanical upkeep, emotional centering, or psychic cleansing.

At Magnitude •, the Variation stops working at inopportune moments, requiring a few minutes of maintenance to function again. The player may accept a Beat for the Variation to cut out when it would cause significant setbacks for the character or his allies.

At Magnitude ••, at the end of each story, the player takes a Build Equipment action (p. XX) to perform a "repair," using a roll appropriate to the type of maintenance he needs. Literally repairing a bionic arm uses Dexterity + Crafts, performing spot surgery uses Dexterity + Medicine, meditation uses Composure + Wits, and so on. The effective difference between the current and desired "equipment bonus" for purposes of the repair roll is equal to Maintenance's Magnitude. The Fragile and Volatile Conditions (p. XX) apply to the entangled Variations, when applicable. Resolving Fragile means the Variation stops functioning for the rest of the scene; resolving Volatile means the Variation keeps working but inflicts a minor Instability on the character in addition to the usual dramatic failure effects. The player can make Variation repair rolls as jury rigging actions if he wants to do it more quickly.

In some cases, another character can take the Maintenance action instead — for instance, to perform mechanical repairs, surgery, or therapy. Variations and other supernatural effects that repair or heal in the appropriate way can substitute for the usual Maintenance action.

At Magnitude ●●●, as Magnitude ●●, but the player must roll at the end of each chapter instead. Resolving Fragile also inflicts a level of lethal damage; resolving Volatile inflicts a medium Instability instead.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●, but the player must roll at the end of each scene instead. Resolving Fragile inflicts a level of aggravated damage instead; resolving Volatile inflicts a major Instability instead.

Misfortune (• to ●●●●)

Keywords: Social; Subtle

The Broken is supremely unlucky, subject to some cosmic curse or quirk of fate. At best, this misfortune is a nagging inconvenience for her; at worst, it puts her loved ones in danger as well and defines her by the maelstrom of catastrophes that follow in her wake.

At Magnitude •, little things make the character's life more frustrating anytime luck is a factor. Traffic lights turn red just as she approaches, she always draws the short straw and performs poorly in games of chance, and any uninformed guess she makes is wrong. The player may accept a Beat for the character to automatically fail at any significant action random factors could influence, or for some other misfortune to befall her in the current scene.

At Magnitude ●●, at the beginning of each chapter, *and* whenever the character spends Willpower, the Storyteller marks down a point of active Misfortune. Once per scene, they may cash this Misfortune in to do one of the following: subtract three dice from the player's pool; add three dice to an opposing Storyteller character's pool; turn a normal failure the player rolls into a dramatic one; have an opponent win a tied contested roll; force the player to roll one action twice and take the worse result; or experience some other notable, if temporary, setback. All unused Misfortune vanishes at the end of the chapter.

At Magnitude ●●●, as Magnitude ●●, but the Storyteller can spend the Remade's Misfortune to affect her, any of her Loyalty Touchstones, or any member of her cohort. They may do so once per character per scene, but only once per action. If another player's character would suffer harm or significant inconvenience from a Misfortune, that player receives the Beat, and any player can accept a Beat for their character to automatically fail at any significant action random factors could influence, once per scene per player. If multiple members of the cohort possess this Scar at Magnitude 3+, their per-chapter limits stack, although the once-per-action limit still applies.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●, and whenever a threat has access to any of the character's allies or Loyalty Touchstones, that person is first in line for danger. Whenever the player makes a roll for her character to aid or protect one of these people, directly or indirectly, she rolls it twice and chooses the worse result whether the Storyteller spends Misfortune or not. Additionally, the Storyteller gains Misfortune anytime *any* of the cohort's members spends Willpower.

At Magnitude ●●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●●, and the Storyteller may now spend as many Misfortune on a single action as they like, stacking effects where it makes sense, or imposing serious, long-lasting setbacks. Per-scene limits still apply; dice bonuses and penalties from Misfortune can't exceed -5 on any given roll.

Missing Limb (• to ●●●●)

Keywords: Physical; Overt

The Variation removes one or more of the Remade's limbs, or renders them unusable somehow. Perhaps he has a machine gun where his arm should be, or a sacred flame bestowed upon him the power to control fire but burned his legs beyond saving in the process.

At Magnitude •, the character is missing one or more limbs, but it only impairs him in dramatic moments the player chooses. He may accept a Beat to suffer a major setback due to the character's lack.

At Magnitude ••, the character is missing one limb, which the player chooses when he acquires this Scar. He permanently suffers either the Arm or Leg Wrack Tilt (p. XX) for the appropriate limb in action scenes.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but the character is missing two limbs; he permanently suffers the Arm or Leg Wrack Tilt for both of the appropriate limbs, or both Tilts for one each, in action scenes.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the character is missing all four limbs. He permanently suffers both the Arm and Leg Wrack Tilts for both limbs in action scenes, and the Persistent Disabled Condition (p. XX).

Murderous Urge (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle

The vengeance that lives in the Deviant's heart spills over into action more often than it should. No matter how diligently she disciplines herself or how often she promises to stay her hand next time, it never gets any easier to resist the need for blood.

At Magnitude •, the character often reacts more violently than a situation calls for. The player can accept a Beat for the character to employ disproportionate or inappropriate violence, when it would cause problems for her or her allies. At Magnitude 1, physical intimidation or fist-fighting suffices.

At Magnitude ••, the character escalates veiled threats to blatant ones, blatant threats to violence, and violence to deadly force. Anytime an opportunity to do so arises, the player must make a successful Scar Resistance roll to stop herself from escalating. Friendly sparring doesn't prompt this roll, but anything else is fair game. Each consecutive failed roll to resist further violence grants a +1 bonus on future such Scar Resistance rolls.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but if the player fails the Scar Resistance roll or chooses to forgo it, the character continues trying to deal lethal damage even if she achieves her original intent in the scene. She doesn't stop until she kills someone, or until she's forcibly prevented from causing harm for (6 - Scar Resistance) turns.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but a single kill doesn't sate the character's bloodlust. Once her original victim is dead, she must succeed at this Scar's roll again or find another target, although she won't harm her Loyalty Touchstones or members of her cohort. To the Broken in this state, "foe" is a relative term; she targets a waitress who got her order wrong or a stranger who cut her off on the highway if no real enemies are nearby, and nothing stops her from provoking people into pissing her off.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but *anyone* is fair game for the character's violent urges, including Loyalty Touchstones and cohort members. Upon dramatically failing the roll to resist

the urge, the player may not roll again to prevent the character from killing one victim after another; the rampage lasts until the scene ends or something forcibly prevents her from continuing for (6 - Scar Resistance) turns.

Native Environment (• to •••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The transformed is only at home in a particular environment, such as in the water, in temperatures below freezing, or in the forest. The longer he languishes outside his native environment, the more it hurts him.

At Magnitude •, the character treats any non-native environment as a level 1 extreme environment (p. XX). Environments especially opposed to the character's native one count as one level higher; for instance, if his native environment is temperatures below freezing, a roaring fireplace filling a room with heat would be harder to deal with. The player may accept a Beat for the character to suffer hardships due to a non-native environment, or to be unexpectedly removed from his native one at an inopportune moment.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and if the character spends more than a scene outside his native environment, he suffers from an appropriate Tilt until he returns to it. For instance, if his native environment is temperatures below freezing, he might suffer the Extreme Heat Tilt outdoors in springtime.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, but non-native environments become level 2 instead, and the character always suffers an appropriate Tilt outside his native environment even if he hasn't spent a whole scene there.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but non-native environments become level 3 instead, and the character's native environment narrows in scope or becomes more extreme. Using the examples above, he now needs salt water, sub-zero temperatures, or a forest with a specific kind of vegetation.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but non-native environments become level 4 instead.

Paranoia (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental, Social; Subtle

All Deviants feel hunted, but this Scar ramps up the Remade's paranoia to unhealthy levels. She reacts with suspicion to anything that defies her expectations, and trusts no one at all other than her Loyalty Touchstones.

At Magnitude •, the character reacts with unwarranted suspicion to anything out of the ordinary, and constantly believes she's being watched or manipulated. The player may accept a Beat for this mistrust to cause significant setbacks.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and whenever someone acts in a way that contradicts the character's idea of how they normally behave based on her personal experience, or something happens that falls outside her normal routine, her payer rolls Scar Resistance. If this roll fails, the Remade suffers a -2 to perception-based rolls, Social actions, and any dice pools to draw on Social Merits such as Allies or Contacts until the end of the scene. The anomaly needn't be violent or harmful; if the character's normal routine includes fighting and mayhem, an act of unexpected generosity or kindness could spark her Paranoia.

At Magnitude ●●●, as Magnitude ●●, and while the penalties apply, the Storyteller makes all rolls to contest the Remade's Social and perception-based actions against any Storyteller character she doesn't implicitly trust in secret, and gives the player misinformation when she fails. The character gains the Spooked Condition whenever the effects kick in; this Condition doesn't fade at the end of the scene, requiring normal resolution.

At Magnitude ●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●, and whenever Paranoia kicks in, the Broken treats a relevant character of the Storyteller's choice as a temporary Conviction Touchstone that is not associated with a dot of Conviction. Any Storyteller character is eligible except the Deviant's Loyalty Touchstones. The Scar's effects don't fade at the end of the scene, instead only ending when the temporary Conviction Touchstone achieves exceptional success on an action to persuade the transformed they're trustworthy, or otherwise makes a grand and convincing gesture to that effect. The Spooked Condition must resolve as normal.

At Magnitude ●●●●●, as Magnitude ●●●●, and while Paranoia's effects are in play, all of the character's Loyalty Touchstones become Conviction ones as well.

Phobia (● to ●●●●)

Keywords: Mental; Subtle; Repeatable

The Remade is irrationally afraid of something that played a role in his Divergence or in the development of the combined Variation. A character who spent weeks in a small tank during his Divergence might suffer claustrophobia, while one who gained a Variation by accidentally merging with a spider might suffer arachnophobia.

By default, this phobia is one that is likely to come into play no more often than once per chapter — like a fear of snakes, heights, or deep water.

Each instance of Phobia pertains to a fear of something different.

At Magnitude ●, the character's Phobia may drive him to abandon plans, act irrationally, or put his cohort in danger. The player can accept a Beat for the fear's source to appear unexpectedly in a scene and cause complications.

At Magnitude ●●, whenever the character encounters the Phobia's source, he can't willingly approach it without his player succeeding on a Scar Resistance roll. If he does confront it, willingly or not, he suffers a penalty equal to (6 - Scar Resistance) to all actions until the source is no longer present. He may attempt to face this fear up to once every few minutes (once per turn, in action scenes), and each successive Scar Resistance roll enjoys a bonus equal to the number of previous failed rolls to do so.

At Magnitude ●●●, instead, whenever the character encounters the Phobia's source, he suffers the Frightened Condition (p. XX). In action scenes, if he can't escape the source, he suffers the Insensate Tilt (p. XX). He must spend a Willpower point to try to resist any attempt to use his Phobia as a threat against him, and suffers a penalty equal to (6 - Scar Resistance) to do so.

Deviations

- **Rare (-1 Magnitude):** The Broken fears an exotic creature or object or an unlikely situation, such as vampires, horseshoes, or being buried alive. It is unusual for him to encounter the object of his fear more than once per story.

- **Common (+1 Magnitude):** The Remade fears something commonplace, such as a fear of the dark, open spaces, or birds. It is common for him to encounter the object of his fear more than once per chapter.

Relentless Variation (• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable; Toggled

The Variation entangled with the Scar is always active, and the Remade can't toggle it off. At best, she must take measures to bring it under control. At worst, she *can't*.

This Scar cannot be entangled with any Directed Variations. The entangled Variations behave as though they and the Scar are both Persistent and Perpetual (granting a +5 bonus to Clash of Wills rolls involving them). In addition, choose one:

- **Inescapable:** Choose another Persistent Scar (the secondary Scar). All Variations combined with this Scar also suffer the secondary Scar. The Deviant cannot suppress the entangled Variations at all — not even temporarily.
- **Suppressible:** Choose a Controlled Scar (the secondary Scar). The Broken can temporarily suppress an entangled Variation by “activating” it, which requires a successful Scar Resistance roll and carries the consequences of the secondary Scar. Tribulation costs Willpower, for example, and Perilous Variation inflicts damage, but in doing so, they suppress the Variation for the duration of its normal activation (typically a scene).

In either case, if all the entangled Variations are Subtle, the Magnitude of this Scar is equal to that of the secondary Scar. If at least one of the entangled Variations is Overt, the Magnitude of this Scar is one greater than that of the secondary Scar.

Relentless Variation and Power Failure

When using the Suppressible option, Power Failure is a special case, reflecting as it does some countermeasure or suppression device the Broken uses to tamp down her unruly Variations — such as a special article of clothing, continual exposure to a radio signal, or regular injections of a stabilizing serum. While this is their main purpose within the story, an enemy *could* deploy them to disable the transformed's Variations, or the Deviant might find herself in an environment where the countermeasures are in place and she can't remove them in order to use her Variations. Thus, the combination of Power Failure and Relentless Variation is a double-edged sword.

For that reason, Power Failure is always treated as a Magnitude •• Scar when it is Relentless Variation's secondary Scar, and the Common and Rare Deviations are not allowed. However, the countermeasure can be as easy to bring into play (or as rare and difficult to apply) as the player wishes. The player similarly decides the following at the time he purchases this Scar:

Off: Does application of the countermeasure neutralize the Variation immediately, or does it take time to do so? If gradual, does the Variation lose Magnitude every interval of time (measured in turns in action scenes, minutes in other scenes), or does it switch off on a delay?

On: Does removal of the countermeasure cause the Variation to manifest at full strength immediately, or does it take time to do so? If gradual, does the Variation

gain Magnitude every interval of time (turns in action scenes, minutes in other scenes), or does it switch on after the delay?

Minimum: Once the countermeasure is removed, can it be reapplied right away, or is it impossible to do so for a period of time (measured in turns in action scenes, minutes in other scenes) or until the end of the scene?

Sensory Deprivation (• to ••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle; Repeatable

The Deviant loses the use of one his five natural senses. He may show no outward signs, or his eyes may fall out of his skull or disappear entirely.

Each instance of Sensory Deprivation affects a different sense. This means a player can acquire this Scar up to five separate times, at different Magnitudes.

At Magnitude •, the character can't taste anything. The Storyteller should impose situational modifiers and other minor effects when appropriate; for instance, the character doesn't notice poison in his tea, but he also never needs to roll Stamina to eat something that tastes vile.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, but the character can't smell anything, instead. He doesn't notice smoke from a nearby fire or toxic gas in the air, but never needs to worry about vomiting in a room full of decaying corpses.

At Magnitude •••, the character can't hear. He suffers the Persistent Deaf Condition (p. XX), which becomes the Deafened Tilt (p. XX) for both ears during action scenes.

At Magnitude ••••, the character can't see. He suffers the Persistent Blind Condition (p. XX), which becomes the Blinded Tilt (p. XX) for both eyes during action scenes.

At Magnitude •••••, the character suffers an almost complete physical numbness; he can feel only the most intense sensations and has trouble moving. The character suffers the Disabled Condition (p. XX), and the player's base pool for all Physical actions and perception rolls that rely on touch sensitivity is a chance die. However, wound penalties don't affect his dice pools until they reach -5.

Silence (• to •••)

Keywords: Social; Subtle

The transformed can't effectively communicate through speech. She might lose her voice, her tongue, or even her entire mouth. A mystical curse might prevent her from speaking, or she might speak in glossolalia or an untranslatable alien language.

At Magnitude •, the character has trouble making herself heard or understood when she speaks. The player can accept a Beat for her limited powers of speech to cause complications.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, and the character can barely communicate orally. Reduce her maximum ratings in Persuasion, Socialize, and Subterfuge by this Scar's Magnitude. Anytime she suffers the Immobilized Tilt (p. XX) or otherwise can't express herself via body language or writing, she also suffers a -2 penalty on all relevant Social rolls.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and the character can't speak at all, although she can still communicate in writing or through sign language. In situations where she can't use body

language or write to express herself, she can't perform Social actions with the above three Skills at all.

Sluggish Metabolism (•• to •••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The Remade's natural processes slow down, making it harder for him to recover from injury and illness.

At Magnitude ••, the character's wounds heal at half their usual rate. For instance, a point of bashing damage takes 30 minutes to heal rather than 15, while a point of lethal takes four days rather than two. Add one to the Toxicity of any poison he suffers. Rolls to avoid damage from diseases take a -2 penalty.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and any moderate Sick or Poisoned Tilt he suffers is grave instead (p. XX).

Subliminal Conditioning (• to •••••)

Keywords: Mental, Social; Subtle

The Broken doesn't always have control over her own actions, whether it's because another entity takes up residence inside her mind and plays tug of war with her free will, or because she was once programmed to follow certain protocols that occasionally reassert themselves.

At Magnitude •, the character is conditioned to respond to a specific stimulus, such as a particular song or the secret sign of the conspiracy that changed her, in a predetermined way. The response is a single, noteworthy action, such as replying with a particular phrase or making a call to a phone number she subconsciously memorized. The player may accept a Beat to succumb to this compulsion when it would create complications.

At Magnitude ••, as Magnitude •, but the compulsion lasts a number of minutes (or turns in action scenes) equal to (6 - Scar Resistance) and requires more meaningful action or prohibits a certain kind of action. This control isn't direct, and she has some flexibility in how she interprets the conditioning, but those who know what it is can manipulate her into situations where she has little choice in how to respond. If a compulsion would force the Remade to Falter, her player may make a Scar Resistance roll to resist it until the end of the scene or until exposed to the stimulus again.

At Magnitude •••, as Magnitude ••, and someone who exploits the conditioning can issue direct commands the character must obey until the compulsion ends. She can bend the spirit of these commands if the wording allows wiggle room, but must adhere to the letter. She can't be commanded to do anything that would take her longer than the compulsion's duration to carry out, although if she possesses inhuman speed or other capabilities that enable her to do things others couldn't in that time, those actions are fair game. Any Scar Resistance to avoid Faltering only allows her to resist the compulsion for a single action/turn, rerolling on successive turns until the duration elapses.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but the compulsion lasts until the end of the scene or for several hours. The Remade may attempt to suppress this compulsion for minutes/turns equal to Scar Resistance with a successful Scar Resistance roll. This roll is allowed once every (6 - Scar

Resistance) minutes/turns and enjoys a bonus equal to the number of consecutive failed Scar Resistance roll that preceded it.

Deviations

- **Rare (-1 Magnitude):** The stimulus is very specific or requires special equipment to deploy — such as a genetically engineered perfume or a passphrase broadcast on a particular radio frequency.
- **Common (+1 Magnitude):** The stimulus is a common one that could easily occur by accident, such as the presence of fire or the sight of a popular coffee shop logo.
- **Complex (+1 Magnitude):** The Broken has been conditioned to respond to a variety of different stimuli in varying ways. The Storyteller may choose one or more additional secret stimuli that may or may not be discoverable, deploying these not more often than once per chapter.

Suppression (••• to •••••)

Keywords: Any; Subtle; Repeatable

The Variation suppresses some fundamental aspect of the Deviant's natural ability, whether it makes him slower on the uptake, less savvy, weaker, or more bumbling.

Each instance of Suppression reduces a different Attribute.

At Magnitude •••, choose one Attribute when the character acquires this Scar. Reduce his effective rating in that Attribute by one. This affects derived traits as well. Match the Scar's Attribute category to the suppressed Attribute. The player can't take this Scar if it would reduce an Attribute to 0, and he can never raise its effective rating above 3.

At Magnitude ••••, as Magnitude •••, but reduce the chosen Attribute by two effective dots, instead, and the maximum rating is 2.

At Magnitude •••••, as Magnitude ••••, but the reduction is instead three dots, with a maximum rating of 1.

Thin Skin (•• to ••••)

Keywords: Physical; Subtle

The Remade's skin is paper-thin, and she bruises easily. Wounds and physical trauma have noticeably dramatic effects.

At Magnitude ••, the character starts suffering wound penalties one box further to the left than usual when that box fills with damage. For each additional dot of Magnitude, the first box that causes wound penalties is one further to the left. These penalties start at -1, as usual, and increase by one per box from left to right, but can't exceed -5.

Standard Deviations

While many Deviations are Scar-specific, as noted above, some can apply to any Scar that fits the Deviation's prerequisites. Where a Scar's effects are based on its Magnitude, use its base Magnitude before applying any Standard Deviations.

Disfiguring Scar

Scar Type: Any

+1 Magnitude: This Deviation must be applied to a Subtle Scar that is entangled with only Subtle Variations. A normally innocuous Scar is glaringly obvious to observers. The Scar, all its Variations, or both are Overt, instead — as decided by the player when he applies this Deviation.

Indelible Mark

Scar Type: Involuntary

+1-4 Magnitude: In addition to being Involuntary, all Variations combined with the Scar this Deviation modifies (the primary Scar) carry an additional Persistent Scar (the secondary Scar) chosen when the character acquires the primary one. Increase the primary Scar's Magnitude by the Magnitude of the secondary one. If the character possesses multiple Scars with this Deviation, choose a different secondary Scar for each one. The secondary Scar only manifests when any of the combined Variations is active.

Either the primary or secondary Scar must be Magnitude •• or higher (before applying any Standard Deviations) in order to benefit from this Deviation.

- **Continual (+1 Magnitude):** The secondary Scar instead manifests continually, as though it were combined with a Persistent Variation.

Identifier

Scar Type: Any

+1 Magnitude: Using the entangled Variations leaves behind evidence that investigators or conspirators can find later. A power fueled by nuclear fission might create an obviously irradiated area; an attack power might incidentally wither all plants nearby; or a psychic power's backlash might kill all small animals in the vicinity. All rolls to investigate, find, or track the character achieve exceptional success on three successes instead of five if she's used the Variation within the last chapter. This includes conspiracy surveillance actions (p. XX). Only one Scar can have this Deviation.

+2 Magnitude: The Deviation instead applies to *all* the Remade's Variations.

Nightmares

Scar Type: Persistent

+1 Magnitude: The Scar and its lingering effects on the character's psyche are so disturbing that every moment she spends asleep is a moment of torment. She either doesn't dream at all, causing disorientation and hallucinations upon waking, or she dreams in pitch black and blood red — unnatural, brutal nightmares that shred her mind and offer no insight. She never truly rests, and doesn't recover Willpower when she sleeps.

Only one Scar can have this Deviation.

Rebellious Variation

Scar Type: Involuntary

+1 Magnitude: At least one of the entangled Variations must be Directed or have Directed effects accessible to the Deviant. Once per scene, when the player's Scar Finesse roll to direct an effect of an entangled Variation results in a failure, the Storyteller may choose (or randomly

select) an alternate target and effect for the Variation, treating it as a minimally successful use of the effect. The Broken's player takes a Beat.

Short Circuit

Scar Type: Involuntary

+1-4 Magnitude: In addition to being Involuntary, all Variations combined with the Scar this Deviation modifies (the primary Scar) carry an additional Controlled Scar (the secondary Scar) chosen when the character acquires the primary one. The secondary Scar only applies when the Variation activates involuntarily. Increase the primary Scar's Magnitude by (the Magnitude of the secondary one - 1), to a maximum of Magnitude 5.

Either the primary or secondary Scar must be Magnitude •• or higher (before applying any Standard Deviations) in order to benefit from this Deviation.

In cases where the secondary Scar has variable results based on the number of successes the player achieved on the activation roll, make a Scar Finesse roll.

Wild Variation

Scar Type: Any

+1 Magnitude: The Remade lacks nuance or restraint with the entangled Variations, all of which must have the Tiered keyword and must be at least Magnitude ••. Entangled Variations become Discrete, allowing the Broken to wield them only at their maximum potency or to access only a single effect. This Scar should not be permitted for effects that allow access to all effects of a lower Magnitude, such as Flight.

Choosing Scars

Like Variations, Scars are highly flexible and modular, allowing for a massive array of combinations and character concepts. Certain combinations of Variations, Scars, and Deviations might render the Scars' intended drawbacks ineffective or make the game less fun for other players — the book can't take every possible permutation into account. In cases like this, always err on the side of staying true to the spirit and themes of the game, and choose another combination or bend the rules as-written to make the pairing viable as a fun and dramatic Scar that complicates the Deviant's life and, at higher Magnitudes, can be deadly or otherwise ruinous. The Storyteller is the final arbiter of these decisions and may disallow disruptive or nonsensical combinations of Variations, Scars, and Deviations where needed.

[FORMAT AS A QUICK REFERENCE PAGE WITH A SERIES OF TABLES A BIT LIKE THE ONES FOR CONDITIONS AND TILTS ON CHRONICLES OF DARKNESS P. 287.]

Variation Quick Reference

Universal Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
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Aquatic (• to •••) Underwater movement and survival. Subtle; Perpetual, Tiered

Bioluminescence (• to •••••) Generate light. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Boneless (• to ••••) Contort, squeeze, or stretch body, or transform into liquid or gas. Overt; Tiered Toggled

Brachiation (• to •••) Climbing and jumping. Overt; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

Camouflage (• to •••••) Hiding or turning invisible. Subtle; Tiered, Toggled

Carapace (• to •••••) Armored hide. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual

Electrokinesis (• to •••••) Control electricity. Overt; Directed, Tiered, Toggled

Enhanced Speed (• to ••••) Fast movement. Overt; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

Environmental Adaptation (• to •••••) Environmental resistance. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

Face Thief (• to •••••) Disguises Deviant as someone else. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Flight (• to •••••) Aerial movement. Overt; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

Gigantic (• to •••••) Deviant's Size increases. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Healing Touch (• to •••••) Heal others' injuries. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Holographic Projection (• to •••••) Create illusions. Overt; Directed, Tiered, Toggled

Hyper-Competence (• to •••) Mastery of a Skill. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

Immunity (• to •••) Invulnerabilities. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

[Descriptor] [Skill] Lash (• to •••••) Special attack. Overt; Discrete, Toggled

Miniaturization (• to ••••) Deviant shrinks. Overt; Discrete, Toggled

Out of Phase (• to •••••) Pass through solid objects. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Pyrokinesis (• to •••••) Control fire. Overt; Directed, Tiered, Toggled

Shadow Selves (• to •••••) Create decoys. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Shadows of the Past (• to •••••) View the past. Subtle; Tiered, Toggled

Specialized Sense (• to •••) Improved senses. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

Storm-Caller (•• to •••••) Create Extreme Environments and Environmental Tilts. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Superhuman [Attribute] (• to •••••) Improved Attribute. Subtle; Perpetual, Reflexive

Telekinesis (• to •••••) Move objects without touching them. Overt; Directed, Tiered, Toggled

Translocation (• to •••••) Teleportation. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

[END TABLE]

Cephalist Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Astral Travel (• to •••••)	Dream powers and astral projection.	Subtle; Tiered, Toggled
Body Snatcher (• to •••••)	Sense riding and possession.	Subtle; Directed, Tiered, Toggled
Creeping Dread (• to •••••)	Create fear.	Subtle; Tiered, Toggled
Memory Theft (• to •••••)	Steal and erase memories.	Subtle; Directed, Tiered, Toggled
Telepathy (• to •••••)	Mind-to-mind communication.	Subtle; Directed, Tiered, Toggled

[END TABLE]

Chimeric Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Animal Transformation (•• to •••••)	Change into an animal.	Overt; Discrete, Toggled
Hybrid Form (•• to •••••)	Activate multiple Variations simultaneously.	Overt; Discrete, Toggled
Mimicry (• to •••••)	Hide Scars.	Subtle; Tiered, Toggled
Pheromones (• to •••••)	Blend in socially.	Subtle; Directed, Tiered
Predator's Cunning (• to •••••)	Situational awareness.	Subtle; Perpetual, Reflexive, Tiered

[END TABLE]

Coactive Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Blessing (• to •••••)	Manipulate luck.	Subtle; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled
Fate's Agent (• to •••••)	Resistance to supernatural influence.	Subtle; Perpetual, Reflexive, Tiered
Onomantic Influence (• to •••••)	Name-based influence.	Subtle; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled
Otherworldly Connection (• to •••••)	Influence over a parallel world.	Subtle; Perpetual, Tiered
Precognition (• to •••••)	Prophetic powers.	Subtle; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

[END TABLE]

Invasive Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Computer-Aided Processing (• to •••••)	Floating Merit and Attribute dots.	Subtle; Reflexive, Tiered, Toggled

Hidden Compartments (• to •••••) Conjure useful tools and equipment. Subtle; Tiered, Toggled

Integrate Technology (• to •••••) Merge with tools and objects. Overt; Tiered, Toggled

Omnicompetence (• to •••••) Floating Skill dots. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Reflexive

Sensor Array (• to •••••) Floating specialized senses. Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual, Tiered

[END TABLE]

Mutant Variations

[TABLE]

Variation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Anomalous Biology (• to •••••)	Fewer bodily needs.	Subtle; Perpetual, Tiered
Deadly Ichor (• to •••••)	Counterattack.	Overt; Discrete, Reflexive, Toggled
Inhuman Digestion (• to •••••)	Matter-eating and power theft.	Overt; Tiered, Toggled
Rapid Healing (• to •••••)	Heal self.	Subtle; Discrete, Perpetual
Sacred Flesh (• to •••••)	Bestow a Variation on others.	Subtle; Discrete, Toggled

[END TABLE]

Scar Quick Reference

Controlled Scars

[TABLE]

Scar Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Concentration (• to •••••)	Distractions cause Variation to deactivate.	Mental; Subtle; Repeatable
Cooldown (• to •••••)	Variation becomes more difficult to control each time the Deviant directs it.	Any; Subtle; Directed, Repeatable
Depletion (• to •••••)	Variation runs out of fuel and must be recharged.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable
Deterioration (• to •••••)	Variation causes limbs, eyes, or ears to lose functionality.	Physical; Overt; Repeatable
Fluctuating Variation (•••)	Variation Magnitude changes while active.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable
Perilous Variation (• to •••••)	Variation inflicts damage on the Deviant.	Physical; Overt; Repeatable
Persistent Drawback (• to •••••)	Variation causes a Persistent Scar while activated.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable
Power Failure (• to •••••)	Variation stops working under certain circumstances.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable

Preparation (• to •••••)	Variation takes longer to activate.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable
Tabula Rasa (• to •••••)	Deviant forgets events that happened while Variation is active.	Mental; Subtle
Tribulation (••• to ••••)	Variation costs Willpower to activate.	Mental; Subtle; Repeatable
Unstable Variation (•• to •••••)	Activating Variation causes Instability.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable

[END TABLE]

Involuntary Scars

[TABLE]

Scar Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Involuntary Stimulus (• to •••••)	Certain circumstances cause Variation to activate on its own.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable
Power Build-Up (• to •••••)	Variation erupts like a volcano, activating on its own periodically.	Any; Subtle; Repeatable

[END TABLE]

Persistent Scars

[TABLE]

Scar Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Keywords
Addictive Variation (• to •••••)	Variation has drug-like qualities, including addictiveness.	Mental, Physical; Subtle; Toggled
Alternate Persona (• to •••••)	Another personality periodically takes control of the Deviant's body.	Mental, Social; Overt; Repeatable
Amnesia (• to •••••)	Deviant has forgotten parts of his past.	Mental; Subtle
Bane (• to •••••)	Contact with something harmless causes the Remade injury.	Physical; Subtle
Conspicuous Appearance (• to •••••)	Deviant has notable or horrible appearance.	Physical, Social; Overt
Dependency (• to •••••)	Broken requires special food or fuel to remain fully functional.	Physical; Subtle; Repeatable
Fragility (• to •••••)	Deviant has a low pain tolerance, suffering Tilts when injured.	Physical; Subtle
Frozen Heart (• to •••••)	Remade is emotionally distant.	Social; Subtle
Genetic Disorder (• to •••••)	Deviant is chronically ill and easily fatigued.	Physical; Subtle
Glitch (• to •••••)	Broken suffers distracting hallucinations.	Mental; Subtle
Hemophilia (• to •••••)	Deviant bleeds readily, worsening injuries.	Physical; Subtle

Lying Eyes (• to •••••) Remade inspires distrust in everyone she meets, Social; Subtle

Maintenance (• to •••••) Variation requires regular upkeep or it stops working. Mental, Physical; Subtle

Misfortune (• to •••••) Deviant is plagued with bad luck. Any; Subtle

Missing Limb (• to •••••) Broken is missing one or more limbs. Physical; Overt

Murderous Urge (• to •••••) Deviant has uncontrollable violent urges. Mental; Subtle

Native Environment (• to •••••) Remade is highly vulnerable to certain environments. Physical; Subtle

Paranoia (• to •••••) Deviant distrusts others. Mental, Social; Subtle

Phobia (• to •••••) Broken has an irrational fear. Mental; Subtle; Repeatable

Relentless Variation (• to •••••) Variation is always active except when Deviant temporarily deactivates it (if ever). Any; Subtle; Repeatable, Toggled

Sensory Deprivation (• to •••••) Remade is lacking one of his senses. Physical; Subtle; Repeatable

Silence (• to •••••) Deviant has difficulty communicating verbally. Social; Subtle

Sluggish Metabolism (•• to •••) Broken heals more slowly. Physical; Subtle

Subliminal Conditioning (• to •••••) Certain stimuli cause Deviant to take a predetermined action. Mental, Social; Subtle

Suppression (••• to •••••) Remade has a reduced Attribute. Any; Subtle; Repeatable

Thin Skin (• to •••••) Deviant suffers increased wound penalties. Physical; Subtle

[END TABLE]

Standard Deviations

[TABLE]

Deviation Name (Magnitude Range)	Summary	Scar Type
Disfiguring Scar (+1 Magnitude)	Subtle Scar and Variations become Overt.	Any
Indelible Mark (+1-4 Magnitude)	Involuntary Scar also has a Persistent Scar when Variation is active.	Involuntary
Identifier (+1 Magnitude)	Variation leaves behind evidence of use that make it easier for conspiracies to find the Broken.	Any
Nightmares (+1 Magnitude)	Deviant suffers nightmares that prevent restful sleep.	Any
Short Circuit (+1-4 Magnitude)	Involuntary Variation also has a Controlled Scar when Variation is activated involuntarily.	Involuntary
Wild Variation (+1 Magnitude)	Tiered Variation only functions at highest effect, becoming Discrete.	Any

[END TABLE]

Deviant: The Renegades Manuscript Preview #4

Chapter Four: Storytelling System

There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part! You can't even passively take part! And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels ... upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop!

— Mario Savio

This chapter contains the basic rules for playing **Deviant: The Renegades**. More information, including optional systems and examples of play, can be found in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Traits

In addition to the supernatural traits of the Remade, **Chronicles of Darkness** characters have mundane traits common to Baselines, Remade, and other monsters alike. Attributes are raw potential, Skills are trained abilities, and Skill Specialties are specific areas of training in which a character excels. Willpower is the extra effort a character can bring to bear in a stressful or dangerous situation, when success is crucial or hangs by a thread.

Finally, a Baseline possesses Integrity, a personal Virtue and Vice from which he can draw strength and refill his Willpower, much the same way a Remade derives Willpower from her Conviction and Loyalty.

Attributes

Attributes represent essential traits that every character possesses by default. These serve as the foundation to most rolls in **Deviant: The Renegades**. The nine Attributes are split into three categories; Mental, Physical, and Social. If a game rule refers to a “Social roll,” or a “Mental action,” that means an action that uses the appropriate Attribute category. A character with five dots in an Attribute has reached the peak of human potential within that ability.

Mental Attributes

Mental Attributes reflect your character’s acuity, intellect, and strength of mind.

Intelligence

Intelligence is your character’s raw knowledge, memory, and capacity for solving difficult problems. This may be book smarts, or a wealth of trivia.

Attribute Tasks: Memorizing (Intelligence + Composure, instant action)

Wits

Wits represents your character’s ability to think quickly and improvise solutions. It reflects your character’s perception, and ability to pick up on details.

Attribute Tasks: Perception (Wits + Composure, reflexive action)

Resolve

Resolve is your character's determination, patience, and sense of commitment. It allows your character to concentrate in the face of distraction and danger, or continue doing something in spite of insurmountable odds.

Attribute Tasks: Resisting coercion (Resolve + Stamina, reflexive action)

Physical Attributes

Physical Attributes reflect your character's bodily fitness and acumen.

Strength

Strength is your character's muscular definition and capacity to deliver force. It affects many physical tasks, including most actions in a fight.

Attribute Tasks: Breaking a barrier (Strength + Stamina, instant action), Lifting objects (Strength + Stamina, instant action)

Dexterity

Dexterity is your character's speed, agility, and coordination. It provides balance, reactions, and aim.

Attribute Tasks: Keeping balance (Dexterity + Composure, reflexive action)

Stamina

Stamina is your character's general health and sturdiness. It determines how much punishment your character's body can handle before it gives up.

Attribute Tasks: Staying awake (Stamina + Resolve, instant action)

Social Attributes

Social Attributes reflect your character's ability to deal with others.

Presence

Presence is your character's assertiveness, gravitas, and raw appeal. It gives your character a strong bearing that changes moods and minds.

Attribute Tasks: Good first impressions (Presence + Composure, instant action)

Manipulation

Manipulation is your character's ability to make others cooperate. It's how smoothly she speaks, and how much people can read into her intentions.

Attribute Tasks: Poker face (Manipulation + Composure)

Composure

Composure is your character's poise and grace under fire. It's his dignity, and ability to remain unfazed when harrowed.

Attribute Tasks: Meditation (Resolve + Composure, extended action)

Skills

Whereas Attributes represent innate ability, Skills reflect behaviors learned and honed over a lifetime. These are things that could be practiced or learned from a book. Similarly to Attributes, Skills are divided into Mental, Physical, and Social categories.

Skills do not receive free dots at character creation. Skills without dots are deficient or barely capable. Skills with a single dot reflect a cursory training. Two dots is sufficient for professional use. Three is a high level of competency. Four is outstanding, and five is absolute mastery of the discipline. When creating your character, prioritize categories. The primary category receives 11 dots, the secondary receives seven, the tertiary four.

Sample actions are listed for each Skill; these lists are just common actions, and should not be taken as comprehensive guides to where Skills can apply. We also suggest dice pools, but it's important to look at the context of the scene, and apply the best Attribute + Skill combination for the events at hand. Also remember that equipment and environmental modifiers can shift a dice pool. We've listed some sample equipment and factors that could enhance Skill usage.

Using a Skill with no dots incurs a penalty. For Physical and Social Skills, it levies a -1 die penalty to the roll. For a Mental Skill, it's a -3 die penalty.

Mental Skills

Mental Skills are largely learned, as opposed to practiced. They reflect knowledge and procedure, lore and understanding.

Academics

Academics is a broad Skill representing your character's higher education and knowledge of the arts and humanities. It covers language, history, law, economics, and related fields.

Sample actions: Recall trivia (Intelligence + Academics, instant action), Research (Intelligence + Academics, extended action), Translation (Intelligence + Academics, extended action)

Sample contacts: Accountant, College Professor, Head Librarian, Lawyer, Rare Book Dealer

Suggested equipment: Internet access (+1), Library (+1 to +3), Professional consultant (+2)

Specialties: Accounting, Anthropology, Art History, History, Law, Literature, Religion, Research, Translation

Computer

Computer is your character's advanced ability with computing. While most characters in **Chronicles of Darkness** are expected to know the basics, the Computer Skill allows your character to program computers, to crack into systems, to diagnose major problems, and to investigate data. This Skill reflects advanced techniques and tricks; almost everyone can operate a computer for email and basic internet searches.

Sample actions: Hacking a system (Intelligence + Computer, extended action, contested if against a security administrator or other hacker), Internet search (Wits + Computer, instant action), Programming (Intelligence + Computer, extended action)

Sample contacts: AI Researcher, Hardcore Computer Gamer, White-Hat Hacker

Suggested equipment: Computer system (+0 to +3, by performance), Custom software (+2), Passwords (+2)

Specialties: Data Retrieval, Graphics, Hacking, Internet, Programming, Security, Social Media

Crafts

Crafts reflects your character's knack with creating and repairing things. From creating works of art to fixing an automobile, Crafts is the Skill to use. Some Deviants must use Crafts to "heal" inorganic parts when injured.

Sample actions: Appraisal (Wits + Crafts, instant action), Counterfeit item (Intelligence + Crafts, instant action), Create art (Intelligence + Crafts, instant action), Repair item (Wits + Crafts, instant action)

Sample contacts: Automotive Engineer, Makerspace Enthusiast, Police Sketch Artist

Suggested equipment: Point of reference (+1), Quality materials (+2), Tools (+1 to +3, depending on utility and specialty), Well-equipped workplace (+2)

Specialties: Automotive, Cosmetics, Cybernetics, Fashion, Metalworking, Graffiti, Jury Rigging, Painting, Repair, Sculpting

Investigation

Investigation is your character's skill with solving mysteries and putting together puzzles. It reflects the ability to draw conclusions, to find meaning out of confusion, and to use lateral thinking to find information where others could not.

Sample actions: Examining a crime scene (Wits + Investigation, extended action), Solving riddles (Intelligence + Investigation, instant or extended action)

Sample contacts: Conspiracy Buff, Medical Examiner, Private Investigator

Suggested equipment: Forensic kit (+1), Unrestricted access (+2), Reference library (+2)

Specialties: Autopsy, Body Language, Crime Scenes, Cryptography, Intelligence Analysis, Lab Work, Riddles

Medicine

Medicine reflects your character's knowledge of the human body, and of how to bring it to and keep it in working order. Characters with Medicine can make efforts to stem life-threatening wounds and illnesses.

Sample actions: Diagnosis (Wits + Medicine, instant action), Treating wounds (Intelligence + Medicine, extended action)

Sample contacts: Chronic Patient, EMT, Surgeon, Sympathetic Conspiracy Bio-Tech

Suggested equipment: Medical tools (+1 to +3), Trained assistance (+1), Well-stocked facilities (+2)

Specialties: Anesthesiology, First Aid, Pathology, Pharmaceuticals, Physical Therapy, Surgery

Occult

The Occult Skill is your character's knowledge of things hidden in the dark, legends, and lore. While the supernatural is unpredictable and often unique, the Occult Skill allows your character to pick out facts from rumor.

Sample actions: Identify the sliver of truth (Wits + Occult, instant action), Relate two similar myths (Intelligence + Occult, instant or extended action)

Sample contacts: Anthropology Professor, Neo-Pagan Author, Weird Hermit Down the Street

Suggested equipment: Well-stocked library (+2)

Specialties: Angels, Cryptids, Divergence, Divination, Ghosts, Local Legends, Witchcraft

Politics

Politics reflects a general knowledge of political structures and methodologies, but more practically shows your character's ability to navigate those systems and make them work the way she intends. With Politics, she knows the right person to ask to get something done.

Sample actions: Cut red tape (Manipulation + Politics, extended action), Identify authority (Wits + Politics, instant action), Sully reputations (Manipulation + Politics, extended action)

Sample contacts: Fixer, Political Blogger, Union Leader

Suggested equipment: Official position (+1 to +5, by Status)

Specialties: Bureaucracy, Church, Corporate, Local, Organized Crime, Scandals

Science

Science is your character's knowledge and understanding of the physical and natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry, geology, meteorology, and physics.

Sample actions: Assess variables (Intelligence + Science, instant or extended action), Formulate solution (Intelligence + Science, extended action)

Sample contacts: Bomb-Making Anarchist, Drug Supplier, Experimental Physicist, Geology Professor

Suggested equipment: Reference library (+1 to +3), Well-stocked laboratory (+2)

Specialties: Alchemy, Genetics, Nanotechnology, Neuroscience, Physics, Virology

Physical Skills

Physical Skills are those practiced, trained, and learned through action.

Athletics

Athletics reflects a broad category of physical training and ability. It covers sports, and basic physical tasks such as running, jumping, dodging threats, and climbing. It also determines a character's ability with thrown weapons and archery.

Sample actions: Acrobatics (Dexterity + Athletics, instant action), Climbing (Strength + Athletics, extended action), Foot chase (Stamina + Athletics, contested action), Jumping (Strength + Athletics, instant action, one foot vertically per success)

Sample contacts: Parkour Enthusiast, Personal Trainer, Physical Therapist, Professional Athlete

Suggested equipment: Athletic shoes (+1), Rope (+1)

Specialties: Acrobatics, Archery, Climbing, Jumping, Parkour, Pursuit, Swimming, Throwing

Brawl

Brawl reflects your character's ability to tussle and fight without weapons. This includes old-fashioned bar brawls as well as complex martial arts.

Sample actions: Breaking boards (Strength + Brawl, instant action), Hand-to-hand fighting (covered in the Violence section, p. XX)

Sample contacts: Club Bouncer, Self-Defense Teacher, Sparring Partner

Suggested equipment: Brass knuckles (+1)

Specialties: Boxing, Dirty Fighting, Grappling, Grenades, Martial Arts, Throws

Drive

Drive is the skill to control and maneuver automobiles, motorcycles, boats, and even airplanes. A character can drive a car without Drive dots; the Skill relates to moments of high stress, such as a high-speed chase or trying to elude a tail. It's assumed that most modern characters have a basic ability to drive. As well, Drive can reflect your character's skill with horseback riding, if appropriate to her history.

Sample actions: Impressive maneuvering (Dexterity + Drive, instant action), Pursuit (Dexterity + Drive, contested action), Tailing (Wits + Drive, contested action)

Sample contacts: High Speed Courier, News Chopper Pilot, Street Racer

Suggested equipment: Performance vehicle (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Ambulances, Evasion, Motorcycles, Off-Road Driving, Pursuit, Stunts

Firearms

Firearms reflects your character's ability to identify, maintain, and otherwise use guns. This Skill covers everything from small pistols, to shotguns, to assault rifles, and anything else related.

Sample actions: Firefights (see p. XX for more on how firearms violence works)

Sample contacts: Gun Store Owner, Local Law Enforcement, Conspiracy Bagman

Suggested equipment: See p. XX for a full list of firearms

Specialties: Firearms Lashes, Handguns, Rifles, Shotguns, Trick Shots

Larceny

Larceny covers intrusion, lockpicking, theft, pickpocketing, and other (generally considered) criminal activities. This Skill is typically learned on the streets, outside of formal methods. However, stage magicians and other entertainers learn these skills as part of their repertoire.

Sample actions: Bypass security systems (Dexterity + Larceny, extended action), Lockpicking (Dexterity + Larceny, extended action), Pickpocketing (Dexterity + Larceny, contested action)

Sample contacts: Burglar, Parole Officer, Security Consultant, Shady Pawn Shop Owner

Suggested equipment: Crowbar (+1), Crowded area (+2), Lockpicks (+2), Partner in crime (+1)

Specialties: Breaking and Entering, Concealment, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing, Safecracking, Security Systems, Sleight of Hand

Stealth

The Stealth Skill reflects your character's ability to move unnoticed and unheard, or to blend into a crowd. Every character approaches Stealth differently; some use distraction, some disguise, some are just hard to keep an eye on.

Sample actions: Losing a tail (Wits + Stealth, contested action), Shadowing (Dexterity + Stealth, contested action)

Sample contacts: Agent, Bow Hunter, Lookout from a Former Job, Navy SEAL

Suggested equipment: Binoculars (+1), Dark clothing (+1), Smokescreen (+2), Spotters (+1)

Specialties: Camouflage, Crowds, In Plain Sight, Shadowing, Stakeout, Staying Motionless

Survival

Survival represents your character's ability to "live off the land." This means finding shelter, finding food, and otherwise procuring the necessities for existence. This could be in a rural or urban environment.

Sample actions: Foraging (Wits + Survival, extended action), Hunting (for animals, Wits + Survival, extended action)

Sample contacts: Off-the-grid Survivalist, Rough Sleeper, Scout Master

Suggested equipment: Survival guide (+1), Survival knife (+1)

Specialties: Foraging, Hunting, Navigation, Shelter, Tracking, Weather

Weaponry

Weaponry is the ability to fight with hand-to-hand weapons, from swords, to knives, to baseball bats, to chainsaws. If the intent is to strike another and harm him, Weaponry is the Skill.

Sample actions: Attacking another (see p. XX for more on Weaponry fighting)

Sample contacts: Fencing Instructor, Gang Member, Western Martial Arts Enthusiast

Suggested equipment: See p. XX for a full list of weapons

Specialties: Chains, Clubs, Improvised Weapons, Swords, Weaponry Lashes

Social Skills

Social Skills are those governing interpersonal relationships.

Animal Ken

Animal Ken reflects your character's ability to train and understand animals. With Animal Ken, your character can charm beasts or even rile them to violence, under the right circumstances.

Sample actions: Animal training (Manipulation + Animal Ken, extended action), Cowing an animal (Presence + Animal Ken, contested action)

Sample contacts: Cat Lady, Rodeo Horse Trainer, Zoo Veterinarian

Suggested equipment: Treats (+1), Whip (+1)

Specialties: Calming, Canines, Manticores, Reptiles, Training

Empathy

Empathy represents your character's ability to read and understand others' feelings and motivations. This helps discern moods, or read deceptive behavior in discussion. It is not inherently sympathetic; one can understand another's positions without agreeing with them.

Sample actions: Finding someone's pain (Wits + Empathy, contested action), Sense deception (Wits + Empathy, contested action), Soothing nerves (Manipulation + Empathy, instant action)

Sample contacts: Shoulder to Cry On, Police Profiler, Psych Student

Suggested equipment: Muted clothing (+1), Relaxing environment (+2)

Specialties: Calming, Emotion, Lies, Motives, Personalities, Trauma

Expression

The Expression Skill reflects your character's ability to communicate. This Skill covers written and spoken forms of communication, journalism, acting, music, and dance.

Sample actions: Composing (Intelligence + Expression, extended action), Performance (Presence + Expression, instant action)

Sample contacts: Investigative Journalist, Political Speech Writer, Reclusive Poet

Suggested equipment: Quality instrument (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Dance, Drama, Electrokinetics, Journalism, Musical Instrument, Singing, Speeches

Intimidation

Intimidation reflects your character's ability to influence others' behavior through threats and fear. It could mean direct physical threats, interrogation, or veiled implications of things to come.

Sample actions: Interrogation (Wits + Intimidation, contested action), Stare down (Presence + Intimidation, contested action)

Sample contacts: Barroom Tough Guy, High-Powered Executive, Police Interrogator

Suggested equipment: Fearsome tools (+2), Gang colors (+2), Isolated room (+1)

Specialties: Interrogation, Stare Down, Supernatural Displays, Torture, Veiled Threats

Persuasion

Persuasion is your character's ability to change minds and influence behaviors through logic, fast-talking, or appealing to desire. It relies on the force of your character's personality to sway the listener.

Sample actions: Fast-talk (Manipulation + Persuasion, extended action), Firebranding (Presence + Persuasion, instant action), Seduction (Manipulation + Persuasion, extended action)

Sample contacts: Car Salesman, Con Artist, Speech Coach

Suggested equipment: Designer clothing (+1 to +3), Reputation (+2)

Specialties: Confidence Scam, Fast-Talking, Inspiring, Seduction, Sermon, Sob Story

Socialize

Socialize reflects your character's ability to present herself well and interact with groups of people. It reflects proper (and setting-appropriate) etiquette, customs, sensitivity, and warmth. A character with a high Socialize is the life of the party.

Sample actions: Carousing (Manipulation + Socialize, instant action), Fitting in (Wits + Socialize, instant action), Getting attention (Presence + Socialize, instant action)

Sample contacts: Drinking Buddy, Event Planner, Society Matron

Suggested equipment: Drugs (+1), Knowing people (+1), Money (+1 to +5)

Specialties: Clubbing, Country Clubs, Frat Parties, Fundraisers, Seedy Gatherings, Tent Cities

Streetwise

The Streetwise Skill is your character's knowledge of life on the streets. It tells her how to navigate the city, how to get information from unlikely sources, and where she'll be (relatively) safe. If she wants to get something on the black market, Streetwise is how.

Sample actions: Finding a shortcut (Wits + Streetwise, instant action), Working the black market (Manipulation + Streetwise, instant action)

Sample contacts: Bartender in a Rough Part of Town, Drug Dealer, Undercover Cop

Suggested equipment: Burner phone (+1), Known nickname (+2), Valuable contraband (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Access Tunnels, Black Market, Gangs, Navigation, Rumors, Undercover

Subterfuge

Subterfuge is the ability to deceive. With Subterfuge, your character can lie convincingly, project hidden messages in what she says, hide motivations, and notice deception in others.

Sample actions: Disguise (Wits + Subterfuge, instant action), Lying (Manipulation + Subterfuge, contested action)

Sample contacts: Con Artist, Crooked Politician, Out-of-work Actor

Suggested equipment: Costume supplies (+2), Fake ID (+1)

Specialties: Conceal Deformity, Detecting Lies, Doublespeak, Hiding Emotion, Misdirection

Skill Specialties

In addition to Skills, your character possesses Skill Specialties. These are refinements of the broader Skills. These should be narrower than the main Skill, and help to define your character's particular expertise. For example, your character might have three dots in Firearms, but a Specialty in Rifles. He's capable with all guns, but particularly good with rifles. If you look to the Skill descriptions, you'll see example Specialties. The Storyteller is the ultimate arbiter of what constitutes a Specialty and what doesn't; Specialties that are too broad or too narrow can hurt the story or never come into play.

If a Specialty applies to your roll, add a die. Multiple Specialties may apply to a single roll, within reason. If you find yourself going to great lengths to justify a Specialty, it probably shouldn't apply.

Skill Specialties let you flesh out your character and offer a mechanical benefit. When creating your character, let Specialty choice guide his development. For example, there's a huge difference between a character with Brawl 4 (Bar Fights) and Brawl 4 (Aikido).

Integrity

Instead of Conviction and Loyalty as described on p. XX, Baselines use an Advantage called Integrity which represents the health of their souls and senses of self. Baselines risk **breaking points** when they suffer psychological stress, including witnessing the supernatural (unless they're used to it.) Killing another human being is always a breaking point; but the Storyteller and players should work together to define a few situations that would constitute a breaking point for each character.

Characters using Integrity roll Resolve + Composure when they reach a breaking point, with modifiers for high or low Integrity (8–10 gives +2 dice, 7–6 is +1, 3–2 is –1 and 1 is –2) or situational modifiers decided by the Storyteller. Whether the character succeeds or fails, reaching a breaking point applies a Condition such as Guilty, Shaken, or Spooked. Failing the roll means the character loses a dot of Integrity. Dramatically failing grants a Beat and changes the Condition to a worse one like Broken, Fugue, or Madness. Only exceptional success escapes a negative Condition; the character regains a point of Willpower and takes a Beat instead. Characters at Integrity 1 continue to suffer breaking points but cannot go to Integrity 0. Integrity may be raised after a protracted period of rest (and, potentially, counseling) for 3 Experiences per dot.

Virtues and Vices

Virtue and Vice are Anchor traits Baseline characters possess instead of Conviction and Loyalty. Virtue is a point of strength and integrity in the character's life, Vice is a place of weakness. This is just a brief touch on the topic; for more, look to **The Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

When choosing Virtues and Vices, use the following guidelines:

- Both should be adjectives that describe dominant personality traits. Don't use physical descriptions.
- Traits that describe existing Advantages, Attributes, or Skills similarly do not apply. For example, "Strong," or "Composed," would not work as a Virtue.
- Virtue should be a point of self-confidence and self-actualization, but something easy and tempting to ignore. It's a higher calling, if she chooses to walk the talk.
- Vice should contrast Virtue as a short-term, quick source of distraction from the world. It should be a hiding place when you're weak.
- Virtue and Vice must be different. The same adjective could work as both a Virtue and Vice in some cases, but a single character must have two different ones.

Whenever a Baseline character acts in accordance with her Vice, she regains one spent Willpower. When she takes meaningful actions in accordance to her Virtue, she regains all spent Willpower. She can only recover Willpower from her Vice once per scene, and her Virtue twice per chapter.

Speed

A character's Speed is the number of yards or meters she can travel in a single turn. This trait is a combination of her Strength, Dexterity, and a species factor that reflects her age, physical configuration, Size, and other considerations.

Other species, such as horses and cheetahs, have physical configurations that lend themselves to high travel rates.

[CHART]

Factor	Species
1	Turtle
3	Human toddler
5	Human adult
8	Wolf
10	Caribou
12	Horse
15	Cheetah

[END CHART]

Rolling Dice

When your character is trying to accomplish something and the outcome is in doubt, you roll a number of 10-sided dice. The result of that roll determines whether your character *succeeds* and accomplishes their goal, or whether they *fail* and don't do what they set out to. Failure doesn't mean "nothing happens," just that your character doesn't get what they want, and complications are headed their way.

You might also score an *exceptional success* or suffer a *dramatic failure* (p. XX).

Dice Pool

The number of dice you roll depends on the action your character is taking. Most of the time, it's the value of one of your Attributes plus one of your Skills, or the value of two different Attributes put together; for example, fast-talking your way past a bouncer might be a roll of Manipulation + Subterfuge, which means you roll a number of dice equal to your Manipulation rating plus your Subterfuge rating. (Sometimes you'll roll a different pool, but those are special cases that will be called out when needed.)

Circumstantial factors, appropriate equipment (or lack thereof), or opposition from another character can add or subtract dice from the total; see below.

The total number of dice you roll is called your *dice pool*.

The Storyteller determines the appropriate dice pool based on what you're trying to do and how you're trying to do it, using the descriptions of the various traits involved. In the above example, if you explained to the Storyteller that you weren't trying to lie your way past the bouncer but schmooze her into liking you enough to let you in, the Storyteller might revise the dice pool to Manipulation + Socialize.

Most of the actions described in this book will tell you what the dice pool should be, but it's fine to come up with dice pools for other actions on an ad hoc basis. Just try to be fair and consistent — if you decide bashing down a door is Strength + Stamina in one chapter, it should always be Strength + Stamina unless the situation radically changes.

Circumstance and Equipment

Sometimes, fortune favors your character, or they're packing the right tools for the job. Other times, the odds are stacked against you or you don't have the right gear at all. The Storyteller should weigh how circumstances or equipment affect a character's chance of success and assign an appropriate *modifier*. A slight advantage — picking an old and damaged lock — might be worth a bonus die, while a stressful situation — trying to pick a lock while people are shooting at you — might subtract three dice from your pool.

Dice Rolling Basics

- **Building a Pool:** Unless otherwise noted, a dice pool is always Attribute + different Attribute or Attribute + Skill.
- **Modifiers:** Bonuses add the indicated number of dice; penalties remove them. Unless otherwise specified, modifiers never exceed +/-5. Add all bonuses *before* subtracting penalties.
- **Successes:** Any die showing 8, 9, or 10 counts as a *success*.
- **10-again:** Any die that shows a 10 is counted as a success, then rerolled. Rerolled dice count successes as normal. Continue counting successes and rerolling as long as you keep rolling 10s.

The Chance Die

If penalties ever reduce your dice pool to 0 or fewer dice, roll a single die anyway. This single die is called a *chance die*, and it follows slightly different rules.

Chance Die Basics

- **Success:** A chance die showing a 10 counts as a success.
- **No 10-again:** Do not reroll 10s on chance dice.
- **Dramatic Failure:** A chance die showing a 1 is a *dramatic failure* (p. XX).

Roll Results

Once you've rolled all the dice, counted all your successes, and finished any rerolls or other permutations, it's time to see how your character fared. On most actions, you'll only worry about whether your character succeeded or failed. Sometimes, however, the outcome of an action is more dramatic.

Roll Result Basics

- **Success:** 1-4 successes. Your character's action succeeds.
- **Exceptional Success:** 5+ successes. Your character's action succeeds, *and* your character gains a beneficial Condition (p. XX). Usually, the Inspired Condition is the most appropriate. Specific actions might have additional effects on an exceptional success.

- **Failure:** 0 successes. Your character's action fails.
- **Dramatic Failure:** chance die shows a 1. Your character's action fails, and something goes significantly awry. Specific actions might have additional effects on a dramatic failure. Otherwise, the Storyteller decides on an appropriate turn of events.
- **Voluntary Dramatic Failure:** Take a Beat and convert a failure into a dramatic failure, up to once per scene.

Permutations

Deviant: The Renegades has a few variations in how dice rolls work.

- **9-Again:** Reroll dice that show 9 or 10, as opposed to just 10. Keep rerolling until you get a result that isn't a 9 or 10. Certain Conditions, Merits, or other special circumstances may award you 9-again on specific kinds of rolls. If you gain 9-again on a roll that already had that quality, it becomes 8-again instead.
- **8-Again:** Reroll dice that show 8, 9, or 10 — any successful die — and keep rerolling as long as your dice show successes. Certain Conditions, Merits, or other special circumstances may award you 8-again on specific kinds of rolls. If you gain 8-again on a roll that already had that quality, it may become a rote action, at the Storyteller's discretion.
- **Extra Successes:** Assuming your roll succeeds, you get a number of extra successes added to your total. This permutation mostly applies to weapons, which add their damage bonus as extra successes on your attack roll.
- **Rote Actions:** When you've got plenty of training and the steps you need to follow are laid out in front of you, you've got a significant chance of success. When you make a roll with the rote quality, reroll any dice that do not show an 8, 9, or 10. If you're reduced to a chance die on a rote action, don't reroll a dramatic failure. You may only reroll each die once. Certain Variations, Merits, or other special circumstances may award you the rote quality on specific kinds of rolls.
- **Successive Attempts:** When you fail a roll, you may be able to try again. Normally, you make successive attempts with your full dice pool. If time is short and the situation is tense, each subsequent attempt instead has a cumulative one-die penalty — so the third time a character tries to break down the door imprisoning trafficked victims of the conspiracy, her roll suffers a -2 penalty. Successive attempts do not apply to extended actions.
- **Teamwork:** Working together can be vital for resisting the conspiracy. See p. XX.

When to Roll Dice

You don't need to roll dice for many actions. If your character isn't in a stressful situation — nobody's actively trying to tear his throat open or demolish the building as he works — you don't need to roll; as long as it's something your character could reasonably do, he just does it.

When the dice hit the table, the Storyteller should have some idea of what will happen if the roll fails, as well as if it succeeds. Sometimes that's coded in the rules. If you fail on an attack roll, for example, you don't deal any damage. Other times, it's up to the Storyteller. If you fail a roll to jump between buildings while escaping a pack of Manticore dogs, do you make it but fall on the other side, grab the next building by your fingertips, or plummet to the alley below?

Actions

Deviant: The Renegades rates each action by two criteria: how long it takes to attempt, and whether another character opposes it. All actions fall into one category in both arenas: An action might be instant and simple (usually just abbreviated to “instant”), extended and contested, or reflexive and resisted, for example.

Actions by Time

- **Instant:** The action resolves in a single roll. Unless otherwise noted, an instant action only takes a few seconds and takes up your *turn* in an *action scene*.
- **Reflexive:** The action takes no appreciable time or effort, and resolves in a single roll, or may not require a roll at all. In an action scene, you can take reflexive actions on other characters' turns, and reflexive actions don't take up your turn. *Contesting* someone else's action is always reflexive.
- **Extended:** The action requires multiple rolls over time to complete; as such, an extended action is not usually an option in action scenes, unless otherwise noted.

Time

Time in the story can speed past or slow to a crawl compared to time in the real world. Weeks or months might pass in the space of few words, while a tense negotiation plays out in real time — or takes even longer.

In addition to years, days, hours, and so on, **Deviant** also uses five units of dramatic time. These build upon one another, from shortest to longest.

- Turn — The smallest increment of time, a turn lasts for about three seconds. A character can perform a single instant action and move their Speed in a turn. Turns normally only matter in action scenes, like fights, chases, and other dramatic and stressful situations.
- Scene — Much like a scene in a play, a scene in a roleplaying game is the time spent dealing with a single, specific event. The Storyteller frames the scene, describing what's going on, and it's up to the players to resolve the event or conflict. A scene might play out in turns (called an *action scene*), progress in real time, or skip forward depending on dramatic necessity.
- Chapter — A chapter is the collection of scenes that happen during one game session. From the moment you sit down and start playing to the point where you pack up your dice, you're playing out a chapter of your story.
- Story — A story tells an entire tale, following the dramatic arc of a related series of events. It might comprise several chapters or complete in just one. It has an introduction, rising tension, a number of twists, and a climax that brings things to a conclusion.
- Chronicle — The big picture, a chronicle is the collection of interlinked stories that involve your characters. A common theme or overarching plotline might link them, or they may only share characters and locations. As your story progresses, the players and Storyteller work together to create an ongoing chronicle.

Permutations

Many Adaptations, Variations, and other capabilities grant effects that can only be once per chapter, or have effects that last until the end of the chapter.

At the Storyteller's discretion, a chapter that covers an unusually long period of in-game time (a week or more, especially if two eventful periods are broken up by a long stretch of uneventful downtime) may allow multiple uses of a per-chapter ability without resorting to an Adaptation. Similarly, a chapter that takes place over the course of less than a day, in-game, might not allow a character to call on the same effect twice without Adaptations.

In the same vein, if a character invokes an effect that lasts until the end of the chapter when the current chapter is nearly over, the Storyteller may allow the character to benefit from it until the end of the *next* chapter, instead.

Per-scene and per-story limits are similarly subject to Storyteller modification.

Such limitations in use and duration exist to prevent overuse of especially impactful abilities. For the most part, Adaptations allow players to overcome these limits (at a price), so making exceptions isn't usually necessary. But remember that these restrictions are not intended as a straightjacket for the Storyteller or the story. As always, any ad hoc modification to the regular mechanics should be clearly communicated ahead of time, with general guidelines settled upon by the troupe before the chronicle's beginning.

Actions by Opposition

- **Simple:** No opposition. Calculate dice pool and roll results as normal.
- **Contested:** Calculate dice pool as normal and roll. The target rolls a dice pool specified by how they contest the action. If your total successes exceed the target's, your action succeeds; if their total successes exceed yours, your action fails.

If you and your target roll the same number of successes, both of you reroll the same pools until someone comes out on top.

- **Resisted:** Calculate dice pool, then apply a penalty equal to one of the target's Resistance Attributes (Stamina, Resolve, or Composure) or Defense. Roll, and calculate roll results as normal.

Contested or Resisted?

If you're not sure whether to use resistance or a contested action, use this guideline: Resistance applies in situations where the number of successes on the roll is an important factor. If what matters is just whether the roll succeeds or not, use a contested action. For example, violence applies Defense as a resistance because the number of successes on the roll determines how badly the attacker messes up his victim.

Extended Actions

Some actions require a great deal of effort over time, and represent the sort of project you can abandon and resume later. Such actions are modeled as extended actions, and they're a little more complex than instant or reflexive actions.

When you take an extended action, the Storyteller determines how many total successes you require. Most actions require between five and 20 successes. Five reflects a reasonable action that competent characters can achieve with the right tools and knowledge. Ten represents a difficult action that's still realistic for a professional in the field. Twenty represents a very difficult action that even a particularly skilled character will have trouble pulling off.

The Storyteller also determines the interval between rolls. If an action would take weeks to complete, she might consider one roll per week. If it's likely to take a day's work, one roll per hour makes for a solid timeframe.

Once you determine those factors, make a number of rolls, counting up the total number of successes across all your rolls. If you earn the required number of successes before you run out of time, you accomplish your goal.

Extended Action Basics

- **Multiple Rolls:** You roll your dice pool multiple times over the course of the action. Successes earned on all rolls count toward completing the action.
- **Roll Limit:** You can make a total number of rolls equal to your base dice pool for the action, before factoring in any modifiers. The Storyteller may reduce this value if time is short.
- **Time Interval:** Each roll takes a certain amount of time, determined by the Storyteller.
- **Required Successes:** The Storyteller sets the total number of successes required for the action, usually between five and 20.

Extended Action Roll Results

These apply to each roll of an extended action. Specific extended actions may have additional effects.

Success: Add the successes earned on the roll to your running total. Work with the Storyteller to determine what steps your character has taken toward his goal.

Exceptional Success: Choose one: reduce the total number of successes required by your character's Skill dots, reduce the time interval for each following roll by a quarter, or apply the exceptional success result of the entire action when you complete your goal.

Failure: You face a setback. The Storyteller offers you a choice: Take a Condition (p. XX) of her choice, or abandon the action. You can offer a different Condition if you think it makes sense. If you refuse or cannot agree on a Condition, you lose all accumulated successes.

Dramatic Failure: Lose all accumulated successes. In addition, the first roll on a subsequent attempt suffers a two-die penalty.

When to Use Extended Actions

As Storyteller, when should you call for an extended action vs. an instant action that takes a defined amount of time? Use the following guidelines:

- **Time Pressure:** If the truck containing the Coactive-creating idol is about to leave the dig and the cohort need to fix their car before that happens, the question of "how long does it take?" has real stakes and tension. If the characters aren't under time pressure, extended actions can feel like a lot of tedious rolling for no reason.

- **Take a Break:** Extended actions are best suited for things the character could conceivably abandon for some time and then resume later: fortifying an abandoned building as a crash space, for example. If it's something that has to be done all in one go, like finding clues in a murder scene before the police arrive, it's probably better modeled as an instant action unless time is short.

Common Actions

The following list represents some of the more common actions characters might undertake in a **Deviant: The Renegades** game. They are presented here in a highly condensed form; for more detailed discussions of many of these actions, see the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

[PRODUCTION: DO A QUICK REFERENCE GRID FOR EACH OF THESE, AS IN COFD CORE P. 70]

Argument (Instant and Contested; Intelligence + Expression vs. target's Resolve + Composure)

You try to sway someone with a rational argument. (If arguing with a crowd, use the highest Resolve in the crowd.) (See also Social maneuvering, p. XX.)

- **Success:** They accept the truth (or apparent truth) of your words.
- **Exceptional:** They're convinced and become recruits to your point of view, though they might change their minds if they find themselves at risk.
- **Failure:** They listen but are ultimately unaffected.
- **Dramatic:** You convince them of quite the opposite.

Carousing (Instant; Presence + Socialize or Streetwise)

You mix with a group, bringing high spirits with you and using them to loosen tongues.

- **Success:** You make a single-serving friend who might be willing to pass secrets or go with you somewhere private.
- **Exceptional:** You make a friend you can contact again.
- **Failure:** You end up a wallflower, with a drink in your hand that you don't even want.
- **Dramatic:** A faux pas reveals that you don't belong...and maybe even hints at your dread purpose.

Fast-Talk (Instant and Contested; Manipulation + Subterfuge vs. victim's Composure + Empathy)

You may not be able to win the argument with facts, but you can try to get out of trouble with a little judicious spin.

- **Success:** The other party swallows your story.
- **Exceptional:** The other party believes you so thoroughly that they're even willing to offer a little aid...though they won't put themselves at any kind of risk.
- **Failure:** The other party doesn't believe you.
- **Dramatic:** The other party has a good idea what the truth is.

Hacking (Extended and Contested; Intelligence + Computer vs. victim's Intelligence + Computer)

You overcome network security and computer passwords to gain access to digital resources.

- **Success:** You access the computer or network as though you had proper clearance, but you only have a short time before someone notices.
- **Exceptional:** You access the computer or network, and no one will notice until you've gotten what you came for.
- **Failure:** You're locked out of the system and you can't access anything.
- **Dramatic:** You trip an alarm or corrupt your own flash drive beyond use.

Interrogation (Extended and Resisted; Manipulation + Empathy or Intimidation – victim's Resolve)

You try to dig secrets out of a reluctant informant. (See also Social maneuvering, p. XX.)

- **Success:** You get the information you were looking for; one piece per success rolled.
- **Exceptional:** You get the information you were looking for, and the informant is willing to continue cooperating.
- **Failure:** The informant blabs a mix of truth and falsehood — even he may not know the difference.
- **Dramatic:** The informant is so alienated or injured that he will no longer reveal information.

Intimidation (Instant and Contested; Strength or Manipulation + Intimidation vs. victim's Resolve + Composure)

You try to get someone to do what you want by making them afraid of you.

- **Success:** They're coerced into helping you.
- **Exceptional:** They develop a lasting fear of you, which could make them easier to coerce in the future.
- **Failure:** They're unimpressed with your threats.
- **Dramatic:** They don't take you seriously, even if you knock them around a bit. They won't be doing what you want.

Investigating a Scene (Extended; Intelligence + Investigation)

You look for clues to what's happened in the recent past...or tidy up so that no one else can find them. (See also Investigation, p. XX.)

- **Success:** You find a clue of exactly the sort you need or manage to significantly confuse future investigators.
- **Exceptional:** You find a clue, and know exactly how it fits in, or you leave the scene immaculate and impossible to decipher.
- **Failure:** You find evidence, but it's damaged and hard to interpret. Or you miss a spot in your clean-up that you won't find out about until later.

- **Dramatic:** You find clues but you contaminate them, or you leave evidence of your presence.

Jumping (Instant; Strength + Athletics – (yards/meters of distance))

To get past an obstacle or out of danger, you leap into the air.

- **Success:** You clear the obstacle or avoid the danger.
- **Exceptional:** You may attempt another instant action in the air or upon landing.
- **Failure:** You don't achieve any significant distance at all — you jump too early, get a false start, or lose your nerve.
- **Dramatic:** The task not only fails, but you lose your balance.

Research (Extended; Intelligence + Academics or Occult)

Using your existing knowledge, you look for information on a current mystery.

- **Success:** You find the basic facts you were looking for.
- **Exceptional:** You find what you were looking for, which leads towards a much bigger score of information.
- **Failure:** You turn up a lot of promising leads, but they're all dead ends.
- **Dramatic:** You learn something, but it doesn't help. In fact, it sets you back. If using Occult, this could mean dangerously false assumptions.

Shadowing a Mark (Instant and Contested; Wits + Stealth or Drive vs. Wits + Composure)

You follow someone, perhaps in the hopes of ambushing them, or of finding out their destination.

- **Success:** You follow the mark to his destination.
- **Exceptional:** You find some means by which you can continue following the mark, such as an unlocked entrance into the building he arrived at.
- **Failure:** The mark senses he's being followed and manages to lose you.
- **Dramatic:** You're caught, either by the mark or some observer that's become suspicious of you.

Sneaking (Instant and Contested; Dexterity + Stealth vs. Wits + Composure)

You're trying to avoid notice by someone, or something...or multiple somethings. Maybe you want to get into a place undetected. Maybe you're trying to break out.

- **Success:** You avoid notice and get closer to your goal.
- **Exceptional:** You avoid notice and get away before anyone has another chance to catch you.
- **Failure:** You're noticed but still have the chance to slip away.
- **Dramatic:** You attract a lot of attention...enough that now it's going to be hard to get out.

[END QUICK REFERENCE]

Willpower

A character's Willpower represents her determination and her ability to go above and beyond what should be possible to achieve her goals.

Deviant and Baseline characters regain one point of Willpower from a full night's sleep, unless a Scar says otherwise.

Spending Willpower

- **Reflexive Action:** Unless otherwise specified, spending Willpower is a reflexive action.
- **Roll Bonus:** Spend 1 Willpower to gain a three-die bonus on a single dice pool.
- **Increased Resistance:** Spend 1 Willpower to gain +2 to *resistance* (see above) against a single action.
- **Other Expenditures:** Other abilities may require Willpower expenditure, as noted in their descriptions.
- **Per Turn Limit:** Characters may only spend 1 Willpower per turn (unless otherwise noted).

Conditions

Conditions represent ways in which the story has affected a character, and what he can do to move past those events. Players don't buy Conditions; events in the game apply them and they remain until certain *resolution* criteria are met. A character can only have one instance of a particular Condition unless each applies to a distinctly different circumstance — for example, he may be Informed about both the occult symbol he stayed up all night to research and the inner workings of the conspiracy he infiltrated. He'd resolve each independently. Various systems and supernatural powers bring Conditions into play, and the Storyteller can do so based on story circumstances.

A list of sample Conditions can be found on p. XX. The listed resolutions for each Condition are the most common ways to end its effects; other actions may also resolve it if they would reasonably cause the Condition's effects to end. When a character resolves a Condition, the player takes a Beat. However, if a Condition has a natural time limit and then fades away without proper resolution, he doesn't take a Beat. If a Condition lingers beyond its relevance in the story, the player and Storyteller may agree to simply let it fade. A player can only earn one Beat by resolving Conditions in each scene.

Some Conditions are marked as Persistent. These Conditions last for a long time, and can only be resolved permanently with a specific and impressive effort. Once per chapter, a player can gain a Beat when a Persistent Condition impacts his character's life.

Improvised Conditions

Storytellers shouldn't feel limited by the list of Conditions in the Appendix (p. XX). As a rough guideline, a Condition typically consists of a modifier between +2 and -2 dice to a certain type of action, or to any action taken with a certain motivation. A Condition resolves when the character's done something significant to act on it, or when she addresses the original source. The sample Conditions later in this book have examples of how to resolve them, but you can also resolve them after other events if it makes sense in the story.

If play bogs down as you search for the right Condition, just improvise one and keep things going. If you can't think of one at all, don't worry — just award a Beat and keep going without a Condition.

Lingering Conditions

Conditions are designed as reminders that events that happened earlier in the story have repercussions later. Usually, Chekhov's gun applies — if you put the Condition on stage, it should fire by the end of the story. But stories are slippery things, and sometimes a story thread represented by a Condition is better to drop for the sake of the overall narrative.

For example, an emotional state like Inspired might no longer be relevant to events in the game because a long time has passed, or it might have been the result of an interaction with a character you don't care about anymore. In those cases, it's perfectly fine to just cross off the Condition. We recommend awarding a Beat as if resolving it, but that's at the Storyteller's discretion.

We recommend doing this sparingly, but the bottom line is: If a Condition doesn't feel relevant to the story anymore, just let it go.

Action Scenes

Sometimes it's useful to zoom in close on the action and track things moment by moment, with a clear understanding of who does what in what order. These are *action scenes*, and to keep everyone's actions straight, they proceed by *turns* in order of *Initiative*. The most common action scenes are fights, but the Storyteller can call for one any time complex things are happening very quickly, like an escape from a conspiracy's facility or a car chase.

Turns

- **What You Can Do:** On your turn, move up to your Speed and take one instant action, *or* move twice your Speed.
- **How Long It Lasts:** A turn is roughly three seconds. If an effect says it lasts “until your next turn,” it lasts until the beginning of your next turn.
- **Order of Action:** Characters involved in an action scene take turns one at a time in order of Initiative, from highest to lowest.
- **Cycle:** Once all characters involved in the scene have acted, the order of action returns to the character with the highest Initiative. Initiative can change from turn to turn, if for instance one character delays his action, or a supernatural power makes a character faster or slower.

Initiative

- **Calculating:** When you come into the action scene, roll one die and add the result to your Initiative modifier (p. XX). This is the only roll in the game on which you treat the result of the die as a number rather than a success or not. Wielding a weapon inflicts a penalty to Initiative based on the type of weapon (p. XX).
- **Delaying:** You may choose not to act when your turn comes up and instead act at any point later in the scene, even if the order of action has reset. When you do act, change your Initiative to the Initiative you acted on for the rest of the scene.
- **Surprise:** If the start of the action might take a character unawares, the Storyteller may call for a surprise roll. Roll the character's Wits + Composure, possibly contested by an

opponent's relevant dice pool (Dexterity + Stealth for an ambush, Manipulation + Subterfuge if they lull you into a false sense of security, etc.). If the surprised character's roll fails, they cannot act or apply their Defense until their second turn.

Defense

Defense measures your character's ability to react to danger and mitigate harm to herself. It's most often used when violence breaks out, but is sometimes used to resist harm from other sources as well.

Defense Basics

- **Resistance:** Defense counts as a Resistance Attribute (p. XX) for any rule that interacts with Resistance (e.g. spending Willpower).
- **Multiple Hazards:** In an action scene, each time you resist an action with your Defense, you suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to Defense. This penalty goes away at the beginning of your next turn. You can choose not to resist an action with Defense; if you do, the penalty doesn't increase.

Tilts

Tilts apply temporary circumstances to both characters and the environment during action scenes. Outside action scenes, use Conditions instead.

Tilts do not grant Beats when they end, but the effects of a Tilt can easily cause a Condition. For instance, a character in a fight gets a handful of road salt flung into his eyes and receives the Blinded Tilt. When the action scene ends, this shifts to the Blind Condition. Resolving this Condition grants a Beat as usual. If the character enters an action scene again before the Condition resolves, the Blinded Tilt applies again.

Tilts come in two forms: Personal and Environmental. Personal Tilts only apply to one character and include ways in which that character can overcome the effect. Environmental Tilts affect the whole scene, and offer ways for individual characters to mitigate their effects. For a list of sample Tilts, see p. XX.

Violence

Renegades are driven to confront their abusers, and Devoted to defend their charges. Conflict — often violent conflict — is inevitable. These rules help the troupe manage scenes of violence.

Intent

Everybody wants something out of a conflict. The very first thing you need to do — before worrying about who attacks first or anything like that — is determine what each character wants to get out of the fight. Boil it down into a simple sentence that starts with the words "I want," as in "I want Agena's key card," or "I want to rescue Tom."

Declaring Intent

- **By Violence:** Intent must be something achievable by violence within the current scene.
- **The Price:** If your intent doesn't include causing harm and your character ends up killing someone, lose one Willpower point. This doesn't apply to Deviants attacking a Conviction Touchstone or defending a Loyalty Touchstone.

Optional Rules: Beaten Down & Surrender

A character who takes more than his Stamina in bashing damage or any amount of lethal damage suffers the Beaten Down Tilt (p. XX): He's had the fight knocked out of him.

A character can choose to surrender, giving his attacker what she wants. If your character surrenders, regain a point of Willpower and take a Beat, and stop participating in the fight. Your character's opponent must spend a point of Willpower to attack him.

If one side's intent involves violence for its own sake, their intended victims don't get Beaten Down and can't surrender. When someone wants to kill you, the only thing you can do is to try to stop her, whether you run like hell or unload a shotgun at her.

These optional rules only apply to people who would incur a breaking point for committing (or attempting) murder.

Down and Dirty Combat

The Storyteller might decide that your character can get what she wants without focusing on the details of the fight. Maybe she's picking on people weaker than her. Maybe the fight's not the important thing going on with regards to the character's intent. In these cases, the Storyteller can opt to use Down and Dirty Combat.

This system resolves the entire fight in a single roll. If multiple characters have separate intents, resolve each intent as a separate Down and Dirty Combat action. If the group only has one intent but multiple characters are participating, they can use teamwork (see p. XX) on the roll. Players can call for Down and Dirty Combat, with the Storyteller's approval. Storyteller characters might deal damage as a result of a Down and Dirty Combat, but they can't initiate one.

Action: Instant and contested; takes anywhere from 30 seconds to a few minutes.

Dice Pool: Combat pool (Dexterity + Firearms, Strength + Brawl, or Strength + Weaponry) versus either the opponent's combat pool (as above) *or* an attempt to escape (Strength or Dexterity + Athletics).

Roll Results

Success: Inflict damage equal to the difference in successes + weapon modifier and achieve your intent — including killing, if that was on the table.

Exceptional Success: As success, and gain 1 Willpower.

Failure: Do not achieve your intent. If the opponent rolled a combat pool, suffer damage equal to the difference in successes + opponent's weapon modifier. Opponent escapes if they want to.

Dramatic Failure: The opposite of your character's intent happens, or she's knocked out or suffers other serious consequences.

Detailed Violence

When the fight is a significant event in the story, or Down and Dirty Combat doesn't suit, use these rules. Violence like this is an action scene (p. XX).

Actions in a Fight

The most common action in a fight is to *attack*. Characters can also *dodge* or push themselves to the limit, sacrificing Defense for greater effect.

Attack

All attack actions are instant actions. Unarmed, melee, and thrown attacks are resisted, while ranged attacks and touching an opponent are simple actions.

- **Unarmed Attack:** Strength + Brawl – Defense; bashing damage
- **Melee Attack:** Strength + Weaponry – Defense; lethal damage
- **Ranged Attack:** Dexterity + Firearms; lethal damage
- **Thrown Attack:** Dexterity + Athletics – Defense; lethal damage
- **Touching an Opponent:** Dexterity + Brawl *or* Dexterity + Weaponry; inflicts no damage.
- **Damage:** A successful attack inflicts damage equal to the number of successes rolled + weapon modifier (p. XX), if any.
- **Pulling Blows:** Set a maximum damage value up to the highest trait in your attack dice pool, and grant the target +1 Defense. Your attack cannot inflict more than the maximum damage you set.
- **Offhand Attack:** Take a two-die penalty to attacks made with the character's non-dominant hand.

Specified Targets

A normal attack is aimed at the target's center of mass. You can aim for specific body parts by taking a penalty on your attack roll. Attacking a specific body part can bypass armor (p. XX) or inflict a Tilt (p. XX) on the target. Attacks against specified targets aren't a way to inflict extra damage or instantly kill people; that's covered by simply rolling a lot of successes on the attack action.

The following modifiers assume a target roughly human in size and shape. The Storyteller can adjust these for more unusual targets.

- **Arm (-2):** If damage exceeds the victim's Stamina, it inflicts the Arm Wrack Tilt.
- **Leg (-2):** If damage exceeds the victim's Stamina, it inflicts the Leg Wrack Tilt.
- **Head (-3):** If damage equals or exceeds the victim's Size, it inflicts the Stunned Tilt.
- **Heart (-3):** If damage equals or exceeds 5, the attack pierces the victim's heart.
- **Hand (-4):** If the attack deals any damage, it inflicts the Arm Wrack Tilt.
- **Ear (-4):** If the attack deals any damage, it inflicts the Deafened Tilt.
- **Eye (-5):** If the attack deals any damage, it inflicts the Blinded Tilt.

Dodge

Dodging is a reflexive action, but your character can only do it if she hasn't taken an action yet this turn, and it takes up her action for the turn.

- **Contested Attacks:** Attacks made against your character become contested instead of resisted until your next turn. Contest attacks with double your Defense as your dice pool, and unlike a normal contested action, your successes cancel out the attacker's successes on a one-for-one basis. Don't reroll ties; if you cancel out all the successes, the attack simply fails.
- **Multiple Attackers:** Apply the Defense penalty for multiple attackers before doubling. If your character's Defense is reduced to 0, roll a chance die.
- **Dramatic Failure:** Defense suffers a -1 penalty until your next turn.

Special Maneuvers

To enact any of the following instant actions, the character sacrifices her Defense until her next turn. If the character has already lost her Defense, for example by being surprised or attacked by enough opponents in one turn to reduce her Defense to 0, she cannot take any of these actions.

- **Charge:** Move up to twice your character's Speed and make an unarmed or melee attack.
- **All-Out Attack:** Make an unarmed or melee attack with a two-die bonus.
- **Aim:** Keep an opponent in your sights with a ranged weapon to gain a one-die bonus per consecutive Aim action on your next attack against that target, to a maximum of three bonus dice. Incompatible with autofire (below).

Other Actions

These are all instant actions.

- **Drop Prone/Stand Up:** Ranged attacks against prone characters suffer a two-die penalty, but unarmed and melee attacks against prone characters gain a two-die bonus if the attacker is standing.
- **Reload a Weapon:** If rounds must be loaded individually, lose Defense until your next turn.
- **Killing Blow:** Inflict damage equal to your attack's dice pool + weapon bonus. Requires an unconscious, immobilized, or otherwise helpless target.

Unarmed Violence

These rules present special cases that come up when fighting without weapons.

Bite

Biting counts as an unarmed attack action.

- **Damage:** Human teeth inflict -1 bashing damage (so an attack that rolls only one success inflicts no damage). Animals and monsters may treat their teeth as weapons, with a bonus between +1 and +4.
- **Grapple Required:** Humans must first grapple an opponent to bite them.

Grapple

Grappling counts as an unarmed attack action. To start grappling, you have to grab your opponent.

- **Grab:** Make an unarmed attack. On a success, inflict no damage but start a grapple. On an exceptional success, also choose a grapple option to enact reflexively.
- **One Action:** All participants in the grapple act on the highest Initiative among them. The only action they can take is the grappling action.
- **Grappling:** Instant and contested; Strength + Brawl vs. Strength + Brawl. The character with the most successes chooses a grapple option to enact immediately, or two grapple options on an exceptional success. On a tie, the characters continue to grapple but nothing else happens.

Grapple Options

- **Break Free:** The grapple ends, and your character may take another instant action immediately.
- **Control Weapon:** Take firm hold of a weapon, either your character's or her opponent's. Lasts until your character's opponent chooses Control Weapon. Required for other grapple options.
- **Damage:** Treat the grapple action as an unarmed attack, inflicting damage equal to your rolled successes. If you have control of a weapon, this counts as a melee attack with the weapon's modifier.
- **Disarm:** Remove a weapon from the grapple entirely. Requires Control Weapon.
- **Drop Prone:** Throw all participants to the ground. Requires Break Free to stand back up.
- **Hold:** Immobilize an opponent. Both characters lose Defense.
- **Restrain:** Your opponent suffers the Immobilized Tilt (p. XX). Requires Hold. If your character uses equipment to restrain her opponent, she can leave the grapple.
- **Take Cover:** Any ranged attacks against your character automatically hit her opponent. Lasts until your next turn.

Ranged Violence

These rules present special cases that come up when shooting at people.

Autofire

Automatic weapons can fire a short, medium, or long burst in place of a single shot.

- **Short Burst:** Uses three bullets. +1 bonus to attack action.
- **Medium Burst:** Uses 10 bullets. +2 bonus to attack action. Can attack multiple targets, up to three.
- **Long Burst:** Uses 20 bullets. +3 bonus to attack action. Can attack multiple targets, with no limit.
- **Multiple Targets:** -1 penalty per target after the first. Roll individually against each target.

Range

Ranged attacks suffer a dice penalty the farther away the target is. Ranged weapons have a short, medium, and long range listed on the weapons table (p. XX).

- **Short Range:** No penalty.
- **Medium Range:** -1
- **Long Range:** -2

Thrown weapons have a short range of (Strength + Dexterity + Athletics – object’s Size) yards/meters, doubled for medium range, and doubled again for long range.

Aerodynamic objects double each range — so an aerodynamic object’s long range is {(Strength + Dexterity + Athletics) * 8} yards/meters. Characters can only throw objects with a Size less than their Strength.

Concealment

If the target of a ranged attack is partially or fully obscured, she has concealment. Concealment applies a penalty to the shooter’s dice pool.

- **Barely Concealed:** -1 (hiding behind an office chair)
- **Partially Concealed:** -2 (hiding behind the hood of a car, with upper body exposed)
- **Substantially Concealed:** -3 (crouching behind a car).
- **Shooting from Concealment:** Barely concealed: no penalty; partially concealed: -1; substantially concealed: -2. You can ignore this penalty, but you lose your own concealment until your next turn.

Cover

If a target’s entirely hidden by something substantial, he’s in cover.

- **Tough Cover:** If the cover’s Durability (p. XX) is greater than the attacker’s weapon modifier, the attack can’t penetrate the cover.
- **Less Tough Cover:** Subtract the cover’s Durability from the attacker’s damage. Both the object and the target take any remaining damage.
- **Transparent Cover:** If the cover is transparent (bulletproof glass, for example), subtract *half* the cover’s Durability, rounding down. Both the object and the target take any remaining damage.

Covering Fire

With a weapon capable of autofire, a character can lay down covering fire to keep anyone from entering his target area.

- **Action:** Instant
- **Dice Pool:** Dexterity + Firearms
- **Bullets:** Uses 10 bullets.
- **Characters in Area of Effect:** On their next turn, they must either take cover within range of their Speed or drop prone, to avoid suffering damage equal to successes on covering fire roll + weapon modifier.

In Close Combat: Wielding a ranged weapon larger than Size 1 in close quarters grants the opponent (weapon’s Size + 1) as a bonus to Defense.

Shooting into Close Combat: Take a two-die penalty for each character involved in close combat with your target that you want to avoid hitting, or a four-die penalty if they're grappling your target. You can't selectively avoid targets this way with autofire.

Weapons and Armor

Weapons are one of the fastest ways to turn a fight into a murder, but sometimes the best defense is a good offense. Armor, meanwhile, keeps a character from grievous harm. Traits for specific weapons and armor are in Appendix One: Equipment, starting on p. XX.

Weapons

Ranged and melee weapons share certain common traits.

- **Type:** A weapon's type is a general classification that fits any number of specific weapons. A metal club might be a crowbar or a length of rebar, while a light revolver might be one of any number of .22-.38 caliber weapons.
- **Damage:** Added to successes rolled on attack to determine total damage inflicted.
- **Initiative:** The penalty to Initiative when wielding the weapon.
- **Strength:** The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a -1 penalty on attack rolls.
- **Availability:** The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

Improvised Weapons

Characters who grab lamps and pool cues still stand a chance of dealing serious damage.

- **Use Existing Weapon Traits:** If it's close enough to a weapon in the chart on p. XX, use the associated weapon traits. For example, a pool cue might count as a sap.
- **Improvised Weapon Traits:** If it's not similar to a weapon in the chart, its damage modifier is (object's Durability -1); Initiative penalty and Strength requirement equal to weapon's Size.
- **Attack Modifiers:** -1 to attack roll. If successful, the improvised weapon takes the same damage it inflicts; Durability applies.

Armor

Armor provides protection against attacks, including bullets, knives, and fangs.

Armor Basics

- **Ballistic Armor:** Each point of ballistic armor downgrades one point of lethal damage from firearms to bashing.
- **General Armor:** Each point of general armor reduces the total damage taken by one point, starting with the most severe type of damage.
- **Order of Operation:** If armor has both ballistic and general ratings, apply the ballistic armor first.

- **Minimum Damage:** When applying armor to an attack inflicting lethal damage, you always suffer at least one point of bashing damage from the shock of the blow.

Armor Piercing

Some weapons have an armor-piercing rating, usually between 1 and 3. When attacking someone wearing armor, subtract the armor-piercing rating from the target's armor. Subtract from ballistic armor first, then general armor. Armor-piercing attacks in close combat subtract from general armor only.

When shooting at an object — or a person in cover — subtract the armor-piercing quality from the object's Durability.

Injury and Healing

Characters can suffer three types of damage. Fists and feet, along with other kinds of low-impact trauma, deal *bashing* damage. Brass knuckles, knives, and speeding trucks deal *lethal* damage. Some horrifying powers deal *aggravated* damage. When something deals aggravated damage directly, it's quite obvious. Flesh bubbles and sloughs away. Foaming pustules taint the victim's flesh. Blackened veins streak out from the site of the injury.

Suffering Damage

When a rule tells you to suffer an amount of damage, you mark off that many Health boxes, starting from the leftmost side and continuing to the right. A box marked with any kind of damage is called a *point*.

Damage Basics

- **Bashing:** Mark bashing damage with a (/) in the leftmost empty box of the Health track.
- **Lethal:** Mark lethal damage with an (X) in the leftmost box that is empty *or* filled with bashing damage. If you mark over bashing damage, move that bashing damage to the leftmost empty box of the track. If no empty boxes are left, that damage is overwritten but not moved.
- **Aggravated:** Mark aggravated damage with an (*) in the leftmost box that does not already contain aggravated damage. If you mark over bashing damage, move that bashing damage to the leftmost empty box. If no empty boxes are left, that damage is overwritten but not moved. If you mark over lethal damage, move that lethal damage to the leftmost box that is empty *or* contains bashing damage. If no empty boxes *or* boxes containing bashing damage are left, that damage is overwritten but not moved.
- **Upgrading Damage:** If your character suffers bashing damage but has no empty Health boxes in which to mark it, upgrade each point of bashing damage to lethal damage. If she suffers lethal damage but has no empty Health boxes *or* boxes marked with bashing damage, upgrade her leftmost Health box that's filled with lethal damage to aggravated damage.

Effects of Damage

- **Wound Penalties:** If your character has any damage marked in her third-to-last Health box, she suffers a -1 penalty to *all* actions except Stamina rolls to stay conscious. This increases to -2 when her second-to-last Health box is filled, and -3 when her last Health box is filled.

- **Unconscious:** If your character's rightmost Health box is filled with bashing *or* lethal damage, roll her Stamina every turn as a reflexive action. Failure means she falls unconscious until her rightmost Health box is empty.
- **Bleeding Out:** If your character's rightmost Health box is filled with lethal damage, she suffers 1 lethal damage per minute until she receives medical attention (p. XX).
- **Dead:** If your character's rightmost Health box is filled with aggravated damage, she is dead.

Example of Marking Damage

Experiment 18 has seven boxes of Health. She's just taken two points of bashing damage. Her Health boxes look like this:

[PRODUCTION: SEVEN HEALTH BOXES, FIRST TWO CONTAINING A SLASH]

If a Manticore later bites her and deals a point of lethal damage, her Health track looks like this:

[PRODUCTION: SEVEN HEALTH BOXES, FIRST ONE CONTAINS AN X, SECOND AND THIRD CONTAIN A SLASH]

If Experiment 18 next suffered a point of aggravated damage, her Health boxes would look like this:

[PRODUCTION: SEVEN HEALTH BOXES. FIRST HAS AN ASTERISK, SECOND HAS AN X, THE THIRD AND FOURTH CONTAIN SLASHES]

Healing

Characters need time to heal once they've been beaten to a pulp. Normally, a character can heal without medical attention, though use of the Medicine Skill will help him recover (see below). The only exception is if a character has all her Health boxes full of lethal damage — she's bleeding out. She can't recover from that without urgent medical attention and emergency surgery.

Deviant characters heal at the same rates as Baseline characters unless a Variation or Scar says otherwise.

Healing Basics

- **Rightmost Box:** Natural healing only affects the rightmost point of damage. Once the rightmost box is cleared, healing time for the next-rightmost box starts.
- **Bashing:** Clear bashing damage after 15 minutes of in-game time.
- **Lethal:** Clear lethal damage after two days of in-game time.
- **Aggravated:** Clear aggravated damage after a week of in-game time.

Example: Experiment 18 escapes the Manticore and goes to ground, avoiding hospitals for fear of the Conspiracy. Her health track looks like this at the end of the fight:

[PRODUCTION: SEVEN HEALTH BOXES. FIRST HAS AN ASTERISK, SECOND HAS AN X, THE THIRD AND FOURTH CONTAIN SLASHES]

Her rightmost wound heals first. Since it's a bashing wound, she clears it after 15 minutes. After another 15 minutes, her second bashing wound clears. Her lethal damage then heals over the course of the next two days. Finally, her aggravated wound heals over the course of the next week. In all, it takes a little over a week and two days for her to recover from her injuries.

Medical Care

Characters can use the Medicine Skill to speed up healing.

- **Action:** Extended and simple
- **Dice Pool:** Dexterity + Medicine with a one-minute interval, for emergency treatment; Intelligence + Medicine with a one-hour interval, for long-term hospital care.
- **Benefits of Emergency Care:** Requires total successes equal to total damage the patient suffers. Successful treatment stops the character from bleeding out and heals one point of bashing damage.
- **Benefits of Long-Term Care:** Successful treatment downgrades one point of aggravated damage to lethal, or one point of lethal damage to bashing. Requires 10 total successes per aggravated wound, 5 per lethal.
- **Long-Term Care Limitations:** Heals the leftmost injury first and can only downgrade one wound per patient per day.

Sources of Harm

In addition to damage suffered in fights, characters face peril from a variety of sources. These are just a few of them.

Disease

Becoming Remade is no protection against malady, and the rough lives they live can expose Renegades to all manner of contagions.

Disease Basics

- **Tilt:** In action scenes, sick characters suffer the Sick Tilt (p. XX).
- **Moderate Disease:** Outside action scenes, moderate sickness might impose a -1 or -2 penalty on actions that require concentration or stamina.
- **Grave Disease:** Outside action scenes, grave diseases inflict a certain amount of damage at specified time intervals, as determined by the Storyteller. The sick character's player makes a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll to resist; success means no damage this time.
- **Recovery:** Most diseases simply run their course over a certain amount of time. Others require a minimum number of successful resistance rolls, require medical intervention, or merely go into periodic remission as determined by the Storyteller.
- **Conditions:** The Storyteller may represent short-term illnesses with Conditions and long-term illnesses with Persistent Conditions, which earn players Beats whenever the illness causes significant harm or inconvenience for the character.

Poison

Whether from a venomous Manticore or Devoted's Variation or the drug-laced darts from a Conspiracy agent's gun, poison can lay even the hardiest Remade low.

Poison Basics

- **Tilt:** In action scenes, poisoned characters suffer the Poisoned Tilt (p. XX).
- **Toxicity:** Outside action scenes, the Storyteller assigns the poison a Toxicity rating. The poisoned character suffers lethal damage equal to Toxicity. Mild poisons only inflict damage once. More severe poisons may inflict damage every hour or even every turn for a period of time determined by the Storyteller.
- **Resistance:** The poisoned character's player rolls Stamina + Resolve – Toxicity every time the poison inflicts damage. Each success cancels one point of damage.

Drugs

Some Deviants turn to alcohol or other drugs to push away the horrors they've survived.

Drug Basics

- **Tilt:** In action scenes, drugged characters suffer the Drugged Tilt (p. XX).
- **Effects:** Drugs can have a wide variety of effects, ranging from dice penalties to imposing Conditions. Most drugs last for a scene, but some burn through a character's system more rapidly or linger for more time.
- **Resistance:** A drugged character can shake off the effects for an hour or scene (one turn, in action scenes) by succeeding on a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll, with a -1 to -3 penalty based the potency of the drug (use -2 as the default).

Overdose

- **Poison:** Characters who overdose on drugs treat the drug like a poison, with a Toxicity somewhere between 3 and 7. The drug inflicts damage once per hour.
- **Duration:** The overdose typically runs its course after (8 – Stamina) hours, though the Storyteller may adjust that.

Electricity

Electric shocks inflict damage based on the strength of the current.

[BEGIN CHART]

Source	Damage
Minor; wall socket	4B
Major; protective fence	6B
Severe; junction box	8B
Fatal; main line feed/subway rail	10B

[END CHART]

Electricity Basics

- **Damage per Turn:** Electricity inflicts damage every turn if the current is continuous.

- **Breaking Away:** Characters in contact with a continuous electrical current must succeed on a reflexive Strength roll to pull away.
- **No Armor:** Worn armor provides no protection against electrocution.

Explosions

Whether it's a Devoted's grenade or fire catching a laboratory fuel tank, Renegades sometimes find themselves caught by explosive blasts. Even if they aren't hit by the flames and shrapnel, the concussive force can send bodies flying and deafen bystanders.

Explosion Basics

An Explosion has four traits: the Damage of the blast, the blast area, the Force, and which Tilts it inflicts.

- **Damage and blast area:** Represents the initial detonation. Anything and anyone within up to twice the explosion's blast area suffers levels of automatic damage (no attack roll is required). At ground zero, touching the explosive or within reach of it, the damage is aggravated. Within the blast area it's lethal, and within twice the blast area (secondary blast area) it's bashing. Objects downgrade damage equal to their Durability (aggravated to lethal, lethal to bashing, and cancelling bashing).
- **Force:** Represents the concussive force. As well as the automatic damage from the blast, anyone hit by an explosion suffers additional damage. Roll Force as an attack dice pool. Defense does not apply unless a power would grant Defense against Firearms. Mundane armor applies half its ballistic rating and none of its general rating. Supernatural armor is applied fully. If the attack is successful, add the explosive's Damage rating as extra successes. The damage is aggravated at ground zero, lethal within the blast area, and bashing within twice the blast area.
- **Tilts:** Nearly all explosions inflict the Deafened Tilt on anyone within twice the blast area. Most also inflict the Knockdown and Stunned Tilts, and some inflict the Inferno Tilt.

Extreme Environments

The human body is not built to withstand extreme heat, cold, air pressure, and other harsh weather. Extreme environments are rated with a level from 1 to 4, depending on the severity of the environment. While characters are exposed to these conditions without a Variation or equipment to protect them, they suffer the level of the environment as a dice penalty to all actions. After a number of hours equal to the character's Stamina, he takes bashing damage equal to the environment's level once per hour. In the case of a Level 3 exposure, the damage is lethal instead of bashing. Level 4 environments cause lethal damage each *turn* after a number of turns equal to the character's Stamina.

Damage caused by extreme environments cannot heal until the character is back in a safe environment.

Extreme Environment Basics

- **Penalty:** Characters suffer a penalty to all actions equal to the environment's level.
- **Level 1-3 Damage:** After (Stamina) hours of exposure to level 1-3 environments, characters suffer damage equal to the environment's level for every hour. At levels 1-2, the damage is bashing. At level 3, it's lethal.

- **Level 4 Damage:** After (Stamina) *turns* of exposure to level 4 environments, characters suffer 4 lethal damage every turn.
- **No Healing:** Characters cannot heal damage from extreme environments until they are no longer in an extreme environment.

[BEGIN CHART]

Environment Levels

Level Example Environs

1 Light snow, heavy storms; too cold to sleep safely; air pressure causes shortness of breath; sweltering sun can cause first-degree burns

2 Heavy snow; cold causes physical pain and potential hypothermia; sun quickly causes first-degree burns, can cause second-degree burns with time

3 Desert exposure; heat rapidly causing second-degree burns

4 Desert sandstorm, severe hurricane, tornado, tsunami

[END CHART]

Falling

Deviants can find themselves leaping from great heights to avoid worse danger.

Falling Basics

- **Damage:** Falls of less than 30 yards/meters inflict one point of bashing damage per three yards/meters fallen. Falls of 30 yards/meters or more inflict 10 lethal damage.
- **Armor:** At the Storyteller's discretion, armor may reduce damage from falls of less than 30 yards/meters.
- **Reduced Damage:** If there's a reasonable way for a character to slow her fall, she makes a reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll. Each success reduces damage from a fall of less than 30 yards/meters by one point.
- **Soft Landing:** Landing in water or snow, or on another soft surface, may automatically reduce damage from falls of less than 30 yards/meters at the Storyteller's discretion.

Fire

Fire automatically inflicts lethal damage per turn of exposure (no attack roll is required). The damage inflicted depends on both the size and intensity of the flames.

[START TABLE]

Size of Fire Damage

Torch	1
Bonfire	2
Inferno	3

[END TABLE]

[START TABLE]

Heat of Fire Damage Modifier

Candle (first-degree burns)	—
Torch (second-degree burns)	+1
Bunsen burner (third-degree burns)	+2
Chemical fire/molten metal	+3

[END TABLE]

Fire Basics

- **Combustion:** Exposure to fire for longer than a turn ignites anything combustible on the character; he continues to take full damage even after escaping the source of the flame.
- **Firefighting:** Fighting a fire typically requires an instant action but no roll. At the Storyteller's discretion, an action might immediately put out the fire (e.g. diving into water) or reduce its size by one level (e.g. stop, drop, and roll).
- **Armor:** Most armor can block its general rating in fire damage automatically for a number of turns equal to that rating.
- **Uncontrolled Blaze:** If an area containing flammable objects is set on fire, it may acquire the Inferno Environmental Tilt (p. XX).

Acid

Strong acids and other highly corrosive chemicals automatically inflict lethal damage per turn of exposure (no attack roll is required). The damage inflicted depends on the coverage and the intensity of the chemical.

[START TABLE]

Coverage Damage

Splashed (<10% surface area)	1
Sprayed (<25% surface area)	2
Doused (<50% surface area)	3
Immersed (entire body)	4

[END TABLE]

[START TABLE]

Intensity Damage Modifier

Mild acid/base (dilute hydrochloric acid)	—
Moderate acid/base (battery acid)	+1
Strong acid/base (fuming nitric acid)	+2
Super-acid or similar (fluorosulfuric acid)	+3

[END TABLE]

Acid Basics

- **Countermeasures:** Neutralizing an acid requires an instant action but no roll. Flushing the exposed area with water will neutralize a mild or moderate acid but has no effect on strong or super-acids, which require a chemical neutralizer. At the Storyteller's discretion, an action might immediately neutralize the chemical's effect (e.g. diving into water) or reduce its coverage or intensity by one level (e.g. applying baking soda)
- **Armor:** Most armor can block its general rating in acid damage automatically for a number of turns equal to that rating.
- **Objects:** Acid can deal Structure damage to objects, which halve their Durability (rounded up) against this source of damage.
- **Acid Attacks:** Hurling or spraying corrosive chemicals at a target is usually a thrown attack. A successful attack splashes the victim (1 damage + intensity), while an exceptional success sprays the victim (2 damage + intensity). A dramatic failure instead exposes the attacker (1 damage + intensity).

Radiation

Deviants can find themselves within a source of ionizing radiation or more otherworldly energies. Some unfortunate Remade are radiation sources themselves.

- **Intensity:** The Storyteller assigns an Intensity value of 1 (X-Rays) to 5 (Ground Zero)
- **Exposure:** Each Intensity notes an interval of time. After intervals equal to Stamina, a character exposed to radiation suffers bashing damage equal to Intensity every interval.
- **Healing and Repeated Doses:** Characters cannot heal radiation damage while still exposed to the radiation. Characters who leave and return within the story track intervals as though they had not left.
- **Protection:** Equipment designed to effectively shield human beings against radiation adds its dice bonus to the character's Stamina for determining how long its wearer can stay in a contaminated environment.

[TABLE PLEASE]

Radiation Intensity

Intensity	Interval	Example
1	Weeks	Examining a mildly radioactive object. X-Rays and other medical sources.
2	Days	Examining a highly radioactive object. Most laboratory research sources.
3	Hours	Visiting the area of a radiation leak after the fact
4	Minutes	High-Energy sources. The inside of shielded experiments and reactors.
5	Turns	Ground Zero

[END TABLE]

Teamwork

When two or more characters work together on a single action of any kind, one person takes the lead. He's the *primary actor*, and his player assembles his dice pool as normal. Anyone assisting him is a *secondary actor*, and rolls the same pool before the primary actor does.

Secondary Actor Roll Results

Success: +1 die to the primary actor's roll for each success earned, cumulative for each secondary actor's success.

Exceptional Success: As success.

Failure: Primary actor receives no bonus dice.

Dramatic Failure: As failure, and -4 dice to the primary actor's roll, cumulative for each secondary actor's dramatic failure. Primary actor must continue.

The primary actor's roll results are as normal for the action the group undertakes.

More participants don't always mean better results, however. Every action has a point of diminishing returns at which too many cooks are in the kitchen. This number usually ranges from three to six, depending on the action, at the Storyteller's discretion. Excess participants' rolls grant no bonuses to the primary actor's pool, and may levy penalties instead at the Storyteller's discretion.

Objects

Objects such as lead pipes, walls, and cars have three traits: Durability, Size, and Structure. Mostly, these relate to how easy the object is to destroy.

Object Traits

- **Durability:** How hard the object is to damage. Subtract Durability from any damage inflicted on the object. Durability has no effect against attacks that inflict aggravated damage.

[BEGIN TABLE]

Durability	Material
1	Wood, hard plastic, thick glass
2	Stone, aluminum
3	Steel, iron
+1	per reinforced layer

[END TABLE]

- **Size:** How large the object is. Objects smaller than Size 1 can fit entirely in a person's palm. See p. XX for more examples of objects and creatures of various Sizes.
- **Structure:** An object's Structure equals its Durability + Size.

Damaging Objects

- **Damage:** Each point of damage removes a point of Structure. Objects do not differentiate between bashing and lethal damage.

- **Reduced Functionality:** Once it's taken more damage than its Durability, anyone using the object suffers a -1 die penalty.
- **Destruction:** When an object's Structure hits 0, it is destroyed.
- **Repair:** See p. XX for rules on how to repair damaged objects.

Equipment

Equipment, tools, and technology help to solve problems. Having the right tool for the job can mean the difference between life and death — or in **Deviant: The Renegades**, the difference between life and a fate worse than death. You can find a list of sample equipment in Appendix 2: Equipment, starting on p. XX.

Equipment is divided up by the Skills it typically assists with. Mental equipment typically assists with Mental Skills, for example.

Equipment Traits

- **Availability:** The minimum level of a relevant trait a character must have to acquire the equipment with a single roll. Sufficient Resources nearly always obviates the need for a roll, but as conspiracies tend to track it (see p. XX), Remade characters often use other Social Merits or Skills (e.g. Larceny to steal it).
- **Size, Durability, Structure:** See above.
- **Dice Bonus:** The bonus the equipment adds to relevant actions.
- **Effect:** Any special rules that apply to using the equipment.

See p. XX for rules on how **Deviant** characters can build their own equipment.

Social Maneuvering

Most of the time, when a player's character wants another character to do something, it can be resolved in a single Social action. The Remade intimidates the bouncer, spins a convincing lie, or gives a rousing speech. Sometimes, though, the character doing the persuading spends time getting on the other character's good side, gradually wearing them down until they do him favors or undertake actions. When that's the case, Social Maneuvering is the system to use.

In a Social maneuver, you start by stating your character's *goal*. Once you and the Storyteller agree that the goal is reasonable, you have to overcome the other person's resistance by taking actions that make them more likely to agree to your terms. Successful actions open *Doors* (as in, "the door is open for further discussion," not literal doors).

How often you can try to open Doors depends on the *impression* your character makes — the more they like you, the more often you can try to sway them.

Social Maneuvering and Consent

We recommend reserving this system for use by player-controlled characters on Storyteller characters rather than on other players' characters. If one player's character wants to seduce, persuade, convince, or intimidate another, leave it up to roleplaying and let players make their own decisions about what their characters do.

Goals

When using Social maneuvering, the first step is to declare your character's intended goal. This is as simple as stating what you want the subject to do and how your character is going about making it happen. You need only announce the initial stages, as the effort will likely occur over multiple rolls, reflecting different actions.

At this point, the Storyteller determines whether the goal is reasonable. A character might, with time and proper tactics, convince a rich person to give him a large sum of money. He probably isn't going to convince the wealthy individual to abandon *all* of his wealth to the character, though it might be possible to get him to name the character as heir, at which point the character can set about speeding up the inheritance process.

Doors

Once you've declared your character's goal, the next step is to determine the scope of the challenge. We represent this with "Doors," which reflect a character's resistance to coercion: her social walls, skepticism, mistrust, or just hesitance toward intimacy. It's abstract and means different things in every given case.

Calculating Doors

- **Starting Doors:** The subject starts with Doors equal to the lower of their Resolve or Composure.
- **Breaking Point:** If the stated goal would be a *breaking point* (p. XX) for the subject, *and* the subject is aware of that fact, add two Doors.
- **Aspiration:** If the stated goal is in opposition to one of the subject's Aspirations, *and* the subject is aware of that fact, add one Door. If the goal would clearly help the subject achieve an Aspiration, remove one Door.
- **Virtue:** If the stated goal is in opposition to the subject's Virtue, *and* the subject is aware of that fact, add one Door.
- **Conviction and Loyalty:** If the stated goal would cause the Remade to Falter, add Doors equal Conviction or Loyalty (whichever applies). If it would clearly support Conviction or Loyalty, remove Doors equal to half Conviction or Loyalty (as applicable), rounded up. Touchstones also suffer an additional bonus or penalty when attempting social maneuvers against the Deviant (p. XX).
- **Adding Doors:** If things change such that the Breaking Point, Aspiration, Virtue, or Touchstone rules above apply during the Social maneuver, add Doors to the remaining total. If your character goes back on her word during the maneuver, add two Doors.

Impression

The Storyteller sets the first impression based on any past history between the characters, the circumstances of their meeting, the nature of the favor being asked (if the acting character is asking right up front — sometimes it's a better idea not to lead off with what you want!) and any other factors she deems relevant. Most interactions default to an average impression, which makes the maneuver a long, drawn-out process. Your character can take steps to improve that: meeting the subject at their favorite restaurant, wearing their favorite perfume, and so on. The

Storyteller is the final arbiter of whether any particular action raises the impression level, but she should be open to working with you to develop a plan.

Impression level determines how frequently you're allowed to roll to open the subject's Doors — the more they like your character, the more often you can roll. If the impression is too hostile, you might not be able to roll at all.

[BEGIN CHART: SHOULD BE ON THE SAME PAGE AS "IMPRESSION"]

Impression	Time per Roll
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Perfect	One turn
Excellent	One hour
Good	One day
Average	One week
Hostile	Cannot roll

[END CHART]

Adjusting Impression

- **Favorable Circumstances:** A comfortable environment, appealing clothing, or similar pleasant situations can raise a hostile impression to average, or an average impression to good.
- **Actions:** Success on an appropriate action, like a Wits + Socialize action to create the ideal guest list for a party, can raise an average or good impression to excellent.
- **Soft Leverage:** A bribe, gift, or offer of service or payment raises the impression level one step if the subject accepts the offer.
- **Vice Leverage:** An offer that indulges the subject's Vice (or aligns with her Touchstones, or equivalent trait) raises the impression level one step if the subject accepts the offer.

Opening Doors

At each interval, you may make a roll to open Doors and move closer to your character's goal. The roll might be different each time, depending on the character's tactics. Some of the rolls might not even be Social. For example, if your character is trying to win someone's favor, fixing his computer with an Intelligence + Computer roll could open a Door.

As Storyteller, be creative in selecting dice pools. Change them up with each step to keep the interactions dynamic. Similarly, consider contested and resisted rolls. Most resisted actions or contested rolls use either Resolve or Composure, or a combination of the two, but don't let that stand as a limit. Contested rolls don't necessarily require a Resistance trait. For example, Wits might be used to notice a lie, Strength to help a character stand up to threats, or Presence to protect and maintain one's reputation at a soiree.

The total effect of Doors

You may have noticed that the Social Maneuvering system boils down to a way to track the long-term shifts in difficulty to persuade a particular character to do a

particular thing. That's intentional, and it's why if the character will never reoccur, it's often easier to just roll a Social instant action instead.

Roll Results

Success: Open one Door.

Exceptional Success: As success, and open an additional Door.

Failure: Open no Doors. Subsequent actions as part of the social maneuver suffer a cumulative one-die penalty. The Storyteller may choose to lower the impression level by one step; if she does so, take a Beat.

Dramatic Failure: The social maneuver fails utterly. No further rolls can be made. Any attempt to achieve the same goal must start from scratch, likely with a worse impression.

Resolution

The outcome of a Social maneuver is either success or failure. Don't confuse this with the success or failure of any particular action that's part of a Social maneuver; here we're talking about the whole thing.

Success

Once your character has opened all the Doors in her path, the subject must act. Storyteller characters abide by the intended goal and follow through as stated. How they feel afterwards might vary, but they will always do what you and the Storyteller agreed on.

Failure

A Social maneuvering attempt can fail utterly under the following circumstances:

- **Dramatic Failure:** The player rolls a dramatic failure on an attempt to open a Door.
- **Deception:** The target realizes the character is lying to him or manipulating him. This does *not* apply if the target is aware the character is trying to talk him into something; only if he feels betrayed or conned.
- **Bad Impressions:** The impression level reaches "hostile" and remains so for the rest of the current story. The character can try again during the next story.

Player vs. Player Resolution

If you allow players' characters to be the targets of Social maneuvering, resolve the resolution stage as a negotiation with two possible outcomes. The subject chooses to abide by the desired goal or offers a beneficial alternative.

Go with the Flow

If the character does as requested, and abides by the intended goal, his player takes a Beat (p. XX).

Offer an Alternative

If the subject's player chooses, he may offer an alternative that's beneficial to the initiator, and the initiator's player can impose a Condition (p. XX) on his character to reflect that alternative. This offer exists between players; it does not need to occur

within the fiction of the game, though it can. The alternative must be truly beneficial and not a twist of intent. The Storyteller adjudicates.

The initiator's player chooses a Condition to impose on the subject. It must make sense within the context of the scenario.

Investigation

When you want an investigation to play a large role in the tale, with entire scenes, chapters, or even stories dedicated to a single mystery, you can use this system rather than boiling it down to a single action. Characters uncover Clues they can use to benefit later actions the investigation enables — for instance, learning the daily routine of a Progenitor.

Investigation Basics

- **No Hard Answers:** The Storyteller doesn't need to come up with all the potential Clues and answers ahead of time. Letting the players fill some of them in themselves as they succeed in finding Clues gets them invested in the outcome and creates “a-ha!” moments. If players put Clues together to reach conclusions that don't match the outcome the Storyteller had in mind, she can consider changing it to match.
- **No Binary Rolls:** Failing to find information crucial to the characters' progress when players fail rolls only slows the game down to no satisfying end. Instead, the Storyteller should raise the stakes or introduce complications when a roll fails. Failure doesn't mean the players didn't find a Clue — instead, it means they miss out on extra benefits success would have afforded them and must adjust to new challenges.
- **Frame the Action:** The Storyteller can intersperse Clue-finding actions with other events in the story to keep the momentum going and give players opportunity to choose which set of heightening stakes to address first.
- **Clues:** Clues are a specialized type of equipment that represent objects, facts, and deductions. They have *elements* that players can spend for benefits, either to solve a particular mystery or to stockpile for other uses: leverage in Social maneuvering, proof that someone is entangled in the Web of Pain, etc.

Scope

First, the players declare a goal to accomplish via investigation. Decide how many total Clues the characters need to uncover to achieve their goal. For smaller-scope investigations, this usually falls between one and five Clues. For broad investigations spread out across the chronicle, the total should equal at least half the number of planned chapters, and can range up to twice the number of planned chapters in a strongly investigation-focused chronicle.

Interval

Each roll to find a Clue is an instant action, but takes some amount of time based on the kind of action the players take. The Storyteller can add challenges and obstacles to these attempts to turn simple die rolls into interesting scenes of their own. If they perform particularly well in these efforts, the Storyteller can offer bonuses to the roll to uncover the Clue.

Uncovering Clues

Once the characters get where they need to be, they roll to uncover the Clue.

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Varies. Players can use any pool that matches the action they take to uncover the Clue. The Investigation Skill is appropriate to case a scene or search through files and evidence, while other Mental Skills can be used to perform research, experiments, or autopsies. Social and Physical Skills can also contribute, given an appropriate justification — such as asking around for rumors of conspiracy activity or breaking into someone’s house to steal a keycard.

The pool suffers a cumulative one-die penalty each time the same Skill is used again in an investigation. However, if characters use teamwork to uncover Clues, only the primary actor suffers this penalty, and only his roll contributes to further such penalties in the same investigation.

Roll Results

Success: Clue is uncovered, with one element plus one more if the character has 4 or more dots or a Specialty in the relevant Skill; each Specialty or Skill can only contribute to extra elements once per character per investigation.

Exceptional Success: As success, and the Clue gains one bonus element; character gains a beneficial Condition.

Failure: Clue is uncovered but incomplete: Its elements may only be used to uncover other Clues.

Dramatic Failure: Clue is uncovered but tainted. Each accumulated tainted Clue forces the player to ignore one success rolled on any future actions pertaining to the investigation; these are cumulative, and all apply to each such roll. The Storyteller may impose a negative Condition as well.

Clue Elements

Players can spend Clue elements to add a one-die bonus per element to any roll pertaining to the investigation, including but not limited to rolls to uncover more Clues. A player can only spend elements from one Clue at a time, or Clues equal to her character’s Investigation dots, whichever is higher. She may spend any number of elements at a time from a single Clue.

Elements from tainted Clues impose a two-die penalty when spent instead of a bonus; however, this is the only way to get rid of tainted Clues, since once all its elements are spent, it sheds its tainted nature.

Uncovering the Truth

Players don’t need to roll to put their Clues together once the investigation is over. Once they accumulate the requisite number of Clues specified by the investigation’s scope, the characters learn the truth.

Players may choose to uncover the truth before they’ve accumulated enough Clues, as long as they have at least one that isn’t tainted. If they do, they still learn the truth, but the Storyteller introduces one major complication per Clue they fall short.

Chases

A Renegade can often find herself fleeing from agents of the conspiracy, or chasing down her targets herself. In most action scenes, a character's Speed trait determines how much she can move. This means that generally, you can figure out who is faster without dice. The following rules let you turn the chase into the focus of the scene instead, adding excitement and drama.

Chase Basics

- **Set the Terms:** By default, each party requires five total successes to prevail. Apply modifiers to this total as follows.

[BEGIN CHART]

Circumstance Modifier

Opponent's Speed is higher than yours	+1
Opponent's Speed is twice yours	+3
Opponent's Speed is at least 10 times yours	+5
Initiative modifier is higher than opponent's	-1
Initiative modifier is twice the opponent's	-2
Initiative modifier is at least three times the opponent's	-3
Your character knows the territory somewhat	-1
Your character knows the territory intimately	-3
Your Size is lower than your opponent's	-1
Opponent immune to fatigue	+2
Actively dangerous environment	+1 to +3, Storyteller's discretion
Opponent starts with one turn lead	+1
Opponent starts with at least two turns' lead	+2

[END CHART]

- **Determine the Edge:** Whoever has better manipulated the environment, terrain, and circumstances to his advantage based on the ever-changing situation gains the Edge, not counting circumstances listed above to modify required successes. If the character with the Edge isn't obvious, make a contested roll for each involved character using a relevant pool determined by the player, with Storyteller permission. Relevant Skills could include Athletics, Streetwise, Survival, etc. If the context of the scene changes significantly, re-determine who has the Edge.
- **Turns:** Each turn represents roughly 30 seconds to a minute of chase time. The character with the Edge rolls first. If she accumulates the requisite total successes before others have a chance to roll, she wins immediately.

Optional Rule: Seizing the Edge

In **Deviant: The Renegades**, characters may contend with foes who outclass them in sheer physical power, speed, or supernatural advantages. Introduce this optional rule if you want a chase to favor the underdog.

After the side with the Edge determines the dice pool for the turn, each side predicts how many successes they will roll that turn. Write down these predictions and don't show them to anyone. After each roll, uncover that party's prediction. The first person to correctly guess how many successes they would roll gains the Edge for the next turn, regardless of contested rolls or circumstances.

Pursuit and Evasion

Both pursuit and evasion use the same chase action.

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Determined each turn by the side with the Edge, based on the current situation. You *can* use a different pool, but unless you have the Edge, you lose the 10-again quality on your roll and suffer a cumulative one-die penalty that increases each turn you don't have the Edge and use the wrong pool. These turns don't have to be consecutive.

Roll Results

Success: You overcome the immediate challenge and make headway. Add rolled successes to your running total.

Exceptional Success: As success, and inflict the turn's terms of failure upon your opponent regardless of his roll.

Failure: Determined each turn by the side with the Edge, before dice are rolled. Choose from among the following: lose one accumulated success from your total, suffer two points of bashing damage or one point of lethal, or suffer an appropriate Tilt.

Dramatic Failure: As failure, and the Storyteller may impose a negative Condition as well.

Other Kinds of Chases

The chase system may also be used to represent other kinds of contests that fall outside the immediate timing of an action scene, such as tracking a Devoted back to his base of operations through a city, or as an alternative to the Social maneuvering system (p. XX) to finesse another character into a particular position or behavior.

Building Equipment

With the conspiracies watching for economic activity and other obvious paper trails, Renegades needing specialized equipment they can't gain through borrowing, blackmail, or theft are sometimes forced (or prefer) to make it themselves. If it would offer a bonus to an action, or would make actions possible that were previously not, it can be considered "equipment," and you can build it.

Equipment Types

- **Physical Objects:** the most common type. Items listed in Appendix One (p. XX) are physical objects, as are weapons and armor. Creative works also fall into this category.
- **Organizations:** small groups of people assembled to address a particular need, like a cadre of bodyguards or research assistants. Organizations built as equipment disband after one chapter unless purchased as Merits afterward.

- **Repositories:** collections of research materials and information sources on a particular topic, like a library of books, a database, or an assortment of security footage. This reflects gathering materials for repeated future use, not benefiting from an existing source.
- **Plans:** abstracted plans that orchestrate complex encounters with specific goals involving multiple people, like heists or rescues. A plan grants its bonus to all participants, but ceases to exist when the endeavor succeeds or definitively fails.
- **Mystical Equipment:** anything that carries minor supernatural potency, such as a circle of protection using salt and bone.

Build Equipment Basics

- **Scope:** Build Equipment actions never take longer than the time between one scene and the next. If it can't reasonably be built in a few hours or less, the character needs to acquire it another way.
- **When to Roll:** If the character has plenty of time, isn't under any duress, and has dots in the relevant Skill equal to the equipment bonus a standard example would provide, don't roll. If the character is under pressure or in danger, roll. Likewise, if she's trying to build something beyond her casual expertise — i.e., something with an equipment bonus greater than her dots in the relevant Skill, something with higher traits than the standard example, or something the Storyteller determines is too complex — roll.
- **Built-In Penalty:** The roll always suffers a penalty equal to the intended equipment bonus. Each other intended benefit, like a new function, an increased trait, or access to a resource, counts as a one-die bonus for this purpose, as well as to determine whether to roll in the first place. Weapons impose a penalty equal to their weapon modifier; armor imposes a penalty equal to its highest armor rating (general or ballistic). Penalties can't exceed -5.
- **Requirements:** The Storyteller may require the use of Resources, Contacts, or other Merits, or a separate research action, to reflect extra effort necessary before you can roll. This should only apply to enhance the drama of the story or introduce interesting plot elements to the action.
- **Time:** ranges from a few minutes to a few hours, but the important factors are whether you finish before something else happens, and what else happens in the meantime.

During an action scene, a Build Equipment action takes a number of turns equal to the built-in penalty; the Storyteller may rule that something can't be built during an action scene.

Build Equipment Action

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Determined by the type of equipment. Wits + Crafts for physical objects, or Wits + Expression for creative works; Presence or Manipulation + Socialize or Streetwise for organizations; Intelligence + Academics for repositories; Wits + Occult for mystical equipment; Wits + Composure for plans. The Storyteller or player can suggest alternatives if appropriate.

Roll Results

Success: You build the equipment.

Exceptional Success: As success, and add one equipment bonus die or other benefit; bonuses still may not exceed +5.

Failure: You build the equipment, but it carries the Fragile (p. XX) or Volatile (p. XX) Condition.

Dramatic Failure: You fail outright and suffer a consequence at the Storyteller's discretion, such as taking damage from an explosive reaction, suffering a Condition like Leveraged or Embarrassing Secret, or leading a threat directly to your location.

Jury Rigging

Sometimes, a character needs to build equipment without time for preparation or even much thought. Jury rigging always takes place in action scene timing.

Action: Instant; takes one turn

Dice Pool: Same as above. The Storyteller may rule that some equipment is too complex to be Jury Rugged.

Roll Results

Success: You build the equipment, but it carries the Fragile (p. XX) or Volatile (p. XX) Condition.

Exceptional Success: You build the equipment.

Failure: As dramatic failure on the Build Equipment action.

Dramatic Failure: As dramatic failure on the Build Equipment action.

Repair, Modifications, and Upgrades

A character may want to fix or alter a piece of equipment that already exists. These actions usually only apply to physical objects, though exceptions are possible.

These rolls use the normal Build Equipment action, with the following exceptions:

Repair/Modification/Upgrade Basics

- **Built-In Penalty:** equals the *difference* between the object's current state and the bonus or benefits the player wants to add. Broken objects are considered to have an equipment bonus of 0. Partially functional objects may have a bonus only one or two dice lower than their usual bonus. For instance, if a computer would normally grant a +2 to research rolls but won't start and is therefore currently at a 0, the roll to repair it would suffer a -2.
- **Increased Traits/New Functions:** treat each modification or upgrade as a +1 equivalent. You can replace one function with another at no penalty — for instance, reversing the function of a walkie talkie to cause interference instead of receiving signals.

Taking Your Time

You may build equipment as an extended action instead, taking no built-in penalty to any of the rolls. Instead, the target number of required successes equals the total intended bonus and benefits of the equipment +1. Typically, players do this to avoid taking large penalties for complex equipment, or when they have small dice pools to begin with and don't want to risk a

chance die. The Storyteller determines the time between rolls as usual. Overall success and failure work as normal for the Build Equipment action.

The Storyteller may also allow a player to build equipment that normally lies beyond the scope of this system, such as a car or a business, with an extended action. In this case, the time between rolls and total successes required should match the effort involved. Building a car may take a week between rolls and require 15 total successes, for example. Storytellers should keep in mind, however, that it's usually much easier to acquire such equipment in other ways, like stealing or purchasing a car, or using Social maneuvering to convince a potential business partner to take the bait. As a result, building this kind of equipment with extended actions should only be done if the player really *wants* to make it from scratch.

Chapter Five: Antagonists

*Bees will not work except in darkness; Thought will not work except in Silence:
Neither will Virtue work except in Secrecy*

Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Treasure of the Humble*

Deviant: The Renegades is a storytelling game of fury and revenge against the people responsible for destroying their lives. All Remade are pursued by conspiracies, both those responsible for their transformation and those that wish to use their new nature to further their own agendas.

The Ones Responsible: Conspiracies

The Remade in their multitude of unique forms all have one thing in common — they've been used as a tool. Conspiracies need resources and the Remade are simply the grist to achieve them. To organizations devoted to high-minded goals pursued with a religious zeal, a few sacrifices are worth the end results. The Remade rarely see eye to eye with their tormentors or whatever pseudo-scientific quackery they peddle.

Look anywhere, and just below the surface of society, a conspiracy could exist. Flourishing in secrecy and darkness, they've grown plentiful off the growth of modern bureaucracy, lax oversight, and societal ignorance. Their goals are as varied as the cruelties they've inflicted on their subjects. Some conspiracies are simply the profit seeking activities of corporations that know this activity is a bridge too far, if discovered by the public. Others are enclaves of spurned academics looking to prove theories so outlandish it's a stretch to claim them as pseudo-scientific quackery.

Dynamic Solutions has found the new future of electronic war within the seething grey matter of combatants. As soon as they retrieve their first run prototypes they'll be unveiling the project to the highest bidder. Inside a tech giant the Moderation Team's algorithm has been running perfectly — every alpha test subject they've run it on has shown a 23% growth rate in harmonious societal behavior. The Lemure Study Group has a stone, and every third week it speaks a new surgical procedure. As long as they feed it the medical waste, their patient survives. The "ancient" matriculation rites of the Fraternity of Saturn require a ragged apostle, but nothing so mundane as a homeless vagrant will do anymore, not if they want to get anywhere in life.

The only true, universal facts of conspiracies are their willingness to destroy individuals' lives to achieve their goals and their fear of being discovered. Not every desire for privacy is the same.

Some conspiracies are organs of larger organizations, like governments or corporations, that know their actions are a step too far in the minds of the populace, while others seek control, knowing the secrets they wield would be reproduced without them if they were ever let into the light.

The Web of Pain Chronicle

Behind every locked door and in every encrypted file are hints of something deeper. No matter who is killed or what files are destroyed there are always clues of more connections to the conspiracy. When a Deviant finally destroys a conspiracy, they discover, much to their horror, that this organization is only one of many groups bound together in the Web of Pain. For conspiracies, the sort that traffic in the unnatural and inhuman means establishing connections with others who do likewise. While these are occasionally relationships of loyalty or mutual admiration, many conspiracies look at other organizations as ignorant charlatans competing for resources they need.

The Web of Pain ensures that the pursuit of revenge is never entirely over. Behind every hurt are a thousand more. Behind every perpetrator are a hundred equally deserving of retaliation. Descending into the Web of Pain is traveling a road of scars. For some Renegades, it may be the only path to finding balance. For most, it will ultimately lead to their dissolution.

Origins

Every conspiracy has an origin somewhere in society. While they may move beyond their humble origins, the deepest roots of a conspiracy inform much of their philosophy and methods.

Government

It may begin with an off-the-books program the military never officially ended, or stem from a bureaucratic accident leaving a high security posting operating in permanent blackout for the last three generations. A minor bureau chief may find an object in the archives or a required survey that turns into an object of extreme veneration. The perfected standards of structural safety code might just naturally lead those eccentric employees in the field to found their own cult. Even small municipal governments have many posts civilians are completely unaware of that could someday birth a conspiracy. Governmental conspiracies, no matter their origin, can all rely on one thing: the implicit authority that comes with saying that they're with the government. Often, conspiracies hiding within government institutes have connections to other agencies who, even if totally unaware of the conspiracy, are still obligated to respect bureaucratic protocol. Thus, even a conspiracy with no expertise in a field can easily find someone who does.

Corporate

A corporate conspiracy may be a small portion of a larger corporate group or an entire corporation secretly engaging in illicit experiments to enrich themselves. Conspiracies exist in every field of production, from contractors doing cleanup for others to high finance managing. With the infinite novelty of capitalism comes a horrific market ecosystem for conspiracies. No two corporate conspiracies approach their take on Divergence the same way, and while many may have started as groups driven by the bottom line, that can radically alter as they establish themselves. Some conspiracies, founded as research efforts trying to understand the full possibilities of a medical breakthrough, transform into a zealous association of augmentation obsessives. Others attempt to cover up an unfortunate side effect of creating cutting edge alloys

from a dimensional rift, but can't help but think of the possibilities of making viable human colonists for such a place. The resources of a corporate conspiracy depend highly on the size of the corporation and how much sway they hold over the company. A rogue department may be running on a shoestring budget trying to fund their own hidden activities with their intended purpose. By contrast, a corporation entirely devoted to a conspiracy has more money than sense to throw at whatever problems come their way.

Cult

Many conspiracies have aspects of a religion, but a cult conspiracy was a religion before it ever entered the Web of Pain. It may have even once been part of a larger ordained religion or it may have been a new religious movement. Some cults become conspiracies by invoking or trafficking with alien or godlike beings discovered by their members. Other cults, due to their isolationist practices, stumble on the remains of old conspiracies, something they can use to make the faithful stronger and better. Some are simply in the wrong place at the right time, their secret knowledge a matter of coincidence rather than piety. Religious conspiracies are less connected to the rest of the world than other groups in the Web of Pain. With some glaring exceptions, a cult conspiracy relies more on its community of faith than easy access to the wealth of a national government or corporate finance. Their strengths lie in the community of faith, both their service and also a testament to the cult's ability to present themselves as charismatic diplomats.

High Society

The saying goes that idle hands are the devil's playthings, and few are less occupied than the upper echelons of society. Conspiracies that take root in high society may be the result of boundary pushing hedonism or directly responsible for a family existing in high society at all. Every old money family has to start somewhere, and not all of them can claim to be descended from kings and landed gentry. A high society conspiracy may start as innocently as being the patron of a researcher as an object of curiosity and amusement or start as violently as covering up the death of a gated community's favored son. Conspiracies operating in high society don't operate by the same rules as other people — most think of consequence as something to be faced by others. Whether they were born to the way of life or clawed their way up to it, the conspiracy members have been promised success by any means necessary.

Criminal

A conspiracy from criminal origins has never been on the right side of the law. For the conspiracy, working behind covers and in coded language has always just been business as usual. The only difference is now they're trading human body parts with an antediluvian entity for relics dredged up from an endless pit. While some of the problems remain the same for criminal conspiracies, especially when it comes to law enforcement, they suddenly have very new ways of dealing with them — allies willing to disappear any problem for insight into their secrets and fascinating toys that break the old game of cops and robbers. What criminal conspiracies lack in legitimate power to abuse they make up for in practical know-how and sometimes more relaxed ethical rubric than people coming from "legitimate" society.

Motivations

Conspiracies are human institutions, and so they share the diverse motivations of the people who share membership in them.

Some seek knowledge, either for its own sake or because of its potential to benefit humanity — or so they tell anyone who will listen. Their curiosity invariably leads them to secret and forbidden lore, propelling them to inhuman acts. For them, triggering the Divergence and subjecting Deviants to invasive study are unfortunate and necessary sacrifices made in the name of progress.

Other conspiracies are driven by the dynamics of power — whether political, financial, military, or religious. They might seek to maintain the status quo or abolish it, to elevate themselves or merely overthrow those who currently sit on the throne. The power they seek might be one they once had but lost, or they may be new entrants in the great games. Without exception, they believe themselves natural arbiters of who should have power and how it should be used. Such conspiracies permit themselves to create or recruit Remade (forcibly, if necessary), and they expect the Broken to obey them without question.

A handful of conspiracies begin with good intentions. Their founders took in runaway Deviants and hid them from abusive Progenitors. Or they invited Remade to use their remarkable abilities to do some good in the world, offering fair wages and at-will employment. Most do not last long, quickly running afoul of conspiracies that do not hesitate to use blackmail, abduction, or murder to destroy their rivals and claim the Broken who were under their protection. Those that hope to survive need to get tough, to overcome their reluctance to resort to underhanded or violent means of furthering themselves. In consequence, even the most benign conspiracy invariably provides safe havens to a few bullies, sadists, or killers who are willing or eager to bloody their hands in furtherance of the conspiracy's goals.

By far the most common motivation is control. Everyone experiences the supernatural at least once in their lives. This encounter strips away all pretense that the world works as advertised and leaves behind deep feelings of helplessness. Although many work to forget, not all walk away completely. Some seek out the creatures and powers lurking in the shadows, first to understand, and then to command. For such conspiracies, the Remade are the weapons they forge to defend against, defeat, and ultimately eradicate the monsters that hide in the world. Although many profess to do so on the behalf of all of humanity, most settle for merely protecting themselves.

Methodologies

Each Deviant is unique, and each conspiracy that manages to unlock the secrets of Divergence attains it through its own methods. However, patterns emerge.

Many attempt to augment human beings with technological components, replacing soft flesh with designer plastics and biocompatible metals. Others use technology to try to cheat death with solid state computing bricks to take over for the human nervous system that they've helpfully shut down. The use of technology is not limited simply to invasive surgery and prosthesis. A conspiracy may simply need test subjects for their matter transmitter or to see what exactly the side effects of supra dimensional radiation are. Others still have a variety of therapies, surgeries, procedures, drugs, tinctures, and infusions that are ready for living human flesh.

At the other end of the spectrum are conspiracies that need a vessel for occult biology, energy, or relics, someone who can hold something, either literally or metaphysically. They create Deviants with rituals, artifacts, and a slapdash occult method designed more to the conspiracy's goals than as a functioning world view. They implant the eggs of things that live outside the world in the brains of victims and invite lemures into the ragged shadows of unwitting volunteers. Their

created Deviants are the unfortunate side effect of attempting true substantiation of otherworldly allies and objects of worship alike. The human body is simply the gate through which the true divine was supposed to pass, not be arrested like so much ancient plumbing.

Then there are the conspiracies that have by coincidence or design located the cracks in the walls of the world. Designers of cognitive behavioral therapy that regresses a human being physically to an animal form, unwritten fictions that play out in their readers' heads as alternative lives, a one-time telephone call with the creator — *their* creator — spelling out their destiny as plain as a straight line. These are the works of visionaries and monsters alike, which seem to have little grounding in either scientific fact or the magics of the world. They are simply oddities which leave their heavy mark on anything that touches them, inexplicable and esoteric even to those that wield them.

Some conspiracies are scavengers, incapable of causing Divergence in victims, or unwilling to do so. These go out of their way to recruit from other groups in the Web of Pain, whether by subterfuge, force, or contractual agreement. Some cast themselves as charities or as enemies of Progenerative conspiracies with whom they secretly have an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship, redirecting the destructive energy of Renegades into more constructive projects as Devoted, reinforcing the Web of Pain. Others are obsessive collectors of inexplicable phenomena.

Dependencies

No conspiracy can truly stand entirely on its own. Organizations form dependencies on each other in the Web of Pain, dependent on others to assist them and feed desires the nascent conspiracies can't reliably get on their own. Most conspiratorial alliances form over a simple need for resources. A fresh supply of cadavers does not grow on trees, but a mafia-owned crematorium is more than willing to supply them. This is especially true for conspiracies whose obsessions intersect in novel ways, coming to agreements to aid each other through material exchanges. These ties allow groups that would normally risk their safety to gain materials to instead trade within the Web of Pain. A government conspiracy, while fully capable of gaining access to signals intelligence, might find it difficult to justify their attempts to move a ton of phosphorous across the country — but a corporate conspiracy has no problem doing that as a favor.

Safety is not always a given in the shadows. Conspiracies hide themselves to avoid reprisal and judgement from the outside world for their actions, but this survival strategy makes them vulnerable to other things that lurk there. Beyond vengeful creations, many conspiracies have good reason to fear other members of the Web of Pain. What may seem perfectly harmless to one organization another might regard as heresy. All it takes is a few of these crisis points to make one overzealous conspiracy take a swing at another. Similarly, more successful organizations win the enmity of jealous rivals. Strong alliances discourage outright war between rival conspiracies, forcing them to engage in diplomacy or, at worst, espionage.

More than anything, conspiracies look for kindred groups that comprehend their drives and philosophies. Of course, the concepts kinship can form over can be troubling, ranging from fraudulent psychological disciplines to similar ghoulish political leanings. Conspiracies often tie themselves to ideologically aligned groups even if they're not necessarily to their advantage. To seek community is human, and conspiracies, despite the brutalities they inflict on others, are ultimately human groups. Academics in the Web of Pain still desire the praise and insight of

peers, religious leaders seek commonalities in disparate faiths, and laypeople still look for others who understand their reasons for harvesting the dead for a living.

Conspiracy Traits

In **Deviant: The Renegades**, conspiracies as organizations play a large role in pursuing the Remade, not just as individual agents but also an organization wielding wealth and influence to bring home their prodigal creations. In game terms, each conspiracy has Traits like a character.

Standing

All conspiracies have an advantage called **Standing** which is representative of the material and supernatural power of those subordinate to the conspiracy's leadership, as well as their prominence within the Web of Pain. As Standing increases, the conspiracy wields greater power to achieve its goals, including bringing Renegades to heel.

Standing ranges from 1 to 10 dots. Those rare conspiracies with more than five dots of Standing are difficult to discover and dangerous when threatened. They have far more resources to burn through to cover up a problem and have almost always progressed further in their own mysterious goals.

Standing determines the starting number of **Nodes** (areas of influence) and **Icons** (special capabilities) a conspiracy has, as well as the number of Attribute dots it has, its maximum rating in its Attributes, and the number of **conspiracy actions** it can take each chapter. A conspiracy can increase its Attributes and numbers of Nodes and Icons by completing **Projects** through **downtime actions**.

Standing and Scale

Standing often indicates how large and powerful a conspiracy is, as well as how far its reach extends beyond its base of operations. As a general rule:

Standing 1-2: Locally influential or regional but diffuse.

Standing 3-5: Regionally influential, or global but diffuse, or local but ubiquitous.

Standing 6-8: Globally influential, or regional but ubiquitous, or having a small presence in otherworldly places.

Standing 9-10: Global and ubiquitous or influential in otherworldly places.

TABLE

Standing	Maximum	Base Nodes*	Conspiracy Icons	Base Attribute Points*	Trait
1	3	1	8	5	1
2	5	1	10	5	1
3	7	2	12	7	2
4	9	2	14	7	2
5	11	3	16	9	3
6	13	3	18	9	3

7	15	4	20	12	4
8	17	4	22	12	4
9	18	5	24	15	5
10	21	5	26	15	5

* For each additional member of the cohort beyond the first who is pursued by the same conspiracy, increase the number of Attribute points by 2 and the number of Nodes by 1.

[END TABLE]

Nodes

Conspiracies can range in size from a few individual researchers to government entities employing thousands. This is represented by the conspiracy's Nodes, which are the specific capabilities and organizations that make up the conspiracy. Nodes are further divided by their function within the conspiracy into four categories: Hierarchical, Temporal, Exploitative, and Structural. The various Nodes of a conspiracy are connected by Linchpins, the individual character who represents the authority and effectiveness of their respective Nodes.

Hierarchical Nodes are the beating heart at the center of the conspiracy and include some of the most secretive members. These Nodes are the central nervous system of the organization, keeping their subordinate Nodes running according to conspiracy principles and choosing the best course of action for their future. The Linchpins of Hierarchical Nodes are the face of the Remade's suffering: charismatic CEOs, zealous demagogues, shadowy boards of directors, or even Devoted who have taken the conspiracy for their own.

Temporal Nodes are the conspiracy's material holdings and power in the world. These temporal holdings can be as varied as the conspiracy's themselves, such as ownership of all local news media, extreme financial wealth, trained combat personnel, or esoteric libraries. Linchpins of temporal Nodes could be Devoted, hunters of the most dangerous game, demagogue politicians, or publicly loathed financiers.

Exploitative Nodes are a conspiracy's ability to exploit and derive resources from the wider world. These Nodes are representative of their resources for manipulating the outside world as well as organizations that the conspiracy has sway in. This may be a ring of agents used for corporate espionage, the surgical teams that process test subjects, a relentless legal team, sleeper agents in law enforcement, or the blackmail held above a Deviant's family that prevents them from asking questions. Linchpins of exploitative Nodes may be the Progenitor responsible for the Remade's transformation, a barely controlled Feral infiltrator, a highly placed agent in law enforcement, or the ritual master of the conspiracy.

Structural Nodes are the logistical portions of the conspiracy, responsible for keeping it running. These Nodes represent the bureaucracy and diplomats that keep the conspiracy efficient internally as well as externally connected to the Web of Pain. This may be the human resources department of a corporation, crime scene cleaners, the accounting department performing financial fraud in the conspiracy's favor, underworld fixers that unite interested parties, a fleet of unmarked black vans, or unpaid graduate students. Structural Linchpins may be the administrator in charge of volunteer harvesting, a lead researcher for the conspiracy, a political officer responsible for weeding out dissent, a zealous loyalist looking to please their keeper, or a young ideologue responsible for internet recruiting.

Linchpin

Each Node has a **Linchpin** character who is the face for that part of the organization. Linchpins can be leaders of their particular sections of the conspiracy, memorable characters, or even just weak links in the conspiracy's hierarchy. These may be targets the cohort has yet to discover or some of the people the Renegades most vividly remember from their torturous time in captivity.

Icons

As conspiracies continue their experimentation into the unnatural and strange, they work tirelessly to expand their power and influence. Some make breakthroughs or discover objects that allow them to harness strange powers. Others use mundane means to wield undue influence over the institutions and populations that surround their centers of power. Mechanically, an Icon represents objects or individuals under the sway of the conspiracy that give them access to unique abilities or powers. Each Icon is attached to a specific Node in the conspiracy, and if that Node is destroyed or subverted the conspiracy loses access to that Icon.

Some examples of appropriate Icon abilities include:

- **Harmonious Community Interaction Algorithm:** Members of the Moderation Team offer specialized management training to all members of the conspiracy, teaching them how to direct the collective behavior of the common people. The conspiracy enjoys the 8-Again quality on relevant Finesse rolls, and its members gain one dot in the Fast-Talking Merit.
- **Unquestioning Populace:** The people of Providence do not talk about the conspiracy for fear of the Local Mafia. Attempts to interrogate witnesses regarding the conspiracy's activity within the city limits suffer a -2 penalty. The conspiracy's next surveillance roll enjoys a +2 bonus after any chapter during which the characters attempted to research the conspiracy by talking to local Baselines.
- **Pillars of the Community:** Members of the conspiracy's Community Outreach Team are active in local charities and other philanthropic endeavors — from fundraisers for first responders, to priceless gifts to local museums, to college scholarships for local students. This helps them appear to be good corporate citizens even during terrible scandals. Members of the Node add one dot to their effective Status whenever their past philanthropy might influence their audience. Once per chapter, as a conspiracy action, the Node can downgrade one point of lethal damage to the conspiracy's Association to bashing damage or heal a point of bashing damage.
- **Mnemonic Therapy Chamber:** Members of the conspiracy who work in the Dynamic Problem-Solving Department benefit from a Scar-free version of the Precognition 2 Variation. The Node's chief researcher benefits from Precognition 3, instead.
- **Stone Guardians:** If these strange Devoted have a name other than the one given to them by The Lumure Study Group, they have not yet found a way to express it to the conspiracy in their quiet language of enamel scraping enamel. Increase the effective bond rating of any Devoted associated with this Node by one step (Acquainted to Personal, or Personal to Obsessive). If already Obsessive, add a further 1 Attribute point, 4 dots of Skills, and 2 Magnitude of Variations.

Attributes

Conspiracies use a simplified set of the Power, Finesse, and Resistance categories instead of the usual nine Attributes.

Power describes the conspiracy's ability to get things done by itself or in the shortest amount of time possible. When a conspiracy uses Power, its actions are based on the Temporal Nodes that it has available to it. When a conspiracy wants to start a manhunt, needs to make a breakthrough and consequences be damned, wants a local ordinance passed now, or just needs somebody dead, it's utilizing Power.

Finesse describes the conspiracy's ability to leverage resources at its disposal and others'. When a conspiracy uses Finesse, its actions are based on the Exploitative Nodes that it has available to it. When a conspiracy wants to manipulate others, synthesize the work of its researchers, or play other conspiracies against each other, it's utilizing Finesse.

Resistance describes the conspiracy's resolve in their actions, loyalty, and willingness to do whatever it takes to complete their goals. When a conspiracy uses Resistance, its actions are based on the Structural Nodes that it has available to it. When a conspiracy needs to purge the organization of whistleblowers, safely absorb new discoveries into their worldview, or perform experiments far in excess of anything they've attempted before it's utilizing Resistance.

Conspiracies begin with 8 dots of Attributes to place in Power, Finesse, and Resistance. They then add bonus Attributes for Threat Response, gaining two dots for each Standing and two dots for each additional player Deviant associated with the conspiracy. No Attribute can be raised higher than the maximum rating for a conspiracy of its Standing. Each Attribute starts at zero before dots are applied but must be raised to at least 1. Conspiracies do not have Skills, but also don't suffer unskilled penalties.

Conspiracy Actions

The amount of force a conspiracy can bring to bear on the Remade changes with its Standing. Minor conspiracies are forced to focus on one or two avenues of retrieval, while influential ones can make the Broken's life a living hell. Mechanically, a conspiracy has a limited number of **conspiracy actions** they may take against the Deviants in a chapter based on their Standing. This trait also informs the number of downtime actions (p. XX) the conspiracy is able to take.

A conspiracy action creates a short-term narrative complication for the cohort. This could be sending a capture or elimination team against the Deviants, but could just as easily involve blackmail against their loved ones, psychological warfare, or exposing the Renegades to public scrutiny. See page XX for more detail on the mechanics of conspiracy actions.

Anchors

Conspiracies have a **Virtue** and **Vice**, which represent the conflicting drives within the organization. Virtues represent the defining attitude towards sacrifice to further their goals such as Zealous or Remorseless. A conspiracy with the Virtue of Zealous follows the Principles of their group, believing the benefits of the sacrifices far outstrip the harm. Vices represent what the organization considers permissible indulgences in thought or action that could be actively harmful to the conspiracy's goals. Vices are often expressed as things like Truthful or Compassionate. A conspiracy with Truthful is an open and sharing community that genuinely believes in the conspiracy's beliefs, and its members find it difficult to keep their work secret from their loved ones — for good or ill.

Principles

Each conspiracy has three defining statements of founding philosophy called **Principles**, which are the guiding mission statements of the conspiracy. All are long-term goals and are rarely challenged as long as the conspiracy feels safe in its current status quo. Only aggressive action by Renegades or rival conspiracies is likely to force the Principles into conflict. Familiarity with a conspiracy's Principles can provide the Broken with the leverage they need to fight it.

Characters may discover Principles through play and narrative. As the cohort begins to map and dismantle the conspiracy, they gain an understanding of the desires and drives of their tormentors. The Storyteller may choose to reveal Principles after the successful cooption or destruction of a conspiracy's Node.

Challenging Principles

Conspiracies are comfortable predators by nature, content to remain at the center of their webs of influence, waiting to exploit, torture, and destroy those who stumble onto them. Both the machinations of other conspiracies and the actions of Renegades in pursuit of revenge can challenge the very Principles a conspiracy is founded on.

Each of the following can challenge a conspiracy's Principles:

- **Stress:** The conspiracy begins a new action past their action limit.
- **Loss:** The opposition destroys a Node with accompanying major loss of human life or by eliminating its Linchpin.
- **Exposure:** The conspiracy has been exposed to the larger world either through one of the covert agents being weeded out or a former member of the organization blowing the whistle.
- **Conflict:** The conspiracy is brought into active war with another conspiracy in the Web of Pain.

When a Principle is challenged it creates a **crisis point** within the conspiracy that is resolved as a downtime action (p. XX).

Conspiracy Creation

At the beginning of a **Deviant: The Renegades** chronicle, every Remade cohort is being pursued by at least one conspiracy. This section provides a step-by-step breakdown of the process, along with guidelines for creating a conspiracy and their Web of Pain.

Note these are guidelines walk through the process of creating a single conspiracy. If a cohort is being pursued by multiple conspiracies it will be necessary to go through the process several times. Rules for running multiple conspiracies can be found on p. XX.

Step One: Concept

The first step to creating a conspiracy is to decide with the players what kind of organization you're creating. You probably have some idea of who the conspiracies are by the time you begin this process. If the chronicle features an Invasive whose body is suffused with Bronze Age analog computers, they probably came from a conspiracy who has some interest in ancient technology. Are they doing this for occult purposes looking to make a mechanical oracle? Is the conspiracy looking to advance their own cutting-edge cybernetics with ancient secrets lost to the eons?

Consider also what role the conspiracy plays in the Web of Pain. If the chronicle features multiple conspiracies with similar backgrounds, such as several conspiracies enmeshed in the military industrial complex, this will create a very different dynamic than the unlikely union of rogue surgeons, the military industrial complex, and a fraternal brotherhood of occultists. This may be desired if the players want a game of conspiracies that see each other as fertile ground for conquest the moment they've fixed the security risk posed by the Remade. Consider what each conspiracy brings into the Web of Pain and if that's the sort of story you want to create. Is the chronicle about the unexpected alliances of the Web of Pain pitting the troupe against a truly bewildering group of antagonists or focusing on the backbiting and cruelty of corporate conspiracies? Speak with the troupe about what sort of group they're looking to have their vengeance against.

*Alice is storytelling a short chronicle of **Deviant: The Renegades** for her friends Arran, Luke, and Monika. Her friends have all decided for the time being the main conspiracy the story will be focusing on is Luke's corporate researchers, a profit-before-ethics company who has earned itself a prominent place in the Web of Pain peddling the secret of Divergence to others. Monika and Arran playing Amanda and Miguel have decided that, for the time being, their own Progenitors have other projects to deal with, and are not pursuing the cohort. Besides, the conspiracy really has it out for Arran's character after he smashed up one of their labs. That is already a strong concept, and Alice decides she'll build that out into something suitably intimidating. The name for the conspiracy comes to mind almost immediately: Omics Enterprises, the sort of bland corporate naming that an unsuspecting person would forget almost immediately.*

Step Two: Standing and Determine Threat Response

At the start of the chronicle, each active conspiracy's Standing ranges from 1 to 6, depending on the threat level (p. XX). Conspiracies introduced later in the chronicle can have a Standing from 1 to 10, depending on the Standing of current conspiracies and the means by which they were introduced (p. XX).

Conspiracies with multiple Renegades in their sights tend to be more potent and to have more resources to bring to bear. If multiple Deviants are pursued by the same conspiracy, then for each additional Deviant add two dots during Attribute allocation and one additional Node during conspiracy creation.

Having worked through character creation with her friends already, Alice knows they've decided to start at the Invasion threat level. Looking it up, Alice makes a note that the conspiracy will be starting at Standing 4, and because there are two additional Deviants she'll get four more Attribute dots and two extra Nodes to play with. Her friends were looking for a challenge, and Omics Enterprises is going to be scary enough to give them one.

TABLE

Threat Level	Conspiracy Standing
Mutation	1
Hyperplasia	2
Dysplasia	3
Invasion	4

Metastasis	5
Metamorphosis	6

END TABLE

TABLE

Additional Deviants	Additional Points	Additional Nodes
1	2	1
2	4	2
3	6	3
4	8	4

END TABLE

Step Three: Principles and Anchors

Choose three Principles for the conspiracy. These are the foundational concepts that outline the organization’s reason for existing. Principles at a glance give a summary of the sort of organization the conspiracy is and further differentiate two separate conspiracies that otherwise both are interested in genetic engineering and corporate profiteering. Additionally, at this step choose a Virtue and a Vice for the conspiracy that are evocative of the individuals within the conspiracy.

Choosing Principles and Anchors should be a collaborative process between the Storyteller and players. These provide context for what makes the conspiracy tick and why it pursues the cohort. They also give the Renegades a tool for hitting the enemy where it hurts most.

Luke’s background gives Alice an idea for the conspiracy’s first Principle: “Profit is a Reason unto Itself,” which the rest of the troupe agrees on easily, knowing that the only thing that guides Omics Enterprises is the largest return on their investment. The troupe considers what they know about Omics and decide that the next two Principles will be “I Before Us” and “In with the New.” The conspiracy is ruthlessly self-interested and also true neophiles, always looking to improve themselves — just not ethically.

For Virtue and Vice, they consider what exactly counts as a Virtue for this group of people, but decide on Diligent. Members of the conspiracy are willing to sacrifice by working hard and long at their jobs to get ahead of the others in the office. For a Vice, they choose Selfish, which is fully indulged by the corporate culture of the conspiracy but does make them rather vulnerable to petty office politics that can have lethal consequences in the Web of Pain.

Step Four: Nodes and Linchpins

Nodes inform some of the most prominent tools and resources at hand for the conspiracy. Each Node is defined as a physical location or a social organization that is either a component of the conspiracy or secretly influenced by the conspiracy. Then, each Node is classified as a Hierarchical, Temporal, Exploitative, or Structural Node, depending on its function within the conspiracy. For more information on the Node classifications, see p. XX.

Each player whose character is connected to the conspiracy should have an opportunity to define one of its Nodes (including Linchpin). This is a Node with which the character has had direct

contact, whether prior to his Divergence, soon after, or more recently (such as one he is currently assessing as a potential target for his wrath). The Storyteller decides on the nature of any of the other Nodes and their Linchpins.

Alice looks up the number of starting Nodes for a Standing 4 conspiracy and considers carefully what sort of abilities a conspiracy like Omics Enterprises would have. She already knows that Luke and Monika want to use the extra Nodes Amanda and Miguel bring to mark down representatives from their respective Progenitors, and Arran determines that destroying one of the conspiracies laboratories has made his character painfully aware of Omic's new security team (formed after Arran's character's break-in), so Alice has eight more to play with. Alice decides first-off she must have a Node representing the conspiracy's leadership, so she puts Omics Board of Directors down right away. The researchers are the characters Lee personally encountered, but the true individuals responsible for his suffering is Omic's leadership.

Next, Alice decides the sort of things a malevolent science startup needs to be able to do. She writes down two rival research labs, a PR department, and a corporate legal team. For the Linchpins she notes down the two feuding scientists, both of whom would be happy to see the other disappear, a security officer with a score to settle with Arran, the two-faced managing director of Omic, and a corporate lawyer whose main job is blackmailing those who raise a fuss about disappearances. She considers where else the conspiracy has its fingers and decides that Lee was turned over by the cops for a reason. Alice writes down a corrupt local precinct that's getting citywide acclaim for their tough on crime stance, with a crooked station chief more than happy to suggest some places to dispose of the unwanted. Deciding that Omics has a heavier hand on the city than just the police, Alice also writes down the city council with a city counselor Linchpin who is secretly sitting on the Omics' board as a minor partner, the city's records department with a corrupt coroner who covers up mysterious deaths, and a hospital whose chief administrator sees to the care and maintenance of Omic's Devoted. With only one Node left, Alice decides that the conspiracy needs something a little stranger to emphasize their status in the Web of Pain. For her final Node Alice writes down a Temporal Node she labels as the Urban Renewal Efforts with the Linchpin of the Crawler. Lee has become an urban legend in the time since he was released, but that doesn't mean all the Needle Man stories are necessarily about him. Alice decides the conspiracy managed to headhunt a Deviant from a much more powerful conspiracy they'd prefer not to anger and have won its affection by allowing it free reign against anyone they can't threaten with town hall or a lawsuit.

Finally, Alice looks over her Nodes and assigns each of them a classification so she knows what sorts of actions she can perform with them. It's obvious to Alice that the board of the directors is the Hierarchical Node of the conspiracy. Without them, the entire place breaks apart. She marks down the security team, urban renewal, the legal team, and one of the labs as Temporal Nodes. Next, she decides the city council, cops, records department, hospital, and other lab will all be Exploitative Nodes. Alice considers making the PR team one as well but decides they're a Structural Node instead. After all, everyone already expects a big corporation to be a little sleazy. The PR team isn't for the benefit of the outside world but controlling the people already inside Omic's web. With all of that out of the way, she assigns her two bonus Structural Nodes as connections to Amanda and Miguel's conspiracies with Linchpins of underground sales associates for the respective conspiracies.

Step Five: Icons

Each conspiracy begins with a number of Icons dependent on their Standing, each tied to one of their Nodes. Before the chronicle begins, the Storyteller and players should work together to create half the Icons (rounded up) with which the conspiracy begins, creating their own or using the examples on p. XX. The Storyteller decides the nature of any remaining Icons.

Now that Alice has created her conspiracy, she decides on the Icons that feel appropriate to the organization. Omics Enterprises gets two Icons at the beginning of the chronicle. Arran suggests that Omics has just rolled out a new weapon suite for its security team. The troupe settles on giving the Cutting Weaponry Lash (Deadly, Insidious [Stamina], Soporific) 2 Variation to members of that Node. They're not going let somebody smash up their labs without seeing the power of genomics.

For the second Icon, Alice elevates the Crawler, attaching it to the Urban Renewal Efforts Node and increasing its effective bond by two steps. The Crawler isn't just a powerful Loyalist. He also has a personal connection to Lee, seeing the Renegade as his rightful prey, so Alice builds him as a Devoted with an Obsessive bond and grants him a further +1 Attribute dot, +4 Skill dots, and +2 Magnitude of Variations. For the time being the conspiracy has the Crawler on a short leash, but it's only a matter of time before the powerful Remade make the conspiracy desperate enough to let go.

Undefined Nodes, Linchpins, and Icons

While it can be useful for the Storyteller if she has all the details of a conspiracy figured out before the chronicle begins, this isn't a necessity. Especially when dealing with large, high-Standing conspiracies, the Storyteller may choose to leave one or several Nodes, Linchpins, and Icons undefined until such time as an appropriate one presents itself.

Step Six: Attributes

Conspiracies begin with 8 dots of Attributes to place in Power, Finesse, and Resistance. They then add bonus Attributes for Threat Response, gaining two dots for each Standing and two dots for each additional player Deviant associated with the conspiracy.

Alice has 18 Attribute dots and considers the sort of organization that Omics Enterprise is. She decides that, as a powerful research corporation, they're going need to be well rounded in both Finesse and Power but their Resistance might be lacking due to the conspiracy's self-interested office culture. She settles on Power and Finesse of seven with a Resistance of four.

Step Seven: Building the Web of Pain

The conspiracy gains a number of connections to other conspiracies equal to its number of Structural Nodes. Additionally, the Storyteller may choose to give one direct connection between the conspiracy's Hierarchical Node and another conspiracy, indicating a deeply entrenched ally.

Alice looks at the conspiracy as it currently stands and makes note of the two conspiracies she knows Omic Enterprises acts as an intermediary for. Then she considers if there is an external connection between her last Structural Node and who it might lead to. After some consideration Alice decides that Omic's PR Manager has a connection with another smaller conspiracy, the House of Mammon, which is looking to insinuate itself into Omic Enterprises and take it over from the inside. That should provide some interesting fireworks if the Remade ever discover it. Finally, she considers if the Hierarchical Node is subordinate to another conspiracy, but decides

that the board of directors is acting independently: the chronicle is already going to be wild enough with three other conspiracies just waiting in the wings.

Playing with Multiple Conspiracies

Many **Deviant: The Renegades** chronicles will feature only a single conspiracy as the cohort's current antagonist. Although this conspiracy may have tenuous connections with other conspiracies, the cohort will not need to deal with the rest of the Web of Pain directly until they have dealt with their current enemies. Some chronicles, however, will include the machinations of multiple conspiracies with some frequency, whether because the players' characters were not made by the same one or because the chronicle's setting suggests multiple active conspiracies.

When running a chronicle with multiple conspiracies, the Storyteller should choose one to be the focus of each story. A conspiracy in focus functions normally, while the other, inactive conspiracies usually act in the background, busy as they are with concerns other than the Renegades. Inactive conspiracies do not perform conspiracy actions during the chapter and only generate one Effort during downtime.

The exception to this is when the focus of the current chapter is a war between two (or, more rarely, more than two) conspiracies. In this case, each conspiracy is limited to a single conspiracy action directed toward the cohort. The rest of their actions must be directed at maneuvering against one another.

Temporal or Exploitative?

Sometimes the difference between Temporal and Exploitative Nodes can be hard to decide, especially when it comes to armed mercenaries, which many Remade discover conspiracies seem heavily invested in. A Temporal Node indicates the mercenaries are part of the conspiracy, a corporate troubleshooting team that is invested in the principles of the organization or at least the paycheck provided by it. Dynamic Solution's temporal Node of Dynamic Problem Solving represents their own in-house PMC, a variety of veteran operatives who aren't just employees, they're also customers. An Exploitative Node by comparison represents a well-placed agent or sway within a group that allows the conspiracy to get others to do the dirty work for them. For example, the Fraternity of Saturn's exploitative Node of Brother Allen Pond FBI representing the fraternity's ability to place their quarry on a variety of wanted lists and allow that agency to solve the problem for them.

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Optional Rule: Mapping the Conspiracy

Instead of keeping conspiracies as loose agglomerations of Nodes and abilities the troupe may instead choose to track the individual portions of a conspiracy physically. During conspiracy creation, the Storyteller chooses a basic structure for the conspiracy. Conspiracies act like a road map, with Renegades only able to pick up leads on the "bottom" facing portion of the conspiracy, the rest being too obscured from the world by cloak and dagger to be easily investigated. However, insulated from the outside world, it becomes more difficult for a conspiracy to use a Node for action. For every level of connection from the exterior of the map the conspiracy takes a -1 penalty to use that Node for actions, but any attempt by the cohort to research that Node suffers the same penalty. Under this rule each Node must be connected either

to a Structural Node or a Hierarchical Node as these are the glue that keep a conspiracy running together. Some example forms conspiracies may take include:

- **Hierarchical Pyramids:** These organizations are stepped pyramids with the Hierarchical Node at the top and branching layers of Nodes connected to several reliable Structural Nodes. Conspiracies in this form have various tiers that may rarely interact with each other or even understand what the level above them does with only the layers closest to the Hierarchical Node understanding the true scope of the order.
- **Alliances:** This conspiracy is either one or two straight horizontal lines of interconnected Nodes. By far the least communicative and least organized conspiracy type these are often cells or loose confederacies of individual actors working together to keep each other safe in the Web of Pain. A Hierarchical Node in this conspiracy represents either the founders that are keeping the conspiracy on task or an overall “commander” that gives objectives for each cell to complete at their own pace.
- **Overseers:** The conspiracy is a single Node in the center with a circle of Nodes ringing it. The most overbearing conspiracies sometimes it’s not enough to delegate to others. These conspiracies are the most vulnerable to losing their leadership and collapsing under their own weight when that presence is gone, however this centralized organization makes them excellent at interacting with the outside world. Sometimes larger forms of this conspiracy structure exist with an inner circle of Nodes that protect the Hierarchical Node.
- **Corporate Ladder:** This conspiracy is one or two vertical lines with the Hierarchical Node crowning it. This type of organization significantly distances the conspiracy’s leadership from threats though it does significantly limit the resources that can be utilized at a given time to solve the problem effectively.

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Using Conspiracies in Play

The following systems are used to model the actions of the conspiracy within the Web of Pain and in its pursuit of Renegades over the course of the chronicle.

Conspiracy Actions

Inside their webs of power, a conspiracy knows that given time and patience, it will complete its goals. The only things that stand in its way are the dual threats of discovery and the interference posed by Renegades. Conspiracy actions describe the ways the conspiracy brings its power to bear against the cohort to capture, control, or stop them in their tracks. Unlike downtime actions (p. XX), these nearly all revolve around the players’ characters, seeking to affect them in some way even if they are not the ones directly at risk.

A conspiracy may push itself past its available resources to achieve more aims. However, doing so invites serious consequences. **A conspiracy that begins a conspiracy action past its action limit takes 1 lethal damage and causes a challenge to their Principles (p. XX).**

All conspiracy actions are reliant on a surveillance roll which determines the overt response they are able to muster against the deviants.

Step One: Surveillance

At the beginning of every chapter, the conspiracy rolls for surveillance to see if they've managed to catch a hint of the player Remade in their dragnet. The actions of the characters during the previous chapter modify this roll, particularly if they involve Overt Variations, Scars, or Merits.

Surveillance

Dice Pool: Conspiracy Standing + Highest-rated Overt Variation or Scar activated/manifested in the previous chapter

Suggested Modifiers (total bonus/penalty cannot exceed +/-5): No Overt Variation/Scar used during current story (-5). Abandoned Loyalty Touchstone known to the conspiracy (-3). Living off the grid (-3). Homeless (-2). Recently changed residences (-1 for different building to -3 for new city). False identity (-1 for false name to -3 for new body). Unemployed (-1). Own a cellphone or car (+1). Recently harmed (+1) or destroyed (+3) a Node. Used an Overt Merit (+ half Merit dots of highest-rated Merit, rounded up, if one-time use; + full Merit dots if multiple uses of Overt Merits). Connected through social media (+2). Used modern information technology (+2). Had a steady job or bank account (+2). Checked into a hospital (+2). Rent an apartment (+2). Own a house (+3). Recently arrested (+3) or escaped custody (+5). Created a significant public scene involving Overt Variations/Scars (+3) or multiple such incidents (+5).

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Success: The conspiracy may take actions as normal against the cohort for the chapter.

Exceptional Success: The conspiracy's first action this chapter does not count against their maximum actions.

Failure: The conspiracy may only take actions against known accomplices and allies of the cohort.

Dramatic Failure: The conspiracy may take no actions against the cohort or their allies, this chapter.

Omics Enterprises is looking to reacquire their wayward creations, now that they've seen just how effective those failed experiments can be when properly motivated. Their previous surveillance actions have all failed. The Renegades have been very good at covering their tracks. This chapter, however, Alice the Storyteller rolls four successes for the conspiracy's surveillance. They've caught scent of the trail.

Step Two: Threat Response

The conspiracy selects from its available Nodes the kind of intrusion it is attempting to throw into the Deviants' plans. A threat response must be logically drawn from the conspiracy's available resources and influences.

Alice looks over Omics Enterprises' Nodes and decides they're going to go through their crooked law enforcement to deal with this problem. This is a job for subtlety and it draws much less attention if their agents deal with the Remade rather than their own private security.

The Best Defense

Conspiracies are reactive by nature, and they do not have unlimited resources to commit to threats. Each time one of the conspiracy's Nodes, Linchpins, or Projects

comes under attack by the Renegades, it counts as a conspiracy action. Attacking a conspiracy's concerns can therefore diminish its ability to pursue the cohort, and can even force it into a crisis point by bringing its total number of conspiracy actions above its safe limits.

Step Three: Establish the Structure

The Storyteller determines what complication the conspiracy seeks to visit upon the Renegades and how it intended for it to play out. A conspiracy attempting physical violence may send their armed enforcers to capture the cohort at their hideout, or maybe, having been tipped off about their break-in at a laboratory, sent a team to ambush them there. Conspiracies looking to influence allies of the Broken may send teams to pay off the erstwhile friends of a Deviant, or, more radically, kidnap them for hypnotic programming.

Ask the big questions of what a confrontation scene is going to look like. If a conspiracy is sending armed agents to face the cohort in broad daylight, consider what their goals are. Are they planning on their agents utilizing violence or using threats against their unaware families to force the Renegades to stand down?

After some consideration Alice decides that Omics has found hints of the neighborhood that the Remade are laying low in. Deciding the best course of action is flushing the rabbits from the brush, they tip off their owned officers and leave behind several bodies with conspicuous needle wounds. The conspiracy is planning on the officers bursting in on the Renegades and either taking them into custody or retrieving the bodies on the way to the city morgue.

Step Four: Create the Dice Pool

The Storyteller creates a dice pool based on the appropriate Attribute for the Node it is utilizing.

Conspiracy Action

Dice Pool: Attribute

Suggested Modifiers (total bonus/penalty cannot exceed +/-5): The Deviants are publicly known and feared (+3). Action is led by a Linchpin (+2). The conspiracy is cooperating with another organization (+1 to +3). Conspiracy has lost a Node or Linchpin this chapter (-1 to -3). Utilized Node is infiltrated by another conspiracy (-2). Using an inappropriate Node for the action (-2). Conspiracy is in revolt (-3).

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Success: The conspiracy creates the complication and sets the stakes for the outcome scene.

Exceptional Success: The conspiracy creates the complication and sets the stakes for the outcome scene. The conspiracy learns of a new potential target for future conspiracy actions.

Failure: The conspiracy action occurs, but the Deviants' players add a complication to the confrontation.

Dramatic Failure: As a failure. Additionally, the cohort gains intelligence on the shape of the conspiracy, learning of a Linchpin or Node location connected to the action.

Alice puts together her dice pool for Omics Enterprises attack. Because the Node is Exploitative and Omics is just guiding another organization (albeit an armed one) to the Renegades, she decides the Attribute should be Finesse, which is 7. Alice rolls five successes and takes note of what an exceptional success means: not only is the conspiracy's maneuver successful, but they learn something about the Deviants' lives from the action. Alice decides the police detectives casing the block run a license plate for one of the Remade's cars, only to find it belongs to Lee's sister. That's going to cause problems in the future.

If Omics had failed the conspiracy action, then the player cohort would have had a chance to modify the outcome of the action before resolving it.

Step Five: Determine the Warning

Each conspiracy action creates narrative indicators of the peril that is about to strike their intended target. For Deviants with their ear to the ground this can be a vital warning of trouble brewing in the short term. Even in secretive operations there are security leaks and accidents that expose the truth.

After some consideration Alice says that even though the police have kept tight-lipped about the discovered dead bodies, it has started trending on local social media, and especially about the police department's refusal to comment on them.

Step Six: Set the Stakes

The Storyteller determines the terms of the confrontation and what sort of action the conspiracy had planned. The Storyteller may announce the parameters of the action to the players such as violence, pursuit, diplomacy, infiltration, or theft. A conspiracy that is sending their trained soldiers anticipates violence, while one that is pulling a false flag operation to place a Devoted amongst the cohort is planning for there to be an infiltration. If the conspiracy failed in step four then instead the targeted characters get to add a complication to the stakes. Some examples include:

- The characters recognize an alternative way of resolving the confrontation. Such as talking down armed goons or shooting unarmed diplomats.
- The cohort gets the drop on the action, ambushing the operatives.
- The Remade establish a rapport with a Devoted or had a previously undiscovered connection with them, giving them much-needed intelligence on the conspiracy's Nodes or Projects.
- An infiltrator's indoctrination is not as successful as originally believed, giving the cohort the opportunity to make a powerful ally or at least do a good deed.
- Some aspect of the operation goes embarrassingly public, being covered by commentators in a hard-to-silence area like national news media or online.
- Operation-critical materials are accidentally left behind or are exposed to an unintended third party either sympathetic or completely unaware of the cohort.

Because Omics Enterprises rolled a success, Alice sets the stakes for the scene. She knows that Omics would prefer the Renegades alive but will settle for dead if that's what they can get. This chapter, the cohort chose their Conviction over their own safety and ignored the warnings in

order to discover more of the shadowy conspiracy. Alice decides complication rears up when the cohort has returned to their hideout to remove a bullet. She narrates the police getting the drop on the exhausted cohort as they stumble back to their hiding place and makes it clear they're in a position where their options look like arrest or another vicious fight with armed detectives.

If the conspiracy had failed their roll then the Remade would have been able to add a complication to the situation. They might consider making one of the detectives one originally responsible for having gotten rid of Lee in the first place, but clearly shocked seeing what has become of him. It could be the perfect opportunity for Lee to extract some payback, but it might give him the leverage they need to talk their way out of this.

Step Seven: Resolve Action

The Storyteller introduces a scene based on the stakes and response, and the players' characters address the complication it represents.

Square Peg, Round Hole

A conspiracy that's desperate may choose to take a conspiracy action with a Node that is completely unsuited for a task. A Linchpin character for an Exploitative Node in a hospital may find themselves required to assassinate a doctor they suspect of aiding fugitive Deviants with a Power action. A Progenitor from a Temporal Node may be tasked with inspiring his Manticore "children" into a killing fury with a Resistance action. A keeper of a cult's laws of a Structural Node may be put in the position of shepherding the zombie enforcers loaned by another conspiracy with a Power. When this happens the conspiracy action takes a -2 penalty.

Downtime Action

Unlike the individual Deviants who oppose them, a conspiracy has the luxury of being in more than one place at once. While tracking down a Renegade that has escaped their clutches may occupy some members of the conspiracy, others may continue the great work of the conspiracy: expanding their influence, gaining more power, or shattering more lives in the name of progress.

As a chronicle develops, a conspiracy naturally grows more powerful and influential if it isn't stopped. Downtime actions reflect this constant process of self-improvement.

Anatomy of Downtime Actions

Downtime resolves according to the following steps.

Step 1: Plan Projects

The Storyteller determines any long-term plans that the conspiracy is pursuing, such as the creation of new Icons, the pursuit of their own shadowy goals, or the subversion of the Renegade's allies to their own side of the war. If the conspiracy does not start a Project or invest their Effort into an ongoing Project, that Effort is lost.

Step 2: Generate Effort

The conspiracy generates Effort for each conspiracy action not taken this chapter. The conspiracy may suffer 1 lethal damage to their Association (p. XX) to generate additional Effort.

The Storyteller decides which Projects the conspiracy is currently working on. There is no limit on how many ongoing Projects the conspiracy may have, though they are limited in which they may complete by the amount of Effort they can reasonably generate.

Step 3: Resolve Crisis Points

If the actions or the Renegades (or the conspiracy exceeding its maximum number of conspiracy actions) challenged any of the conspiracy's Principles, this chapter, these are resolved now.

Step 4: Set the Stage (Optional)

Conspiracies are complex ecosystems of individuals with their own reasons for joining and who have very different views of their founding Principles. They are also, for the most part, objectively more reprehensible people than are the Renegades who oppose them. This optional rule gives the game a more cinematic television experience seeing the interior lives of the potentially large cast of human monsters who all consider themselves the protagonists of their own stories.

At the end of each chapter, each player takes on limited control of a single character in the service of the conspiracy. The Storyteller may choose to provide as wide or narrow a selection as she wishes. Linchpins and Conviction Touchstones are a good choice, but it could also include a member of the capture crew the Renegades gave the slip, a friend whom the conspiracy has convinced to betray one of the Remade, or even a witness to the Deviants' actions whom conspiracy members are interviewing.

The players then play out a brief conversation or scene involving these characters. This can highlight schisms in Principles, determine conspiracy strategy for the future, and show conspirator (and bystander) reactions to the exploits of the Renegades.

Projects

The pursuit and capture of Renegades is but one minor function of the greater founding principles of a conspiracy. When not trying to claim their wayward creations, most conspiracies have their own missions to accomplish, from acquiring a rival corporation to digging up the remains of their founder sealed beneath the governor's mansion.

Downtime actions further the long-term Projects the conspiracy is carrying out. The core of downtime actions is the generation of Effort, which is used to generate new influences and narrative effects for the conspiracy. Effort is the difference between an organization growing smoothly, and everything the conspiracy has worked for being pulled apart by their own vengeful creations.

Effort

A conspiracy generates Effort when it is not actively opposing or pursuing Renegades. For each conspiracy action unused by the conspiracy at the end of a chapter they generate 1 point of Effort. Effort can't be stockpiled to be spent later. They're either used for an ongoing Project immediately, or the excess labor is squandered by the conspiracy.

Once the conspiracy has put forth enough Effort, they may complete the Project.

Complexity

The Complexity of a Project indicates just how much Effort the conspiracy will need to put into the Project to bring it to fruition. Small Projects that barely affect the local population or only in small, esoteric ways may only merit a single point of Effort, while Projects that bring entire populations around to a conspiracy's way of thinking may require as many as 10. Once a conspiracy has spent enough Effort to complete the Project, the results of the Project go into effect at the beginning of the next chapter.

[BEGIN TABLE]

Complexity Example

1 Gain the temporary obedience of a group of people unrelated to the Renegades or a single member of their social network. Create or recruit a Manticore or Deviant appropriate to the conspiracy's Standing. Cause minor changes in the status quo, such as getting a symbol included in city iconography. Grant a Linchpin character access to three dots of Social Merit(s) appropriate to the relevant Node until the end of the chapter. Move an existing Icon from one of the conspiracy's Nodes to another. Assimilate a Node another conspiracy has abandoned.

3 Demand the loyalty of a large group of people unrelated to the Renegades or a single member of the players' characters' inner circle. Gain access to a new Icon. Cause substantial changes to the status quo, such as making a portion of conspiracy lore or belief a beloved character or saying.

5 Subsume a smaller organization or political entity into the conspiracy. Replace a previously lost Temporal, Exploitative, or Structural Node, complete with Linchpin (must be in some way connected to the conspiracy's current holdings). Cause significant alterations to the status quo, such as making a Principle a publicly tenable belief.

7 Subvert operatives in an organization that operates on a national scale. Replace a previously lost Hierarchal Node (complete with Linchpin). Cause serious changes to the status quo, such as normalizing open recruitment by the conspiracy.

10 Seize citywide control of local governance, operating freely and openly. Deploy an Icon with world-shaking properties. Cause major changes to the status quo, such as gaining the adoration and loyalty of the public or seizing control of a place of occult power from the supernatural creatures that laid claim to it. Create a new Node (complete with Linchpin) or increase an Attribute by one.

[END TABLE]

Projects and Nodes

Each Project is connected to a Node that narratively represents the group within the conspiracy finishing, guarding, or stewarding the Project until it comes to fruition. Once the conspiracy begins a Project, but before it comes into play, anything that destroys its connected Node disrupts the Project. This causes the loss of any Effort the conspiracy has already invested in the Project.

Resolving Crisis Points

By nature, conspiracies are resistant to change, confident in the elegance of their Principles. Some events, however, can inspire a collective crisis of faith known as a crisis point (p. XX).

Whenever a conspiracy faces a crisis point, in addition to suffering lethal damage to its Association (p. XX), the conspiracy must respond in one of the following ways:

- Replace one of its Linchpins with another.
- Shifts one dot of an Attribute to another.
- Lose a point of Effort from an existing Project.
- Suffer an additional 1 lethal damage to Association, which does not trigger a crisis point.

Narratively, these changes come about from the conspiracy attempting to maintain control in an increasingly disorganized environment. If the cohort had a direct hand in causing the crisis point, the Storyteller may allow them to choose the effect of the crisis point from the options above.

Conspiracy Versus Conspiracy

Although conspiracies often coexist peaceably and can benefit considerably from their relationships with other conspiracies, they sometimes come into conflict over territory and resources, including control over Deviants. A conspiracy that means a rival conspiracy harm has three ways of handling the conflict: sabotage, subversion, and war.

Sabotage

Sabotaging a rival conspiracy involves interfering with its ability to accomplish its goals — disrupting supply chains, intimidating employees, or passing along information about delicate Projects to hostile Renegades. This is a downtime action with no Complexity. Each point of Effort the saboteurs spend inflicts a point of bashing damage to the target's Association and uses one of the target's conspiracy actions, potentially inflicting lethal damage and a crisis point, if this pushes the target beyond its conspiracy action limit.

Subversion

The conspiracy attempts to compromise a rival slowly. This is a downtime action with a Complexity equal to the targeted organization's Standing, and it must target a Node the attacker is aware of (including ones connected via Structural Nodes). Successfully completing the Project replaces the Linchpin of the Node with a loyal agent. This also grants the attacking conspiracy knowledge of all the other Nodes connected to the subverted Node, offering future fronts in their war of subversion. The victim of a concerted subversion attack may be unaware of what is going on until only their leadership remains loyal to the conspiracy's Principles. Successfully compromising the last Hierarchical Node of a conspiracy allows the infiltrators two choices:

- Completely subsume the target conspiracy into their own, adding its Nodes and Icons to their conspiracy. If the subverted conspiracy's Standing is equal to or greater than the interloper's, the attacking conspiracy also gains one Standing, complete with additional Attributes.
- Place the target conspiracy on a leash connected to one of their Structural Nodes. In this case, the subordinate conspiracy becomes the puppet or catpaw of the attacker. The dominant conspiracy can direct the subordinate to take conspiracy actions on its behalf. Although these still count against the maximum number of conspiracy actions the dominant conspiracy can take, attacks or crisis points the subordinate conspiracy suffers do not normally impact the dominant conspiracy.

For example, if a Standing 3 conspiracy relegates a Standing 1 conspiracy to its puppet, it may demand that the subordinate take a conspiracy action on its behalf each chapter, leaving the puppet to suffer the consequences of that action while leaving itself a free conspiracy action to convert into Effort. It can instead force the subordinate conspiracy to take two conspiracy actions, but this causes the subordinate conspiracy to go over its action limit for the chapter, inflicting lethal damage to its Association and causing a crisis point. If the subordinate conspiracy was instead a Standing 5 conspiracy, the dominant conspiracy could only demand it take two conspiracy actions before the master conspiracy begins suffering Association damage and crisis points for exceeding its own action limits.

War

The conspiracy attempts to annihilate a rival. Going to war is significantly more dangerous for everyone involved. This is a downtime action with no Complexity. Instead, every point of Effort generated towards the war effort deals 1 lethal damage to the target's Association. The conspiracy can continue the war as long as they wish, until either the other conspiracy is completely destroyed or the organization is too weak to continue action.

The shadow wars of conspiracies are rarely one-sided affairs. Loyal officers on both sides suffer "accidents," precious libraries are torched, and expensive facilities that took time to create are vandalized. Both conspiracies may generate Effort towards destroying the other side. Lower-Standing organizations often have a hard time surviving a war with a conspiracy significantly larger than them, unable to muster the resources to hit them in enough places to really make the bigger group hurt.

War tends to end poorly for both conspiracies involved. Unless one conspiracy has the overwhelming advantage of size and situation, these conflicts can delay both conspiracies' goals and severely damage both groups. In the Web of Pain, these sorts of conflicts rarely stay private, either. Other connected conspiracies, both ally and enemy, join the conflict, some more than willing to take advantage of the chaos and some that want to ensure the peace no matter who they will have to put down.

Discovering the Conspiracy

The difficulty of pursuing revenge against a conspiracy is finding its independent parts. Except for the most hierarchically driven conspiracies, most are secretive and autonomous, operating in the shadows to avoid discovery. Renegades looking to dismantle their tormentors must first discover exactly how the organization is put together before they can fully strike back.

Deviants looking for a target to hit must attempt to discover a vulnerable or exposed portion of the conspiracy's Nodes. This process adheres to the normal rules for investigations (see p. XX), but special modifiers often apply to research a conspiracy or one of its Nodes.

Suggested Modifiers (total bonus/penalty cannot exceed +/-5): The Node's Linchpin is the Progenitor of a member of the cohort (+3). Cohort has the aid of a whistleblower (+3). The cohort was the target of a recent conspiracy action originating from the Node (+2). Node operates in public view (+1). Target is a Hierarchal Node (-1). Conspiracy has never been targeted by a conspiracy action originating from the Node (-1) or its conspiracy (-2). Conspiracy takes special care to conceal the Node's existence from the public (-2). The lead is years old (-3).

Node Destruction and Subversion

A Deviant looking to put some capability of a conspiracy on hold for the immediate future is attempting to destroy a Node. While the concept is simple in theory, in practice, it may require radical action. For many sorts of Nodes, such as research labs, libraries, or front businesses, this may require vandalism, arson, or even violence. Against infiltrators and planted double agents in other organizations, it may demand public exposure, blackmail, or forcing them out with scandal.

A Node is considered destroyed when it is no longer accessible to the conspiracy or no longer able to serve its intended application. Alternatively, if the Linchpin of a Node is taken out of action (whether killed, abducted, or convinced to abandon the conspiracy), the Node is similarly destroyed, unable to function without their supervision. When a Node is destroyed, the conspiracy takes 1 lethal damage to its Association and loses access to that Node for all actions, as well as control of any Icons or Projects attached to it. This may permanently stall downtime actions if the conspiracy has no sort of specialized abilities to replace it.

Instead of destroying a Node, a Deviant may try to subvert it. If a Deviant gains leverage over a Linchpin, whether with blackmail or threats, they may take partial control of the Node. A subverted Node functions as normal for the conspiracy but also provides any benefits of the location to the Deviant, allowing them to make use of the Node's resources, administrative access, or position to help their own lonely crusade.

Project Discovery and Prevention

Merely thwarting a conspiracy's attempts to capture, control, or neutralize the cohort may consume much of a Renegade's time, but these little victories do nothing to stop the enemy from achieving its goals. The cohort may uncover one of the conspiracy's Projects entirely by accident or after careful investigation:

- **Inquiry:** Using the Investigation system (p. XX) to uncover a potential lead on the conspiracy's current actions.
- **Serendipity:** A lead is discovered from a failed conspiracy action (p. XX), giving some clue of what the conspiracy is up to.
- **Informant:** The cohort becomes aware of any Projects that are connected to or rely on a subverted Node to function.

Every Project within a conspiracy is connected to a specific Node until its completion and implementation. This may represent the team of technicians putting the finishing touches on the newest invention, the kennels newly bred Manticores are stored in until they're let loose, or even a marketing firm in charge of the memetic plague the conspiracy is about to unleash. Destroying this Node before the Project's completion can set back the plan or even permanently stop it. When a Node connected with a conspiracy Project is destroyed, the conspiracy loses all Effort they have invested in it.

Harm, Healing, and Purges

Harming a conspiracy takes more effort than just harming its agents. A conspiracy tracks damage using Association, a measure of the size and loyalty of its following. Conspiracies have Association equal to 3 + Resistance. Association boxes act like Health boxes (p. XX) when the conspiracy suffers damage.

Instead of corresponding to physical damage, Association tracks how many members the conspiracy has and how loyal they are to the cause. Bashing damage indicates fear or worry for personal safety, distracting individuals from their jobs. Lethal damage reflects a growing panic with the conspiracy's mission or the member's safety. Aggravated damage is outright factional war within the organization, as members of the conspiracy try to escape the life. Common sources of Association damage include the following:

- **Bashing:** Subversion by an enemy conspiracy; Renegades carry out a significant and successful act of sabotage against the conspiracy or intimidation of its members
- **Lethal:** Wartime attacks by an enemy conspiracy; Renegades destroy an Exploitative, Structural, or Temporal Node, whether by eliminating its Linchpin, carrying out a major attack, or exposing its crimes to the public; conspiracy exceeds its conspiracy action limit for the chapter
- **Aggravated:** The conspiracy began the preceding chapter with an Association track filled with lethal damage and did not perform a purge to clear it; Renegades destroy a Hierarchal Node

Once a conspiracy's Association track is filled with lethal damage, it enters a vulnerable state of extreme disorganization, gradually crumbling into its constituent parts unless it performs a purge. In such a state, the conspiracy loses the ability to pursue downtime actions and takes one aggravated damage per chapter as the population of the conspiracy disperses or joins uncommunicative rival factions. Once the Association track is filled with aggravated damage, the conspiracy completely dissolves, leaving nothing behind but rumors of its existence and the survivors whose lives it destroyed. Other conspiracies can scavenge the leftover Nodes and Icons of the now defunct organization. Allowing a conspiracy to crumble away from disorganization can be a cathartic event for Renegades, but cohorts often rankle at letting so many of those responsible just walk away without answering for what they have done.

Conspiracies gradually recover from most setbacks, as their subordinates slowly forget the terrors of the past. At the end of any chapter in which the conspiracy suffered no damage to its Association, it downgrades damage to its Association equal to its Standing — aggravated to lethal, lethal to bashing, and bashing healing entirely. However, any damage the conspiracy suffers during the chapter prevents this gradual restoration of institutional confidence.

A conspiracy may also undertake a purge to restore order and calm to panicking conspiracy members. Purges take one of four forms, each of which is a conspiracy action:

- **Expel:** The conspiracy cuts its losses and severs ties with a Node closest to those making trouble. The conspiracy destroys a Node and any Icons attached to it, but clears all damage from Association. The absolute destruction prevents characters from following the destroyed Node's connections to any of the conspiracy's other Nodes, unless they had already made contact with those Nodes.
- **Reform:** The conspiracy chooses to make an illustrative example of one of its dissenting members, showing there are many ways to serve the cause. The conspiracy selects a Node and makes an immediate conspiracy action with it. This action does not count towards a conspiracy's maximum actions per chapter. The Node is destroyed after being used this way, but the conspiracy clears all damage from Association.

- **Reclaim:** The conspiracy cannibalizes its own for resources to further its goals and reaffirm the Principles they are founded on. The conspiracy permanently reduces its Power, Finesse, or Resistance by one and clears all damage from Association.
- **Resignation:** Rather than attempting to fix the failing organization, the conspiracy makes a desperate push to achieve its goals. The conspiracy destroys up to its Standing in Nodes and gains that amount of Effort to spend on downtime actions.

How A Conspiracy Dies

Sometimes the Remade get exactly what they want and finally put a stop to the actions of a conspiracy. When a conspiracy falls into one of the following categories, it is considered destroyed. If survivors of the organization attempt to rebuild it from the ashes, it may look the similar but is a significantly different organization then it once was.

- **Dissolution:** The conspiracy's Association track is filled with aggravated damage, whereupon its surviving members abandon their posts and flee en masse.
- **Decapitation:** The conspiracy's last Hierarchical Node is destroyed, causing the conspiracy's remaining Nodes to dissolve into their constituent parts.
- **Desolation:** The conspiracy drops below its Standing in Nodes, collapsing under its own weight as it becomes unable to support its needs.

When a conspiracy is destroyed, all remaining Nodes and Icons remain in the wild and can be acquired by another group in the Web of Pain with a downtime action. If Nodes are not destroyed or subsumed by another conspiracy, then they may become the basis for a new conspiracy in the world.

Going Deeper

Renegades rarely find vengeance so simple as killing the person who pulled the switch or invoked the seven forbidden names. Wherever they search, they find clues of deeper mysteries and of organizations that enthusiastically pushed their tormentors onward. Every clue hints at someone else who made this possible. After a conspiracy has been destroyed, the Renegades responsible may descend deeper into the Web of Pain and start uncovering secrets of the original conspiracy's allies.

When the players' characters destroy their first conspiracy, they may immediately make a connection with a new conspiracy using all destroyed Nodes as Clues with one element each (p. XX). The troupe collectively decides whether this new conspiracy is the former's Inheritor, Rival, or Master.

- **Inheritor:** An inheritor conspiracy was previously subordinate to the now destroyed conspiracy. They may have previously been kept on a short leash by the organization, or perhaps much of their own understanding of Divergence is reliant on their predecessor conspiracy. An Inheritor conspiracy starts at one Standing lower than its predecessor.
- **Rival:** A Rival conspiracy was another conspiracy that had both competed and cooperated with the predecessor conspiracy. They may be attempting to absorb the territory and assets now freed up by their rival's destruction or looking to avenge the loss of such brilliance from the world. A Rival conspiracy starts at the same Standing as the predecessor conspiracy.

- **Master:** A Master conspiracy was in some way controlling the Predecessor conspiracy, secretly behind the scenes another pulled the strings that made all this tragedy play out in the first place. A Master conspiracy starts with one more Standing than the predecessor conspiracy.

A new conspiracy starts with Nodes and a pool of Attribute dots appropriate to its Standing. If a new conspiracy unconnected to other conspiracies already in play is discovered (or discovers the cohort), its Standing is based on the average total Magnitude dots of the cohort's Variations (rounded down):

[TABLE]

Average Total Variation Magnitude	Standing
2	1
5	2
7	3
10	4
12	5
15	6
17	7
20	8
25	9
30	10

[END TABLE]

The Devoted

Some Remade slip the shackles of the conspiracies who kept them, tormented them, and reshaped their lives. Others, however, never know this taste of dicey freedom or their fraught independence. They stay nestled in the iron embrace of those who made them, safe from truth and choice and the many dangers of the outside world. For this, the Devoted are forever grateful and owe their mutable lives to those who changed them.

The lives of the Devoted are dictated by the conspiracy that reared them. Some fortunate Devoted may have time to themselves to pursue their personal joys: favorite TV shows or hobbies, or other mundane things. Others are bound tighter to their leash, every minute of every hour spoken for, dictated by scientists, engineers, and dubious medical professionals. Only those who escape eschew this control. The Devoted realize they are volatile aberrations and that this structure is for the best. Without it they'd lose control and destroy themselves or harm others. For others still, it may never occur to them that a life can persist outside the conspiracy's walls. Conspiracies make little effort to convince their creations to leave, so why would any Remade seek a free life?

The Open Door

To say the life of a Renegade is fraught with challenges would be a tremendous understatement. They are hounded on all sides by opposition, by the unpredictability of their bodies, and by the

fear of rejection by their peers. With the world arrayed against them, is it any wonder that some Renegades reject their hellish livelihood — such as it is — and return to the conspiracies they fled? Or yet that some Remade never leave? The world outside the sterile conspiracy compounds will chew up and spit out new Renegades. Why would anyone leave? Yet, they do, and when they eventually crawl back, ruined and empty, the conspiracies welcome them.

Prodigal Children

The hardships of attempting to live an ordinary human life become insurmountable. A Renegade's body won't stop changing, shifting every time she glances in the mirror. Life was better when she had a routine — awful body-altering drugs and all — and a reliable roof over her head. Scars fester, leak, and mutate. It interrupts sleep, keeping the Renegade from focusing on the day-to-day. The people who made her could stop this. Maybe they'll take her back, she thinks, maybe not even with a price.

The easiest way for the Remade to become Devoted is to return to the conspiracy's fold. Depending on the conspiracy, this return may come with a price, while others may at least appear to welcome their prodigal creation home with open arms. Perhaps the only asking price is the character's freedom. Either way, if the character returns to a conspiracy after being a Renegade, she becomes Devoted.

Children by Adoption

The Remade does not have to return to the conspiracy that made her. Another conspiracy can just as easily open its doors to a wayward Deviant, promising her a life free of pain and torment, for nothing more than the price of her independence. Remade can return to any conspiracy willing to take them in, and are not required to crawl back to their conspiracy of origin.

The Enemy's Face

Devoted make excellent recurring antagonists for a Deviant chronicle. These enemy Remade cling to their kept lives, the dark reflections of the cohort and a warning of what could have been. Entangled with the players' characters' stories, Devoted appear when the characters are at their lowest to grind them beneath their boots, claim their pathetic lives, or cajole them back to the welcoming arms of their mutual conspiracy. These encounters should be intense, dangerous, and deeply personal. The four archetypes listed below function as guidelines for designing the Devoted who will appear in the chronicle. These antagonists are intended to be built collaboratively between Storyteller and players, with a sliding scale for the antagonists' involvement with the players' characters.

Four Archetypal Devoted

The **Rival**: Whether an individual foil to a specific character, or the one left behind when a group escaped, a Rival is not out for blood. A rival wishes to see her counterpart(s) defeated and humiliated, with all their plans foiled. Rivals are the most well-rounded of the Devoted archetypes, ideal for a recurring threat. These Storyteller characters always have some personal entanglement with one or more of the player's characters: the most common background being another Deviant created at the same time who chose stay (or was unable to escape). However that story unfolded, the rival likely still harbors festering resentment. Rivals should be designed to counterbalance and challenge the cohort.

The **Stalker**: Where Rivals often face the cohort directly, Stalkers provide a stealthier, more subtle opposition. Stalkers are frequently engineered in response to the escape of the players' Remade. They pursue and track the players' characters, observing them, recording their lives, sending snippets of data back to their conspiracy, and, eventually, aid in the characters' capture. Most Stalkers do not have a history with their prey, and were created specifically to return rogue Broken. As Storyteller characters, Stalkers have spent their entire changed lives observing and pursuing, so it is not uncommon for them to develop obsessions with one or more of the players' characters. This does not have to be a romantic obsession, but should always verge on uncomfortable. Stalker characters should be designed to be skulking observers first and dangerous fighters second.

The **Assassin**: Remade are valuable assets, the result of months or years of investment and labor. Ideally, a conspiracy dispatches a Stalker and gets its lost creations back in one piece. When attempts to recover the Remade alive fail, conspiracies fall back on Assassins, the final, lethal choice. Conspiracies create Assassins as general weapons; creatures designed for slaughter and war, and it is these grim-faced huntsman that are turned loose upon the players' characters. Assassins may have Rival or Stalker type relationships with the players' characters, or they may simply be forces of nature kept on a leash until the conspiracy has need for them. The players and Storyteller should discuss what kind of threat they'd like to see, when creating an Assassin. Though often a major enemy featuring in a single chapter or story, Assassins can become repeat antagonists if the characters evade their initial attack.

The **Warden**: Where Assassins are made to kill, Wardens are made to preserve and protect. Remade are dangerous and volatile, so when a conspiracy creates one that is more obedient and stable than the others, they become a Warden. Wardens keep the other Deviants in line and bring lost Remade back to the fold. Ostensibly this is done with love and care — a Warden wants their charges to be safe and secure above all else. Wardens designed in opposition to the players' characters may have been their former guardians, overseers, or supervisors who failed in their task and let the Broken escape. This antagonistic relationship can be as intimate as the players desire. Like Stalkers, Wardens focus more on capture than the kill, but rather than stealthy observers Wardens present a social threat as they attempt to convince the characters to surrender and come quietly. They only have the characters' best interests at heart, after all.

Making the Devoted

Devoted serve the story as personalized antagonists, foils, and nemeses who punctuate the chronicle with their repeat presence. Rivals and Stalkers tend to be directly personal: having relationships with one of the players' characters, rather than the entire group, while Assassins and Wardens have connections to the entire cohort. Storytellers and players collaborate to create these antagonists, building them based on the severity of the relationship: Acquainted, Personal, Obsessive. Begin building the Devoted with the same character creation as players' characters (p. XX).

- **Acquainted**: Acquainted characters have 2 additional Attribute points, 5 additional Skills, and 2 additional Variation dots, and any Scars that may go with them. Antagonists at this level of engagement have a familiar but not intimate relationship with one of the player's characters. These Devoted might be unfeeling guards who knew the character's face from her time imprisoned in the conspiracy's experimental cells, a former middle-manager half-transformed by the same cruel procedures but given a longer leash for his cowed obedience, or a

cellmate of a few days who remembers snatches of bonding conversation but failed to form a lasting or meaningful relationship. These types of Devoted view the players characters with little more regard than passing recognition — they know her name and likely know what was done to her, but little more.

- **Personal:** At the Personal level, the bond between antagonist and player's character is more intense - they may have been intimate or lovers, or shared a friendship forged in trauma. Assign 3 additional Attribute points, 8 additional Skills, and 4 additional Variation dots plus relevant Scars. This level of entanglement indicates a character who might have been a partner in the experiment. Perhaps the Personal-level Devoted character signed up for the same "medical trial" with the player's character and was left behind when she managed to escape. They might have been former colleagues both doing research towards the same genetic modifications, each pushing the other towards greater and more volatile changes while the player's character quit the program without telling her compatriot. They could also have been a teacher, especially if the conspiracy the Renegade came from has religious associations. The Devoted imparted valuable lessons in controlling their Variations before the Renegade made her escape.
- **Obsessive:** Antagonists designed at the Obsessive level cannot let their damaged relationship with the players' characters go. They are singularly focused on the downfall of the character or characters with whom they are entangled. Apply an additional 4 Attribute points, 12 additional Skills, and 6 additional Variation dots plus any relevant Scars. If the antagonist is being designed by the group of players, add one extra Skill, and Variation dot for each player beyond the first who wishes to be entangled with the character. Whatever created this degree of relationship, it was consuming and traumatic; something unforgettable in the worst possible way. This Devoted character may have been lovers with the transformed, perhaps they even agreed to sign up for the program together, holding hands with barely contained fear as they signed their lives away. If not lovers, perhaps they were instead close friends and the Devoted perceives the Renegade's choice to leave as the ultimate betrayal. What once was love and partnership now burns as spurned hatred. The Obsessive wants nothing more than to be back together with the Renegade who abandoned her, no matter what the cost. The Storyteller should avoid creating an Obsessive character who has no emotional connection to any of the players' characters. These types of Devoted are always deeply personal, not just a stalker who observed the players' characters from across the room and let negative feelings fester.

Growing Threats

Powerful Renegades attract the attention of powerful Devoted, both as a matter of narrative and a means of ensuring the players' character continue to face real challenges.

When introducing Devoted during the chronicle, the Storyteller may instead determine starting Magnitude of Variations based on the Standing of the conspiracy that created them, rather than based on the Threat Level of the chronicle.

Particularly with Obsessive Devoted, the Storyteller may elect to award Experiences to these antagonists at the same pace as each of the players' characters earn it (or the average number of Experiences, if using individual Beats). The Storyteller may spend these at his sole discretion, or invite players to make some purchase decisions on behalf of their greatest Remade foes.

Nemeses

Like their Renegade counterparts who achieve Catharsis and become Guardians, Devoted become consumed by Fury and become Nemeses. When one of the Devoted's Conviction exceeds her Loyalty, she fills with endless hatred, transforming into a Nemesis. Often, this occurs when someone kills one or more of her Loyalty Touchstones, leaving her with more sworn enemies to destroy than people to protect.

If one of the players' characters pushes a Devoted into this state, her entanglement jumps immediately to Obsessive, regardless of its previous status. If she was already at the Obsessive level, she instantly increases all her Attributes by 1 (and therefore any derived stats) and immediately gains one new Variation (with any accompanying Scar).

Devoted Form

Being Devoted means giving up on personal freedoms for personal gain. While the Renegades buck their leash and choose to live a life of scarcity and pain, the Devoted embrace what the conspiracy has given them — it is a *gift* only fools throw away. Some Devoted might justify their loyalty, saying they are playing a long game and intend to rebel when the time is right or when they have amassed enough power to do so. Others own their choice to remain, choosing to believe in a “just” cause, while others still delude themselves with the kind of sweet lies one whispers to keep doubts away. Regardless of what a Devoted tells herself to sleep at night, she still wakes up in her conspiracy-granted cell, looks at her conspiracy regulation walls, and does her conspiracy ordered duty with flawless obedience. Some may call this life a cage, living as a kept pet or a prized possession, but who would rather live under a bridge, suffering and hungry? Who will help you when your own body rebels?

Systems: Devoted reverse the effects of Conviction and Loyalty when compared to Renegades.

- Newly created Devoted have 3 Loyalty and 1 Conviction, plus whatever their Origin grants.
- After a scene in which the Devoted performs some service for a Loyalty Touchstone, she gains one Willpower and takes a Beat. Once per chapter, when she risks danger or suffers in the pursuit of a Conviction Touchstone, she regains all Willpower.

Identifying Variations and Scars

When dealing with a Remade opponent, knowing his capabilities and vulnerabilities can be the key to defeating him. However, not all Broken wield obvious Variations, and most Scars are not immediately obvious to a casual observer. The genre abounds with cases where a Deviant's enemies were able to identify and exploit his weaknesses, and so this system is designed to allow players' characters (and their opponents!) do just that.

A character can only identify a Variation or Scar when it is active (or manifested). Whether the Variation/Scar is Overt or Subtle, the dice pool and suggested modifiers are the same.

Dice Pool: Wits + relevant Skill. This is usually Occult for Variations and especially exotic Scars, Medicine for Physical Scars, and Empathy for Mental and Social Scars.

Suggested Modifiers (total bonus/penalty cannot exceed +/-5): Attempting to identify a Clade Variation of a Clade other than the observer's (-2). Circumstances in the scene make it highly unlikely the Scar will come into play, such as a Remade with the Native Environment Scar while

in that environment (-1 to -2). Circumstances in the scene make it more likely the Scar will come into play, such as a Deviant in the same scene as the object of his Phobia (+1 to +3).

Variation/Scar is one the observer has seen before (+1), studied closely (+2), or has himself (+3). Observer has relevant exotic sensory equipment or senses (+1 for Unseen Sense Merit to +3 for Specialized Sense 3).

Identify Overt Variation or Scar

Action Type: Reflexive

Roll Results

Success: The observer identifies one of the target's active Overt Variations or Scars (name and Magnitude).

Exceptional Success: As a success, but the observer also learns more specific details (the trigger for his Involuntary Stimulus, for example, or the specifics of his Bane).

Failure: The observer only notices the obvious effects but doesn't associate it with a specific Variation or Scar.

Dramatic Failure: As failure, but the observer misidentifies the Variation or Scar.

Identify Subtle Variation or Scar

Action Type: Extended (one roll per turn in action scenes; one roll every several minutes in other scenes)

5 Successes: Identify the Variation or Scar and its general effects (name and Magnitude).

Each additional two successes yield an additional key detail about the Variation/Scar — effects, Deviations, Variation/Scar entanglements, specifics (which Specialized Senses, for example, or what triggers Power Failure).

Example Characters

Madeline “The Wall” Hager, Rival Devoted

Quote: *"I remember what you said. I'll see you destroyed if it's the last thing I do!"*

Background: A low-level clerk at Dynamic Solutions, Madeline's department manager took notice of her hard work ethic and commitment to taking on overtime hours, and put her name forward for a reward. Usually this meant pizza parties or free company swag, but Dynamic Solutions had other things in mind for their hardest working, most loyal employees willing to donate so much of their time. Assuming this meant a promotion, Madeline went along with it.

She went into her annual review anticipating praise, a small increase in pay, and a change in job title, but her supervisor only spared her a forced smile as two Dynamic Solutions Talent Acquisition Team members put a blackout bag over her head and injected sedatives. They reshaped her into something else: something big, something powerful, something terrifying. Talent Acquisitions considers her their most successful experiment yet. The rest ended messily, or made the mistake of trying to leave.

Madeline remains ever a good employee. She doesn't blame Dynamic Solutions — after all they made her something when she was nothing, just a wage slave chained to a desk. Now she can punch through walls. Who else can boast such a thing? She brims with misdirected rage at her

former life: at her former coworkers for readily turning her over to brutal experiments and with everyone in her former life for saying she'd never make anything of herself.

Appearance: Madeline at first appears little, ordinary, and innocuous besides having a bit of unusual bulk. This is a ruse, for her true Remade form is a towering mass of muscle, bulging subdural plates and raw, unchecked fury. Before activating her Variations, she has dark hair, dark eyes, glasses, and dresses in earth tones and other subdued colors. These give way to the monster within once her array of power has been activated.

Storytelling Hints: Madeline used to be small and unassuming but has been transformed into powerhouse of raw might. Once set on a path, she is an unstoppable force, an inexorable juggernaut.

Origin: Exomorph

Clade: Coactive

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3; Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 1, Athletics 1, Brawl (Grappling) 1, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Firearms 1, Intimidation (Physical Displays) 3, Investigation 4, Persuasion 3, Politics 3, Science 1, Socialize 1, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 2, Weaponry (Improvised) 1

Merits: Dauntless, Investigative Aide (Investigation), Investigative Prodigy 1, Fast Talking 2, Living Progenitor 3, Prized Experiment

Willpower: 6

Stability: 6

Conviction 1

Loyalty 3

Aspiration: Find an excuse to break something or hurt someone

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10 (12)

Health: 8 (13)

Size: 5 (10)

Acclimation: 1

Controlled Scars: Preparation (Social; Gigantic) 2

Persistent Scars: Bane (Physical; Draining; Blessing, Immunity) 4*

Variations: Blessing (Albatross) 3, Gigantic 3, Immunity (Deviant Variations) 3

* Madeline cannot approach lit safety spotlights and suffers intense pain when caught in their direct light.

Tristan "Echo" Howe, Assassin Devoted

Quote: *"Come quietly or die. Those are your choices."*

Background: For Tristan, their options after high school narrowed: not quite bright enough to make college work, not quite skilled enough to enter a trade. They made a choice that many young people coming of age in the early twenty-first century did: they joined the military. After a few tours in Iraq, Tristan was offered a new and exciting opportunity. They took it out of curiosity and the promise of a six-figure paycheck.

They entered the training program with two dozen others in the early summer and by winter Tristan no longer recognized their own face. A few more months later, and whatever was left of their personality had been replaced by a focused desire for violence. They have become a perfect weapon, honed to a clean, unthinking point. Wherever the government points them, they go, and they execute their job with horrifying ruthless efficiency. Their commanding officers give Tristan a target, and the Devoted learns everything possible about them before beginning their bloody task. Tristan Howe doesn't really exist anymore. They are the Echo, a flawless weapon, an empty shell of a person-become-weapon.

This experiment has been successful beyond any of the military scientists' wildest dreams.

Appearance: Tristan retains a general human form: one head, two arms, two legs, but the similarities end there. Their body is elongated and strange, reformatted for every imaginable type of movement — joints snapping and ligaments uncoiling as they drop from unexpected places. Tristan's hands have been reshaped into rending claws which they use to shred opponents, but remain dexterous enough to handle firearms. The military dresses them in a bulletproof bodysuit to better protect their perfect weapon.

Storytelling Hints: Dispatching the Echo is a last resort. They will pursue the players' characters until their job is complete, even if this means temporary defeat and an escape to attack again later. Encounters with the Echo are violent and dangerous, and only the most silver-tongued of characters can dissuade them from their bloody task. Storytellers looking to include this deadly force of nature should consider what the players' characters have done to earn such a threat sent after them.

Origin: Epimorph

Clade: Mutant

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3; Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Claws) 4, Computer 3, Crafts 2, Drive 1, Firearms (Rifles) 4, Intimidation 3, Investigation 4, Medicine 3, Persuasion 1, Politics 2, Science 2, Stealth (Ambush) 3, Subterfuge 2, Survival 2, Weaponry 4

Merits: Dauntless, Demolisher 3, Grappling 2, Hardy 2, Iron Skin 2

Willpower: 7

Stability: 8

Conviction: 2

Loyalty: 3

Aspiration: Bring down a target

Initiative: 7

Defense: 4

Speed: 12

Health: 8

Size: 5

Acclimation: 3

Involuntary Scars: Involuntary Stimulus (Physical; Insistent; Cutting Brawl Lash) 2

Persistent Scars: Conspicuous Appearance (Social; Brachiation) 3, Frozen Heart (Social; Hypercompetence) 2, Glitch (Mental; Anomalous Biology) 2

Variations: Anomalous Biology (Breathless, Heartless) 2, Brachiation 3, Hypercompetence (Firearms) 3, Cutting Brawl Lash (Deadly, Forceful, Piercing) 2*

* Tristan's claws activate whenever they become fully submerged in water.

Weapons/Attacks:

[START TABLE]

Type	Damage	Dice Pool	Special
Claws	2L 8	Armor Piercing	2; inflicts Knocked Down Tilt)

[END TABLE]

Ian "Cipher" Temple, Stalker Devoted

Quote: *"I can find anything you need. Just give me five minutes."*

Background: With college applications looming, Ian needed money. He had good grades, but not quite good enough for a scholarship. He was athletic and talented, but not the star of the team. Getting a good education would be expensive, and his family couldn't afford to foot the bill. Ian came across a flyer advertising a paid study looking for young men in his age bracket. A few internet searches on the sponsoring company turned up reputable information, so he volunteered. What followed was a blur, and he doesn't fully remember any of it. When he asks, his handlers tell him not to worry, to focus on his job. He doesn't think he's always been able to climb walls; no, that's probably new. Ian only has the vaguest recollection of a life before his time as one of the Devoted, half-recalled dreamlike snippets of parents and siblings, so it has never occurred to him that he might escape his life as a prisoner. He continues to live his life day to day, job to job, losing a little piece of his memory each time he activates his powers.

Appearance: Slender and wiry, Ian was once a handsome, young black man but has become something between chameleon and human. Ian's hands and feet have been shaped into grasping, sticky paws. He keeps himself almost entirely covered up, preferring dark clothing in grays or navy blues to better blend in with shadows. His clothing is otherwise utilitarian: close fitting and made of material that minimizes sound while moving. When he is not scuttling barefoot across a ceiling, he moves awkwardly in ordinary shoes as his feet have been transformed to facilitate his unusual method of locomotion.

Storytelling Hints: Ian only remembers what the conspiracy has told him, and he believes that by pursuing and observing the characters, he will be given the keys to unlock the secrets of his life before. He derives genuine pleasure from his duties as a stalker, ferreting out information, overhearing critical conversations, and infiltrating spaces he doesn't belong and does not see any of these activities as wrong or immoral. Ian's first instinct when confronted with violence is to flee or to hide, the latter of which he is exceptionally skilled at doing.

Origin: Epimorph

Clade: Chimeric

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3; Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Computer 2, Investigation (Profiling) 3, Larceny (Burglary) 2, Medicine 1, Science 1, Stealth (Shadowing) 3, Streetwise 2, Survival 2, Weaponry 2

Merits: Area of Expertise (Stealth: Shadowing), Investigative Aide (Stealth), Patient, Resources 2, Shiv 1, Stabilizer 2, Street Fighting 2

Willpower: 6

Stability: 6

Conviction: 2

Loyalty: 3

Aspiration: Learn something about the cohort

Initiative: 6

Defense: 6

Speed: 10

Health: 8

Size: 5

Acclimation: 1

Persistent Scars: Amnesia (Mental; Camouflage, Face Thief) 3, Conspicuous Appearance (Physical; Brachiation, Predator's Cunning) 3

Variations: Brachiation (Spider) 2, Camouflage (Invisible) 2, Face Thief 2, Predator's Cunning (Uncanny) 3

Eve "Hellbender" Strang, Warden Devoted

Quote: *"Come with me, friends, this way to safety."*

Background: Eve Strang thought she was signing up for a pharmaceutical drug trial, but after putting her name in ink on all the paperwork, the conspiracy revealed the truth. This was an experiment to build a sturdier, unstoppable person. The final candidate would, ideally, be able to work tirelessly, endure any hardship, and become the perfect bloodhound. Having already signed away her freedom legally, and being too poor to afford an attorney to dispute it, Eve agreed to

the conspiracy's terms. Months of extended treatments, drugs, tests, surgeries, and worse followed. Others in the program died or fled. Some shifted wildly out of control. Eve stayed miraculously stable through the whole trial, and for that she was rewarded with a job. She'd witnessed so many other Deviants go rogue when they should have endured, so she happily agreed to become the conspiracy's dragnet, an unsleeping force that would return the lost to home. Her persistence and aggressively protective nature earned her the moniker "Hellbender" after the species of lizard with the same nickname.

Appearance: Eve "Hellbender" Strang is tall, lean, and sharp-featured with straight, platinum blonde hair and a cold stare. She wears a calf-length double-breasted black trench coat tailored enough to appear professional, but also loose enough to conceal weapons. Beneath it her clothes are practical, bordering on plain, intended for ease of movement. The Hellbender walks with purpose and the inexorable confidence of a person who feels no pain.

Storytelling Hints: What humanity remains within her clings to compassion — Eve truly cares for the safety of prodigal Remade and believes that her efforts to return them to their conspiracies is what's best. She herself must regularly undergo therapy and treatment to maintain her tremendous power and without it, she would crumble and die. If she needs such things, surely others do, too, and she's more than willing to help them understand.

Origin: Autourgic

Clade: Invasive

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3; Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Empathy (Deviants) 3, Expression 2, Firearms 2, Intimidation 3 (Scare to Safety), Investigation 3, Medicine 1, Persuasion (Deviants) 4, Politics 2, Science 2, Socialize 1, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2, Survival 1

Merits: Direction Sense, Good Samaritan, Lifeline 2, Resources 2, Shared Suffering, Tolerance for Biology

Willpower: 6

Stability: 6

Conviction: 2

Loyalty: 4

Aspiration: Protect another Deviant from harm

Initiative: 6

Defense: 6

Speed: 11

Health: 8

Size: 5

Acclimation: 1

Controlled Scars: Tribulation (Mental; Meditation; Omnicompetence) 4

Persistent Scars: Dependency (Physical; Fatigued, Sluggish, Submissive; Anomalous Biology, Healing Touch) 4, Paranoia (Mental; Onomantic Influence) 3

Variations: Anomalous Biology (Bloodless, Heartless, Painless, Tireless) 3, Healing Touch 4, Omnicompetence 4, Onomantic Influence (Invoke Name) 3

Armor: 1/3 (Kevlar vest)

Quislings of the Flesh: Human Conspirators

Conspiracies aren't made up of monsters of scales and metal. Even if the person pulling the switch wasn't themselves human, which is extremely rare, most of the people who run the labs, set up experiments, and dispose of evidence are, well, people. They have families, hobbies, and annoyances just like anyone else in the Chronicles of Darkness. When they go home at night, do they hug themselves in the darkness, ridden with guilt? Or do they fall into a sound sleep, safe in the knowledge that they are advancing the evolution of the human race?

Humans of all kinds make up a conspiracy. The CEO making decisions on her yacht is just as human as the janitor mopping the blood off the floor in the operating theater. They all have their reasons for being there, and they all have their own reactions to what happens in the halls of the conspiracy they're a part of.

For Money

One of the most common reasons people work for a conspiracy is the paycheck. Many don't think too hard about the implications of the corporation's or the hospital's policies. They collect their checks, clock in and out, and treat it as a 9-to-5 job.

This doesn't mean all, or even most, of the conspiracy members don't know what's going on. Janitors see things in quiet hospital rooms that make them vomit in the bathroom later.

Accountants meet Remade at the office Christmas party and see them for what they are. The Chief Financial Officer signs off on orders for endangered animal parts, ECT machines, restraints, and vats of formaldehyde. A Progenitor requires a massive infrastructure to create a Deviant, and many of those people aren't bound to the conspiracy by anything other than their livelihood.

While whistleblower laws nominally protect those who talk, conspiracies are not noted for their adherence to ethical jurisprudence. They might pay the fine, but whoever talks might be found floating in a river a day later. Or they might be terminated after failing to meet a sudden load of unreasonable demands placed on them, and found hanging in their closet several months, or even weeks, later. Or they might be paid off and sent to live in the Caribbean. It really depends on the conspiracy.

Those at the very top of the food chain might also have this motive, but they are creating Broken to make money, not to scrape by on a salary. These corporate overlords are extremely dangerous, due to the number of underlings at their disposal. If something cuts into their bottom line, then they will cut right back to restore profitability and prevent future threats to cashflow.

For Knowledge

The search for truth, change, or a higher form of life consumes many who become Progenitors, including scientists, occultists, and doctors. The desire for understanding and discovery

motivates such conspirators, whether it is proving a seemingly laughable theory, curing a bizarre supernatural illness, or unlocking the secrets of a lost cult.

These conspirators are often among the most loyal to the conspiracy because they cannot continue their work without its aid. While some treat their creations with a degree of kindness, many regard their test subjects as little more than lab rats, and the Broken that result as valuable only insofar as they cooperate with their creators.

While these conspirators are far less numerous than those who are just in it for the money, they are what most Renegades picture when they plan their assault on the conspiracy. These people have a personal stake in the conspiracy: intellectual property, college credits, possibly even some emotional attachments. They are often heavily protected due to their intimate knowledge of the conspiracy's projects, and they will not go down without a fight (and possibly a healthy amount of begging).

However, they are not always enemies. One Deviant's torturer might be another's savior. They can be negotiated with and even worked with for extended periods of time — but they always want the knowledge that results.

For the Pain

Many Renegades would like to think that their conspiracy was founded on a pedestal of absolute evil. The employees are all cringing underlings or abusers-in-training, their Progenitors are cackling mad scientists, and the heads of the conspiracy are omnipotent puppeteers in the shadows. The truth is usually much more complex. Many Progenitors think they are doing the best for the human race, the accountants and administrative assistants are just doing their jobs, and the CEO plays at being a Silicon Valley startup prodigy who is too far removed from his people to know or care about what they're doing.

However, this is not always the case. Many who join a conspiracy know exactly what they're signing up for. They're willing to fudge numbers, buy secondhand needles, and do whatever is necessary to continue creating and torturing Remade to exercise their own need for power. Conspiracies deal in unethical (or at least highly questionable) experiments and business practices, so staying in operation means finding people who are willing to look at those behaviors without going to the FBI or the ethics board. And such people are often those who are willing to look the other way in exchange for the conspiracy letting certain personal habits slide, too. In short, even relatively benign conspiracies attract the worst kinds of people, at least some of the time.

These people are extremely dangerous and often lurk in odd or unexpected areas of the conspiracy. A cell guard for Remade might enjoy torturing them, but there also might be a head of marketing who wields her power like a whip, or a janitor who has learned to use the ECT machine. They may play a long game, befriending a Remade only to betray her later, or they may launch themselves at a Renegade while she's casing the facility. Each one is different, and each one is always looking for a new victim to bully and abuse.

Sample Characters

These are templates for your human conspiracy members. Feel free to use or modify them as necessary.

Administrative Assistant

“Sure, I have access to that spreadsheet. Can I see your badge?”

She’s the conduit through which most of the conspiracy’s information flows, a Linchpin in their affairs. There might be one, ten, or a hundred like her, but all of them hold unique keys to the organization’s information. A lot of Renegades overlook administrative assistants, considering them mere pawns. A smart Remade knows better. A good administrative assistant can make anyone disappear or destroy precious data with the stroke of a key or the push of a button.

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 3; Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

General Dice Pools: Find a Smoking Gun 6, Destroy Damning Evidence 6, Deal with Difficult Person 7

Combat Dice Pools: Duck! 3, Outrun Pursuer 5

Initiative Modifier: +3

Defense: 2

Health: 8

Willpower: 7

Size: 5

Speed: 7

Doubles as: Information security technician, personal assistant, accountant, grey-hat hacker

Executive

“I understand your concerns. Why don’t we step into my office and discuss it further?”

The executive sits at the heart of the conspiracy. Whether in the know, or totally in the dark, the executive directs the overall agenda and policy of the conspiracy. Some are mere figureheads. Some really are the menacing corporate overlords they appear to be.

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 4; Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Presence 5, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

General Dice Pools: Inspire Conspirators 9, Make Important Call 6, Money Laundering 5

Combat Dice Pools: Call for Backup 7, Small Pistols 4

Initiative Modifier: +6

Defense: 2

Health: 7

Willpower: 8

Size: 5

Speed: 9

Doubles as: Financial adviser, mob boss, chief of surgery, university president

Graduate Student

“Can’t talk. Need coffee.”

There is no single type of grad student in a conspiracy. Their fields vary widely — from science and engineering to history and religion. They are suckered in by the promise of a stipend, of cheap housing, of credit, of free food. Most do their duty and leave; after all, the abuse isn’t any worse than any other academic institution. Some, though, become whistleblowers, or even Remade.

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3; Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 4; Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

General Dice Pools: Find Cheap Food 5, Frantic Research 7, Strong Stomach 6

Combat Dice Pools: Frenzied Punching 4

Initiative Modifier: +4

Defense: 1

Health: 9

Willpower: 6

Size: 5

Speed: 8

Doubles as: Well-meaning journalist, underpaid intern, janitor who knows too much

Nurse Practitioner

“How are you feeling today? Any change in those nightmares?”

Nurse-practitioners are much cheaper to keep on staff than doctors, and have a better bedside manner. Many conspiracies employ them, hoping their Remade will stay Devoted due to their kindness, rather than turn Renegade. Sometimes, it even works.

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 4; Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

General Dice Pools: Diagnosis 9, Cut It Out 7, Bedside Manner 5

Combat Dice Pools: Improvised Weaponry 5

Initiative Modifier: 7

Defense: 3

Health: 8

Willpower: 8

Size: 5

Speed: 10

Doubles as: General practitioner, head nurse, ER technician, mad scientist

Private Military Contractor

“Code Delta Radio, I repeat, Code Delta Radio!”

Some conspiracies have the money and reach to hire groups of mercenaries to protect their most valuable assets. These men and women make sure that the Deviants don't escape, the Progenitors remain safe, and nosy reporters and moles are kept out of the organization.

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4; Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

General Dice Pools: Identify Problem 7, Small Group Tactics 7

Combat Dice Pools: Automatic Firearms 7, Knockout Punch 6, Subdue Busybody 7

Initiative Modifier: +7

Defense: 3

Health: 8

Willpower: 8

Size: 5

Speed: 12

Doubles as: Military police, terrorist insurgents, private security

Professor of Biology

“So, if you insert the package via the xiphoid process, you should be able to connect it here...”

No one pays academics better than conspiracies with money. Biology and medical professors are often the backbone of Remade creation. While they are rarely Progenitors themselves, they often create the plans for Progenitors to work from.

Attributes: Intelligence 5, Wits 1, Resolve 3; Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 5

General Dice Pools: Biological Blueprints 9, Explain Anomaly 7, It Just Might Work! 5

Combat Dice Pools: Panicked Flailing 3

Initiative Modifier: +6

Defense: 1

Health: 8

Willpower: 8

Size: 5

Speed: 7

Doubles as: Mad scientist, infosec department head, mid-level technical management, sadist

Slavetaker

“You know, I heard there was this amazing cache of pre-Columbian artifacts in the ruins beyond the river. It's just a rumor, of course, but...”

Not all people involved in the creation of Deviants practice medicine or engineering. Some just get lucky and know where to put people to force them to change. Some pose as adoption

agencies and buy up Born Deviant children. Others seed rumors for urban explorers and archeologists, luring them to places of mystical power. Once the target undergoes the Divergence, her Progenitor uses her as an indentured servant, often abusing her and reminding her how grateful she should be that someone wants her.

Attributes: Intelligence 5, Wits 3, Resolve 4; Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

General Dice Pools: Charm 7, Lure 7

Combat Dice Pools: Hand-to-hand 5, Taser 4

Initiative Modifier: 8

Defense: 3

Health: 8

Willpower: 9

Size: 5

Speed: 11

Doubles as: Con artist, smuggler

Whistleblower

“Please don’t tell them it was me.”

Every conspiracy has its weak link. The whistleblower can be anyone, but is usually someone the upper echelons overlook.

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 4; Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 1; Presence 1, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

General Dice Pools: Paranoid Bastard 7, Damning Evidence 8

Combat Dice Pools: Frantic Brawling 4, Escape 7

Initiative Modifier: +6

Defense: 4

Health: 6

Willpower: 6

Size: 5

Speed: 11

Manticores

Humans are not the only creatures capable of being Remade. Animals are candidates for Divergence as well, and many of the conspiracies find them to be not only perfect subjects for experimentation, but also much easier to control once the changes have been made. Animals have no souls, and therefore aren’t prone to the Instabilities and fluctuations their human counterparts suffer. Manticores are also far less likely to turn on their masters, and those that do can be put down with little regret.

Manticores can be trained to do specific jobs, and are often Remade with traits intended to enhance their abilities in those areas. Among the conspiracies, Manticores are primarily used for hunting down escaped Deviants, guarding the labs and homes of the corporation's most prominent members, and spying on rivals and Renegades that might be plotting against them. Manticores can also make good companions, detecting sources of a Renegade's bane nearby and warning them away, or being a walking, purring Faraday cage that adds a degree of security to her hideout.

Not all Manticores are created in a lab or intentionally twisted by magical means. Some are animals that happened across an improperly-discarded barrel of chemicals and took a long, fateful drink of tainted water. Others were in the right place at the right time: a flock of birds whose migration path flew them through a beam of interdimensional energy; a fox that caught and ate an escaped lab rabbit, its blood teeming with nanobots.

Conspiracies have the best access to Manticores. They possess the resources, the materials, and the facilities to make them, and can tailor a new breed to their exact specifications. These Remade animals have loyalty and obedience coded into their DNA. Every cell is a tracking device. If they require any sort of upkeep, their Progenitors can provide it or breed out the need in the next generation.

People in a conspiracy's upper echelons keep Manticores as both pets and protectors. More than one CEO has put in a request for an ever-vigilant watchdog after a midnight visit from a Renegade in the apartment she once thought impregnable. Devoted bring Manticores along to sniff out their targets. The Broken's roommate might say he's not home, but the crow on the Devoted's shoulder detects another heat signature inside the flat.

Though conspiracies use Manticores in the pursuit, capture, and subdual of Renegades, they aren't the only ones with access to the animals. Some Remade free lab-grown Manticores during their escapes, and find one of the animals has followed them home. Others happen upon them out in the wild, expecting to find another transformed human at the end of a strange trail, only to find a Manticore, instead. Some Renegades — especially Autourgics — create Manticore companions of their own. A cohort with a Manticore in their midst often values the animal just as strongly as their human members.

Enhanced Hunting Hound

Quote: [low growling, with an odd tinny buzz underlying it]

Background: Its predecessors were hunting dogs: retrievers and hounds, terriers and curs. They bred it for keen senses, superior tracking ability, fearlessness around the roar of a gun. It has as many ancestors who won Best in Show as it has plain old mutts who survived through sheer scrappiness. They threw in a bit of wolf — of course they did. But then they got creative. They spliced in bat-like sonar and added venom sacs behind their teeth that mix a sedative into the dog's saliva, the better to knock out its victims. They implanted a playback device in its ears, so it can recall its victims' voices and listen for their low, frightened murmurs wherever they might hide. They replaced its corneas with cameras, so the hound's masters can see what it sees and play it back to study later.

Now the dog is trained to heed its Devoted master's commands. They search the streets together, the hound with the Renegade's scent in its nose and her voice in its ears. If she's out there, it will find her.

Description: At first glance, the hunting dog resembles a finely bred black Labrador retriever, but it's too big for its breed, and sleeker than a lab ought to be. It occasionally emits a clicking noise rather than a bark, and cocks its head to listen for the results. It has two sets of snakelike fangs, longer and sharper than the other teeth in its maw. When it catches a victim and bites down, its sedative-laced saliva enters the target's bloodstream and renders her unconscious. The hound sits beside the target, guarding her until its master arrives and bundles the target away.

Storytelling Hints: The hound can hunt in packs or alone, and responds quickly to its master's commands. It doesn't usually display the viciousness or aggressiveness of other breeds, but will certainly use its power to intimidate prey. Once the dog has its target's scent, it follows it almost single-mindedly. Its Progenitor bred its need for sleep down to a minimum, and stimulant packs implanted under its skin can give it several extra hours of useful, uninterrupted tracking time.

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4; Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5; Presence 2, Manipulation 0, Composure 1

General Dice Pools: Aggressive Growl 5, Chase 7, Tracking 8

Combat Dice Pools: Bite 7, Tackle 6

Variations: Brachiation (Bounding) 1, Cutting Brawl Lash (Deadly, Envenomed, Soporific) 2, Sensor Array 2

Initiative: 5

Defense: 7

Health: 7

Willpower: 0

Size: 4

Speed: 12

Weapons/Attacks:

[START TABLE]

Type	Damage	Dice Pool	Special
Bite	2L 7	Inflicts	Drugged and Poisoned Tilts

[END TABLE]

Ferals

Sometimes, the process of Divergence breaks a Remade's soul too deeply for him to hold on to his humanity. Along with his sense of self, the drive to protect other humans or seek revenge on his Progenitor simply never takes root, making him Feral. Often, this violent change is accompanied by powers too great for the Remade to control, or mutations that reshape his form into something far stranger than his mind can bear.

Yet, some of these Deviants manage to wrest a modicum of control over their fluctuating powers and deteriorating bodies. They regain a measure of self-awareness, and succeed in making their Variations and Scars subside, for a time, though the threat of Instability is always lurking.

Conspiracies seek Ferals out for several reasons. When they're the result of an experiment gone horribly wrong, it behooves the conspiracy to get rid of the evidence and protect the organization. However, sometimes they want the Feral for her powers. A Feral on a leash can be an extremely potent weapon — more unpredictable than a Manticore, but the tradeoff is in the sheer amount of power the Feral can wield. A conspiracy with a captive Feral can force him to astrally project into a Renegade's hideout and spy on them. A Feral who is a Face Thief can steal his target's identity, committing a crime that gets the Renegade arrested and puts her in the conspiracy's control. Conspiracies can be far less subtle, sending the Feral straight in to the Renegade's home — or to where his Loyalty Touchstones live — to strike out with his Lashes and do as much damage as he can.

Once a Feral loses control over his powers, he poses a terrifying danger to anyone in his path. He might emit pheromones that cause anyone in their range to turn violent, or send massive bolts of lightning tearing through buildings. He grows to impossible heights and crushes anything in his wake, or fades entirely from view, striking out at his enemies from seemingly nowhere. It is often up to Renegades to subdue him, which puts them at risk not only of the conspiracies finding them, but also of triggering their own Instabilities.

Ferals who have a handle on their powers and have retained a degree of clarity can also be potential allies for Renegades. Their time on the run from conspiracies gives them a keen understanding of how those organizations work, and they may have spent some time entangled with one, either as a participant in creating other Remade or as a prisoner and tool. Most Ferals are extremely cautious, to the point of paranoia. The slightest hint that a Renegade could lead the conspiracy to her door is enough to spook her and send her even further off the grid. Alternately, a Feral who feels she's been betrayed by a Remade or members of his cohort could decide to unleash her rage on them all. Killing them, after all, gets rid of the problem.

Chloe Kincade, The Girl with a Thousand Faces

Quote: "I don't know who I am, some days. Maybe today I'll be you."

Background: Chloe always thought she'd be a famous surgeon someday. She focused her studies on facial reconstruction, interning under the best in the field. She read journal articles voraciously, and wrote letters to their authors asking questions that belied her brilliance. When a recruiter from a biomed company reached out to her with an exciting opportunity to work on cutting-edge procedures, she jumped at the chance.

The methods the company employed were beyond her understanding. The materials and pharmaceuticals they used weren't any she'd ever heard of, and the equipment approached Clarke's Law-levels of complexity.

Chloe remembers examining the machine the doctors used one night while she was alone in the lab. Maybe there was a short in the system. Maybe she didn't calibrate it correctly. Maybe she just stood in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Next thing she knew, she was across the room, on the floor, her face burning. When she looked in the mirror to assess the damage, there was nothing there, her features melted or blurred or fused into a blank slate. She's not sure how she saw anything, how she was able to breathe, or how the scream got out.

Chloe ran, and stole the faces of the people she passed along the way.

Description: Chloe's face changes too often for any photos to be reliable. She takes faces from the young and old, and from across all genders. She's of average height, flat-chested, and sturdily built, and wears clothes to match whichever persona she's adopting.

Storytelling Hints: Chloe hardly remembers what she looked like before her Divergence, but she's stopped mourning who she used to be. The constant face-shifting has unmoored her from any true sense of self, and she discards personas the way most people discard fast food wrappers. Within a week of wearing a new face, the features deteriorate, and Chloe goes out to seek a new one. She doesn't only steal a person's looks. She tries their personality on as well.

Her former employer has been searching for her for over a year, without realizing how many times she's returned to the lab wearing one of her old colleague's faces to steal information.

She's grown adept at switching faces to lose herself in a crowd. If she's being followed, she'll attempt to circle back and tail the person who was tailing her first.

Origin: Pathological

Clade: Invasive

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2; Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Expression 3 (Technical Writing), Larceny 2, Medicine 4 (Plastic Surgery), Politics 2, Persuasion 2, Science 4 (Biology), Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Subterfuge 3, Survival 3

Merits: Anonymity 5, Fast-Talking 4, Hypervigilance

Willpower: 5

Stability: 6

Conviction: 0

Loyalty: 0

Aspiration: Live someone else's life

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Health: 7

Size: 5

Acclimation: 1

Persistent Scars: Addictive Variation (Physical; Lingering; Face Thief) 3, Paranoia (Mental; Environmental Adaptation, Hyper-Competence) 2

Variations: Environmental Adaptation (Urban) 1, Face Thief 4, Hyper-Competence (Medicine)

Deviant: The Renegades Manuscript Preview #5

Chapter Six: Settings and Sample Conspiracies

Situational forces can work to transform even some of the best of us into Mr. Hyde monsters, without the benefit of Dr. Jekyll's chemical elixir.

— Philip Zimbardo, lead researcher on the Stanford Prison Experiment

The conspiracies writhing through society's flesh dwell in an intertwined existence of different cultures and occult biomes. From this medium springs forth Divergence, in all its manifold expressions and deviations. The Remade scramble through the shadows of innumerable places and peoples, reflections of their societies' sins.

This chapter presents four sample locations around the world, featuring existing conspiracies and situations that challenge the Broken who dwell there.

Anchored Realities

Ankara, Turkey

In Ankara, the Remade look around at the concrete and brick flesh of their city and see themselves reflected through a dozen different metaphors. Ankara is an ancient settlement swept to prominence in the aftermath of the First World War's tumult and transformed into the capital of the Republic. Its masters tried to clip its wings through careful urban planning, but the city slipped the leash and erupted into sprawling, riotous growth. The meat of the urban landscape overgrows itself like a wild cancer, as crumbling *gecekond* slums burst up then are remade into gleaming manufactories and rigid complexes. It is a battleground for conflicting politics and cultural flash-points and governmental paranoia; the streets flood like capillaries with protests and riots when the pressure in the nation's heart grows too great. It is a great, groaning beast at conflict with itself, somehow held in a cycle of self-renewing constancy.

The conspiracies that covet Ankara prize the raw material of the city itself — a unique creature of urban evolution, a well of strange energies that they will give anything to possess and pry into. It sits as a nexus of the unexpected, a point of stable disruption in the fabric of reality. For four millennia, and maybe even longer than that, it has been a place of pilgrimage for Progenitors and a point of intrusion by alien forces into this world. Now, it is the battleground between two powerful conspiracies: the terrifying and ancient Onachus, and the shadow-government of the *Uyanıklık Cemiyeti*, the Vigilance Society.

Liminal Tides

For the Remade, Ankara is a place of inexplicable phenomena and underlying threat. It is a city, yes, and a place of human conspirators who would twist and pervert the minds and bodies of their victims, much like anywhere else. Ankara is subtly *wrong*, though, to the wary eye. Little glitches are everywhere in the urban sprawl. Streets that don't join together quite right, stairways leading up to nothing, park benches contorted into an isolating closed circle amid a copse of utility poles. A Baseline might shrug it off as the result of Ankara's explosion beyond its original planned layout. Remade know better.

Ankara is a place where reality's many layers are pressed close together. Energy membranes, folded dimensions of raw power, or information tucked alongside the world, are crushed that little bit nearer and are more prone to bleeding out into the space that humans can perceive. Alien realms of ephemera and capering jinn are but a breath away. Strange echoes of the city, stillborn versions that never were, and tumbled Escher nightmares hidden behind rarely-trod alleys, push and gnaw at the corners of its urban landscape.

Most Remade are in no position to explain the city's phantasmal permeability. The Onachus apostate Kelebek likely knows a great deal, but demands a high price for her counsel. Other Renegades spend their time and energy on avoiding the prying eyes of the conspiracies and planning avenues of counterattack. For their day-to-day survival, it is more important to understand the effects of Ankara than its causes. Never climb the stairways-to-nowhere under a new moon. Don't cross covered parts of the Ankara Çayı waterway if you can hear strange whispers. Steer clear of the power substations when the evening sky is red. A body of superstitions and taboos, shared among Remade and their allies, builds a little further whenever a Deviant takes a wrong turning and ends up lost in hungry, alien streets for one frightful night.

Still, some Broken refuse to sit down and just accept that Ankara is a bleeding wound of eldritch energy. Driven by an obsessive need to understand the urban arcana of the city, or intending to turn Ankara against their enemies, such Remade record, plot and calculate patterns of intrusions into the world. An irregular storm of interference dips out of unseen dimensions to drench electricians in static and blow fuses across several blocks, so figure out the pattern behind its appearance, and the Renegade can launch an attack when a conspiracy's agents will be deprived of modern surveillance and communications. With a Vigilance Society cadre in hot pursuit, a desperate Deviant takes the forbidden left-right-left turn into the *gecekondu* shanty, preferring to risk running the dusty streets of the 'other city' where the psychic Devoted will refuse to follow.

If the Remade are largely in the dark as to the causes of Ankara's state, Progenitors have an overabundance of theories. Attempts to explain the liminal nature of the region include a claim that it was the test site for a reality-distorting bomb detonated by some ancient civilization — the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great is a popular choice of culprit — or that a meteoric impact involving exotic elements had a similar effect. One Turkish researcher notoriously disappeared after briefly making a big splash in the internet conspiracy-theory community. He claimed to have scientific measurements indicating a catastrophic *future* event, its effects so intense as to ripple backwards through the fabric of space-time.

Others point to the Tree of Life on Republic Coins and claim Ankara is one of the places where the roots of the Tree writhe through the world. Midas is another common theme, as the transmutative powers and bestial traits ascribed to the Phrygian king might indicate he was a Deviant, a Progenitor, or both. There's at least one contorted theory that the Gordian knot was in Ankara, not nearby Gordium, and that it was no simple bundle of string but rather a thread of dimensional stability that Alexander's sword split apart.

Some would-be Progenitors come to Ankara following old leads — myths of Midas, the Onachus, or the recovered texts of now-dead Ottoman-era conspiracies. More arrive due to modern inquiries. Anomalous results at a research foundation's lab attracts a top scientist, or enough urban legends about jinn in the electricians catch the attention of a petty sorcerer. Certain methodologies of Divergence are much easier and safer to undertake in Ankara's malleable reality than elsewhere. The city is like a honey-trap for Progenitors.

Those who work independently or as part of a minor conspiracy usually don't realize their danger until it's too late. The Onachus and the Vigilance Society guard against mere dabblers in the secret side of the world, and they consider Progenitors operating outside their remit as pests or threats. The lucky ones are driven off. A rare few are given offers they cannot refuse. The conspiracies murder most who fall into their spotlight, and whisk their projects away for analysis. Most Ankaran Renegades are the Remade of these minor Progenitors caught in the city's web.

Coactives are the most common Deviants in Ankara, born from a fusion of the strange energies or mutated by ephemeral influences. Other Clades are uncommon, apart from the Cephalists of the Vigilance Society.

A substantial minority, however, are the victims of accidental Divergence. A hapless human takes a wrong turning one day and ends up in a weird echo of a residential area, where the hollow-eyed inhabitants report to punishment-factories for daily mutilation; when he emerges, his body has mutated from exposure to the other city's malign nature. Before the river was cleaned up, its noxious filth spread sickness and disease; one outbreak of spores from a membrane of corrosive reality infected several poor government workers living in the vicinity of the riverbanks, and now, fifteen years later, the creeping Divergence has bloomed through their meat and their minds.

These accidents rarely have any idea of what has happened to them or who their Progenitor might be. As angry as any Deviant, and even more confused, Ankara's accidental Renegades tend to have short lives. They flare up and burn out fast. Their funeral pyres pass under the guise of another minor terrorist attack, or an act of sectarian violence. The conspiracies swoop in like vultures as, dead or alive, any Remade is a potential resource. The Midas Club, a seemingly benign organization, does its best to find and offer succor to Ankara's lost Broken, but they're often too late.

And what of the Baselines who dwell in Ankara, who bustle along its streets, crowd into its offices and ministries and factories, and play in its parks? For the most part, they blithely pass the oddities of their city without a moment's hesitation. They assume the odd, patchwork glitches in the urban fabric are a natural result of Ankara's overflowing and chaotic growth. They shrug off problems with the infrastructure as expected — for many, it's a surprise the *gecekondu* areas have electricity and running water at all. Just as in the rest of the world, people train themselves not to see the darker edges of daily life. They block out the strange whispers, instinctively avoid particular streets, and tell themselves that the low crime rates surely mean a disappearance has a benign explanation behind it. Terrorism and government crackdowns are frequent enough to make more esoteric conspiracy theories unnecessary.

And yet, almost reflexively, they hang their nests of concrete and brick with eyes of staring white and blue — the *nazar boncugu*, talismans of the evil eye. Naïve tourists assume the dangling trinkets are a quaint superstition aimed at their wallets, the cheap debasement of a local tradition into mass market appeal. But Ankara's true nature nags at the subconscious, and the people of Ankara lean a little more heavily on the old Anatolian practices than they might otherwise. Better to take the evil eye seriously, just in case. Better the dubious protection of an old cultural tradition than no protection at all.

Fracture Lines

As the thriving capital city of a large nation, Ankara seems an odd place for a Deviant to hide. The major hubs of governance and high-end industries mean a heightened security presence. Terrorism and tension with other regional powers aggravates the authorities' paranoia. People are everywhere, and even the ingrained instinct to ignore unsettling evidence of the world's darker facets will only go so far. The presence of the major conspiracies looms large over all other considerations, too. This city is their laboratory. A Renegade can all too easily feel like a rat, running free only because the overseers of Ankara have not yet deigned to crush them underfoot.

Yet, these same features give Ankara some advantages as a battleground for the Remade. Over five million are packed into this place, so a Remade who *can* pass for a Baseline will melt into the crowd. The disorganized, technically-illegal houses of the *gecekondü* areas are a warren that a Deviant can vanish into, while the spreading suburbia on the city's flanks can hide all manner of sins in peaceful streets and behind quiet facades. The conspiracies may be powerful, but they are far from absolute rulers. Even as they worm through the fabric of society and the machinery of state, they must conceal themselves or be dragged out into the light and expunged. Ankara is a city of paranoid ministries and high-value targets. When a conspiracy moves outside of its carefully-cultivated bastion of influence, it deals with choking bureaucracy and ever-wary security services.

At the heart of Ankara is the **Ulus** district, the old town. While the Ulus is by no means made up entirely of old buildings, it does feature its fair share of ancient architecture. Its crowded nature, winding streets, and steady stream of tourists might seem an appealing hiding place to some Remade, but the Onachus maintain a strong presence here. While they carry out few significant operations in Ulus, and their actual headquarters are no longer in Ankara at all, the conspiracy has mapped the strange phenomena of the city most extensively here and its response teams react rapidly to potential breaches. Onachus agents watch the district through surveillance networks, and while their coverage is far from perfect, a Renegade who decides to set up shop in Ulus is asking for trouble.

One major hole exists in the conspiracy's web of influence. As far as Baseline humanity knows, **Hamamönü** is just another tourist trap: a tangle of old streets restored to Ottoman style. As far as Onachus are concerned, it's a huge and disturbing breach they still have no answer to. Several years ago, the Hamamönü neighborhood was just another run-down, dilapidated piece of Ulus, dim and quiet. Overnight, the Hamamönü that everyone knows today aggressively overwrote the old version. The new streets follow different paths. The old, crumbling buildings vanished in favor of bright, appealing restaurants and souvenir shops. An entire cast of inhabitants came with the buildings, people who suddenly burst into existence, complete with names and histories in the governmental records. And *no-one noticed*; the original residents were forgotten, even by family and friends.

The new ones have smiles a little too plastic, voices slightly grating as they eagerly peddle tourist tat to the enthralled crowds. Bad things happen to people who cause trouble in Hamamönü — a flash of teeth in a back-alley, a flurry of garments into a back room, and they're gone. The district occasionally spits out their bones into the sewer system. The Onachus sent in a Devoted to examine the phenomenon, but the district tried to take a bite out of her, so she bit back with fire and radiation. That's when they found the *other* problem with Hamamönü — something about its warped, parasitic presence aggravates Instability in Deviants. Even the slightest slip can result in Scars bubbling up and running wild. The conspiracy cannot

functionally quarantine a highly successful tourist spot, and they're paranoid that the Vigilance Society doesn't seem to have noticed what happened either.

The Renegade **Kelebek** is a reclusive Onachus apostate. She's feared and revered by the occult underworld of Ankara, a witch-queen entirely wrapped in saffron-yellow but for her ulcerated eyes and a brief impression of radiation-scarred flesh around them. Kelebek is a wellspring of esoteric knowledge and possesses a massive collection of occult objects, particularly artifacts that have been spat out of Ankaran breaches or were changed by exposure to its strange energies. Her help comes at a high price, but she has a particular taste for archaeological finds from Anatolia and the Levant. Her hunger for such would strip the museums of their troves, if she could get away with it, and some Remade are desperate or arrogant enough to hit a private collection for a bauble to sweeten her disposition.

Kelebek is deeply paranoid and highly secretive. She evades the Onachus through an almost instinctive understanding of the city's patchwork breaches, and rumors swirl that she spends the months between her appearances walking the echoes of other cities that overlap with Ankara. What has become clear in recent months, though, is that she's planning something. Her agents, armed with her considerable fortune, have been hunting for cutting-edge medical practitioners who have flexible ethics and ambitious theories. Some Deviants wonder if she's looking to become a Progenitor herself, to build her own Remade as weapons against the Onachus. A few spout a wilder supposition: Kelebek wants to try the impossible, and reverse her own Divergence.

The **Midas Club** is a conspiracy that doesn't realize its own nature. A loose network of interested parties who have stumbled upon awareness of Divergence and its victims, the Midas Club thinks it is a humanitarian mission — a benevolent force helping the Broken rather than exploiting them. With several wealthy patrons and a network of safe-houses, it does its best to map the worst excesses of Ankara's strange phenomena and to identify new Renegades. Where it finds a Deviant, the Club's members swoop in to present themselves as a hidden force of righteousness and succor.

Make no mistake, the Midas Club *is* a conspiracy. As an institution that's now some seventy years old, founded by a cabal of military officers who discovered the Vigilance Society during the early years of the Republic, it has survived the intervening decades through cunning, bribery and influence. Presenting a friendly face to Deviants helps usher them into its embrace where they can be examined, questioned, and studied for a greater understanding of their Divergences. **Orhan Tilkici**, the current head of the Club, tries to convince Deviants to keep a low profile, not rock the boat, and be eventually transported out of Ankara to remote areas of the Turkish countryside. There, Club researchers can examine and attempt to 'treat' them under less pressured circumstances where other conspiracies aren't close on their trail. This clashes with the drive for vengeance and action in most Deviants. Often, Orhan lets uncooperative Remade leave with an air of sad resignation. Sometimes, though, he can't find it in him to see a particularly interesting set of Variations walk away like that. More than one Renegade has been tasered, gassed, or anesthetized, then whisked away out of Ankara. Any other Remade guests of the Club at the time are fed a story that the vanished Deviant was seized by the Vigilance Society.

Shadow War

Two mighty conspiracies dominate in Ankara. The Onachus wield tremendous occult power, while the Vigilance Society draw on the darkest recesses of the military-industrial complex.

The Onachus

The Onachus are an old and powerful conspiracy whose talons reach far across Europe and the Middle East. Their right hand is a cascade of foundations and corporations, powerful business interests producing tides of wealth and overt influence. Their left hand is a tangle of religious groups, cultural organizations and petty social conspiracies through which they tug at the puppet strings of their catspaws. They watch for the same phenomena that birthed their conspiracy in Ankara — breaches into interstitial spaces, and places where the fabric of reality wears thin. At the conspiracy's heart are the Onachus Devoted, following a path of spiritual self-mutilation with the goal of enlightenment.

The Onachus believe they are inheritors of a legacy reaching back four millennia, although the conspiracy only truly came into being in the latter years of the Roman Empire. To conspirators in the know, Ankara has been hiding its secret in plain sight for a very long time indeed. Its name literally means 'anchor' in ancient Greek, despite lacking a port and, indeed, being over a hundred miles from the nearest coastline. The Onachus see evidence that philosopher-Progenitors have worked their art in Ankara's strange embrace for long eons, but that it was only with *the* Onachus herself that the site's true potential was realized.

Onachus is an Anatolian myth: a fiend of poison and fire, a mother of monsters. Where she strode, the earth sickened and burned. Sometimes she is depicted as a bison or a dragon, the mate of Biblical nightmares, and her loins the source of a litany of horrors. But to the conspiracy, she was both Progenitor and Remade. What made her special was not her Variations and Scars of monstrous intensity, but a methodology focused on understanding of the soul itself. By approaching Divergence unclouded by misunderstandings as to its true nature, the conspirators interpret her approach as being pure in a way that other Deviants are not. The Onachus believe the most important part of any human being, Baseline or otherwise, is the soul itself. Flesh is transitory, but the spirit houses humanity's true potential for evolution.

The conspiracy keeps a carefully tiered structure to compartmentalize information, and runs its core like a company despite being more of a cult. At the top is a small board of leaders, half Onachus Devoted and half Baseline. Outside of this cabal, no member has a full picture of the conspiracy's activities, even other Devoted. A second tier of loyal organizations run by trusted conspirators form the main body of the Onachus — a hydra with many heads coordinated towards the same goals. These groups, like the powerful Rassiter Foundation or the Nar Alhaqqa, are in the loop and can directly call on the rest of the organization for support. The third tier are minor conspiracies that dance to the tune of the Onachus, controlled through money or blackmail or special interests, uninitiated into the greater mysteries.

The Onachus see themselves as heroes and guardians protecting Baseline humanity from a world filled with unseen horrors. Remade, other than their own Devoted, are a threat, a sign of sickness — of attempts at human evolution that have gone off the rails and threaten to infect more of the species. Reality suppurates and frays at the edges. The Onachus are self-appointed surgeons, excising the rot of imperfect Divergence and sterilizing the world's wounds. Where the conspiracy encounters a breach or a Remade run wild, it draws on what regional resources it has — and these are often considerable. Onachus companies push every edge of the corporate abuse stereotype, with independent security teams prone to activity well beyond their jurisdiction, and a willingness to bribe and influence government apparatus to cover up their operations. Ironically, Ankara is a weak spot for the conspiracy as the Vigilance Society has a stronger hold

on government channels than the Onachus do. In the capital, the conspiracy leans more heavily on its other arm of operations, using local community organizers, Islamic faith groups, and informal influence networks among the judiciary.

Where a threat is too great to overcome with corporate black-bag squads or the crushing weight of society's hostility, the conspiracy must rely on its Devoted. The Onachus are hesitant to do so, as their Devoted are not just tools, but living examples of a potential future for all humanity. Due to the extensive Scars that the Onachus Divergence inflicts, extended operations can also quickly result in the Devoted suffering colossal damage to their physical bodies. Instability risks a catastrophic event of lethal flame and radiation.

Onachus Divergence is administered to carefully vetted volunteers in the conspiracy's most guarded facilities. A potential Devoted does not need to be a high-ranking conspirator. More important is a level of spiritual resilience that the Onachus purposefully hunt for in the human population. The conspiracy tells potentials they are the next step for humanity, that the soul is the true legacy of the species and the greatest source of power available, and that as Devoted they will help change the world for the better.

The Divergence bathes the subject in frequencies of strange energies that resonate with the human soul. During this process, surgeons implant carefully-crafted artifacts of tangled, angular brass and steel into the subject's abdomen — objects of occult engineering that serve as nodes and amplifiers. The first Onachus changed herself without these devices. They are the handiwork of centuries of examining and measuring breaches in reality and the strange worlds beyond, and are the true reason for the conspiracy's hungry pursuit of such phenomena. At the culmination of the process, the soul cracks through the direct application of energy like a hammer, and the raw power floods out to be harnessed as light, heat, and information. The implanted nodes set up a feedback loop that wrenches the crack even wider, reinforces it, and catalyzes even greater power within. The soul becomes a reactor, burning bright as a nuclear flame. Few survive the process.

Onachus Devoted are fanatical in their zeal. Each is the potential chrysalis of what the conspiracy believes humanity's future may be — casting off physical frailty in favor of the raw power of the soul. Combined with the immense power of the Variations that course through their bodies and nodes, most Devoted believe the body is a vessel of little import — a fleshy channel that holds them back. They are trained to ignore the pain that comes as their skin blisters and meat boils when unleashing the fire and radiation of the soul.

Onachus activities in Ankara continue apace, even to the modern day. The controlling board is headquartered in Europe, now, but its members regularly visit the city. The upper echelons of the conspiracy swirl with rumors that there is another layer of leadership above the board — a single ruler hidden from sight. Agents also suffer a growing sense of unease at what seems to be a rising intensity in otherworldly phenomena. Many conspirators fear Ankara is finally starting to come apart at the seams, and that extreme events like Hamamönü will soon be commonplace.

While the Onachus feud with the Vigilance Society now, they have faced other enemies in the past, including powerful conspiracies that wormed through the Ottoman Empire during its heyday. The Onachus seek to expunge all knowledge of one particular foe from the earliest days of their existence, a conspiracy or cult of Ascalon. Whoever the Ascalon cult were, they had knowledge of occult science that could interfere with the Onachus Divergence — weapons shredding a Devoted's soul with Instability and resonators sending Variations lashing wildly out

of control. The cult is long gone, lost to the passage of time, but occasionally their handiwork surfaces from old tombs or archaeological digs.

The defection of Kelebek shook the organization's core. Unlike many conspiracies, the Onachus had a near-absolute trust in the loyalty of their Devoted, seeing them as the spine of the organization. Following her departure, lower-ranking Devoted have found themselves more isolated from the chain of command, now treated more as powerful assets than holy exemplars, until such a time as they prove their long-term stability and trustworthiness. This breeds frustration and resentment. Worse, the stories about *why* Kelebek fled are still passed in quiet whispers between worried conspirators. She became paranoid that Onachus — the *original* one, founder of the conspiracy — is after her, having become a predator of Devoted souls. The Remade reassure themselves that Kelebek must be mad, that Onachus could not have survived two millennia, and that the notion the Devoted are created purely to feed her hunger is nonsensical. The conspiracy actively suppresses any discussion of Kelebek's claims, and has flagged her for termination by any means necessary.

The Vigilance Society

The *Uyanıklık Cemiyeti* is a conspiracy of rogue military and state agents, a black ops department buried in the squirming guts of governance. Answering to no one but themselves, members of the Vigilance Society believe they are still the torchbearers of the vigorously secular, rational, nationalist movement through which Kemal Ataturk birthed the Turkish Republic. The conspirators imagine themselves hard men making hard decisions, protecting the people of Turkey from a world full of threats. They thrive in the modern environment of tension, terrorism, and sectarian violence.

The Vigilance Society emerged in the aftermath of the First World War, initially just another tendril of the nascent nationalist movement that also created Kemal Ataturk's Sentinel Society. The latter is a matter of proud public record: how the nationalists responded in the face of the circling, hungry Western Powers not by folding to the Ottoman Sultan's instructions for disarmament issued from Istanbul, but instead by cleverly gathering troops and resources from across the region to serve a new government in Ankara. The Vigilance Society appears in none of these histories, because its founders stumbled on something entirely unexpected when smuggling munitions out of western Anatolia. They found the remnants of the *Eiraf*, one of the earliest psychic research programs.

As the Ottoman empire collapsed upon itself, the many conspiracies that had dwelt within it for generations writhed in panic. Most fell apart and perished. Some were set upon by conspiracies among the Western powers, hungry to loot the occult secrets of a dying power. The *Eiraf* was a clandestine, sinister legacy of a long line of Imperial court astrologers delving into the esoteric arts of prognostication.

The Vigilance Society played no major part in the War of Independence, too busy trying to gather resources and implement the *Eiraf* procedures they had discovered. By the time the founders consolidated their conspiracy in the halls of power in Ankara, attempts at Divergence produced the first *Eiraf*-class Cephalist Remade, and at this point they encountered the Onachus. Surprised at the existence of a surviving Ottoman conspiracy, the Society immediately judged the Onachus as a threat to the nationalist vision. The eighty years that have since passed have borne witness to a shadow war played out across the city and beyond.

The Society dwells within the hollow spaces of the state. It lurks in warehouses and facilities that every ministry believes are the property of another. It recruits veteran soldiers quietly filtered out of the mainstream military due to their encounters with the supernatural and offered excellent pay in return for the utmost confidentiality. It draws revenue streams siphoned from bloated budgetary commitments. Agents of the conspiracy pepper the Turkish intelligence services, military, and scientific divisions. They have proxies and catspaws in the major defense industries. When pushed, the Vigilance Society can bring all the power of the state to bear on enemies — wiretaps, surveillance, police brutality, extraordinary rendition and imprisonment into modern oubliettes. They even have literal black helicopters.

However, the Society's primary strength is their Divergence program. The procedures have come a long way since the early days. Long gone are the occult sigils and mystical drug-induced trances. Today, the Society's facilities feature humming screens that monitor psychic equilibrium, sensory deprivation tanks, and chemical cocktails piped directly into the spine and cranium. Society Progenitors experiment with new refinements, attempt to instigate new Variations, and promote greater stability in their subjects. Remote viewing, mental influence, and telekinesis are all features that the *Eiraf* inducement chambers can reliably trigger in suitable candidates.

Volunteers drawn from special forces or covert training regimens are deployed in intelligence operations beyond the Republic, sent hunting terrorist and insurgent groups within the country's borders. Most, though, are unwilling — latent psychics sourced from medical screening of an unwitting populace, taken into custody and subjected to horrific procedures with no expectation they will ever leave a Society facility even if Remade. Used as candidates for remote and far-reaching Variations, survivors are brainwashed or kept in semi-comatose states, rigged up to Instability-monitoring machinery and used as a living surveillance system to keep the Society apprised of threats and opportunities.

The conspiracy sees other Remade as potential terrorist weapons or tools against the establishment. The Society tries to capture rather than terminate, as it can gain more information from a live vivisection than from an autopsy. It brings promising Progenitors in-house if possible. The psychic capabilities of Cephalist Devoted means the Society can be *very* convincing when it wants to be.

Ankara is a problem. The Society only realized the nature of the new capital site some time after embedding themselves in the corridors of power, and it is a constant source of frustration and fear that the heart of the nation is a literal sieve. Paranoid theories of terrorists hiding in alternate realities or religious fanatics tapping into membranes of infinite energy run through the highest offices of the conspiracy. The Onachus are bad enough, but at least they are a *known* enemy — monstrous and a threat to the nation, yes, but foes willing to play along in a cold war rather than going hot. It's the unknown that terrifies the Vigilance Society, and so they seek to know everything.

The Vigilance Society are sitting on a metaphorical bomb due to having lost a literal one. Conspiracy members managed to get their hands on a nuclear weapon, a warhead present on Turkish soil through the NATO weapons-sharing agreement. Cephalists were supposed to extract the authorization codes via psychometry — a back-up plan in case the Republic suddenly found it could not rely on the United States when its back was to the wall — then return the bomb to its official store. The warhead is gone, though, and so is one of the Remade. It's only a small

payload, but this fiasco has pushed the paranoid Society heads to fresh heights of panic. The best guess that slaved Remade prognosticators can come up with is that the bomb is somewhere in Ankara. The Cephalist Renegade's powers are strong enough to interfere with their clairvoyance, though, and no-one is entirely sure what he is planning. Rumor is he's looking to offload the weapon to a buyer, and Kelebek is in the market. It's against the Society's instincts to warn the Onachus of a problem coming their way, but there's no foreseeable outcome where a loose tactical nuclear weapon works out well for the Society, no matter who it is targeted at.

Conspiracies of Ankara

Onachus

Standing: 7

Principles: The soul is the path to true human evolution; breaches in the world are both threat and opportunity; benevolence towards humanity through hidden guidance.

Virtue: Zeal

Vice: Arrogance

Attributes: Power 8, Finesse 7, Resistance 5

Conspiracy Actions: 4

Association: 8

Hierarchical Node: The Board

Temporal Nodes: Altin Finance Global, The Assessors, Breach Response Unit, Rassiter Foundation, Onachus Devoted

Exploitative Nodes: Bektashi Materials Research, IMINT/SIGINT Analysts, Legal Retainer Team, Nar Alhaqqa, Suborned Judges

Structural Nodes: Galatia Transport International, Rassiter Holdings, Ulus Information & Insight, Yıldırım Security

Icons: Alarum, Breach Suppression Technologies, Location Isolator, Onachus Divergence, Rassiter Analysis Protocols

Rassiter Foundation: This is a sprawling private foundation of laboratories, scientific research projects, and some associated charitable fronts.

Rassiter Analysis Protocols: The Rassiter Foundation's occult scientists have refined the Protocols over the decades. Agents of the Node enjoy the rote quality on Academics, Occult, and Science rolls when locating and investigating interstitial breaches and breakdowns in reality.

Breach Response Unit: This network of highly trained agents equipped to deal with breach incidents and Deviants.

Breach Suppression Technologies: As an automatic conspiracy action, the Node can equip up to six Baseline agents with barely-understood occult devices that replicate the effects of seven Scar-free Magnitude of Variations. Each agent may have only one Variation at a time, although any number of agents can share the same Variation. For example, three agents could have

Otherworldly Connection (Escherfolk) 4, while two others have Precognition 1, and the sixth has Hypercompetence (Occult) 1. This equipment lasts until the end of the chapter.

IMINT/SIGINT Analysts: Onachus have their tendrils in several European intelligence agencies, which they use to track down those of interest to the Onachus who have made it especially difficult to find them

Location Isolator: As a Complexity 10 downtime action Onachus can pinpoint the location of anyone one of the Onachus Devoted has encountered to within ten miles, anywhere in the world.

Yıldırım Security: This ethically-flexible but ever-vigilant Node protects the conspiracy's holdings.

Alarum: Calling upon additional security, the Node reinforces the conspiracy against enemy attacks. Once per chapter, armed agents of the conspiracy arrive to deal with an attack or intrusion on another Node, or armed agents already present gain the Informed Condition regarding the attackers during the current scene. If a rival conspiracy attempts the sabotage or war action against Onachus, reduce the damage it deals in the current chapter by one.

Others: The **Board** runs the conspiracy. **Altin Finance Global**, a major international company, supplies the funds needed to keep the whole operation functioning. **The Assessors** serve as both emissaries and recruiters, seeking out those with the qualities required of the **Onachus Devoted**. The Exploitative Nodes of the Onachus include **Bektashi Materials Research**, the exotic materials laboratory that performs the actual Onachus Divergence itself — a unique Divergence methodology that produces incredibly potent Deviants. The other Nodes are the conspiracy's fearsome **Legal Retainer Team**, the old-boys-network of **Suborned Judges** and other legal professionals, and the faith group organizers of **Nar Alhaqıqa**. Finally, the Structural Nodes that provide the conspiracy with a backbone of organization include a series of companies who move Onachus personnel and goods around (**Galatia Transport International**), serve as a front for property ownership (**Rassiter Holdings**), and maintain its grip on surveillance and oversight in areas of Ankara (**Ulus Information & Insight**).

Vigilance Society

Standing: 7

Principles: Protect the Turkish Republic against all threats; knowledge is power; only we know enough to judge what is truly a threat.

Virtue: Vigilant

Vice: Paranoid

Attributes: Power 6, Finesse 8, Resistance 6

Conspiracy Actions: 4

Association: 9

Hierarchal Node: Special Security Response Council

Temporal Nodes: 2nd Army 4th Corps Secondments, Eiraf Archive, Eiraf Devoted, Emergency Operations Task Force, Vigilance Threat Analysis

Exploitative Nodes: Explosives Response Team, General Directorate of Security, Ministry of Finance, MIT Surveillance Operations

Structural Nodes: Black Helicopters, Eiraf Research Program, Quartermasters, Special Assignments Recruitment Program, Vigilance Threat Analysis Security Corps

Icons: Eiraf Surveillance Network, Noah Reactor, Sensory Augmentation Tank, Watcher Protocol

Eiraf Archive: This provides a growing body of research and lore that fuels the Society's efforts.

The Watcher Protocol: Via the elaborate calculations of the Watcher Protocol, an advanced predictive A.I. created by the communal efforts of conspiracy Cephalists, all Society agents (not just those attached to the MIT) gain the 8-again quality on all Investigation and Streetwise rolls and achieve an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Eiraf Devoted: Operating closely with the Archive, the Society assigns its most trusted Psychics to this Node.

Eiraf Surveillance Network: Society Devoted can network themselves together in conspiracy laboratories. Devoted of this Node can use teamwork to bolster each other's Scar Finesse rolls for Cephalist Variations.

The Emergency Operations Task Force: Tasked, on paper, with monitoring emergencies and notifying the public of them, this Node's agents guard and operate the Noah Reactor.

The Noah Reactor: This device can generate a large-scale but seemingly natural cataclysm anywhere in the world, which the Society uses to trigger an emergency declaration in Turkey or to attack the nation's enemies abroad, requiring a Complexity 10 downtime action.

Vigilance Threat Analysis: This counterterrorism analysis and response group is an official organ of the Turkish government wholly under the Society's direction.

Sensory Augmentation Tank: The Node's agents enjoy a Scar-free Magnitude 1 Variation that enhances their senses, grants some form of remote viewing, or provides prophetic powers. All agents receive the same benefit during a given chapter, but the Society can change this Variation as a Complexity 1 downtime action.

Others: The Hierarchical Node atop the Vigilance Society appears on official paperwork only as the **Special Security Response Council**, an overlooked governmental committee with surprisingly broad, sweeping powers in emergency situations. The conspiracy has direct command over the **2nd Army 4th Corps Secondments** stationed in Ankara. It draws on the **MIT Surveillance Operations**, and the **Ministry of Finance** for additional resources in a less official capacity, and conspiracy infiltration into the **General Directorate of Security** gives the conspiracy significant influence over the civilian police force. The **Explosives Response Team** has infiltrated law enforcement bomb squads, using their authority to evacuate areas under the guise of a bomb threat or set off explosions either as tools of assassination or in order to blame a desired scapegoat. The **Eiraf Research Program** serves as an intermediary between the Special Security Response Council and its research Nodes. Other Structural Nodes include a transport fleet of military vehicles and **Black Helicopters**, the various suborned **Quartermasters** in the Turkish Land Forces and MIT (who keep the flow of supplies going), and the **Vigilance Threat Analysis Security Detachment** that protects Society holdings. The **Special Assignments Recruitment Program** is the backbone of the conspiracy, sifting through military and civilian records in search of suitable candidates for membership—either patriotic and paranoid soldiers

who might find a place in the conspiracy's hierarchy, or those expressing the signs of psychic potential and the possibility of surviving Divergence.

Midas Club

Standing: 3

Principles: Map the everchanging city; catch more flies with honey; doing it for their own good

Virtue: Altruistic

Vice: Deceptive

Attributes: Power 3, Finesse, 6, Resistance 3

Conspiracy Actions: 2

Association: 6

Hierarchal Node: Remote Treatment Center

Temporal Nodes: Ankaran Spatial Cartographers, Rescue Squads

Exploitative Nodes: Bought Hospital Orderlies, Dirty Cops

Structural Nodes: Mysterious Patrons, Safe Houses

Icons: Liberated Remade, Righteous Resilience Propaganda

Remote Treatment Center: What direction the Club wields over its Nodes flows from here.

Righteous Resilience Propaganda: This keeps up morale, allowing the conspiracy to downgrade damage to its Association at the end of each chapter even if it took damage during the chapter; if it took no such damage, it instead downgrades additional two damage.

Rescue Squads: This Node's agents rescue and recruit Renegades.

Liberated Remade: The Rescue Squads include a large population of Remade who have chosen to work for the Midas Club to free other Deviants and bring them into the fold. Once per chapter, when the Conspiracy recruits a Devoted as a Complexity 1 downtime action, this Node recruits one additional Devoted.

Others: The Club's **Ankaran Spatial Cartographers** chart Ankara's occult phenomena. Most Renegades who end up in the hospital or in jail make easy targets for other conspiracies, but the Club arranges for many such Broken to be released through its **Bought Hospital Orderlies** and **Dirty Cops**. The conspiracy's cash flow through **Mysterious Patrons** and the volunteers at its **Safe Houses** are the lifeblood of the organization. The Midas Club is accustomed to suffering losses, and the Remote Treatment Center uses Its Rescue Squads also

Ankara and Beyond

Within Ankara, the dueling conspiracies of the Onachus and the Vigilance Society dominate the occult landscape. Lesser conspiracies are either crushed underfoot or scurry for cover as the two giants struggle for influence and control over the city's bizarre phenomena. Still, it's a restrained conflict. Neither can afford to be revealed to the wider world. Both are peripherally aware of the Midas Club, but find the loose organization troubling to track down and suppress, and given its actions are largely limited to taking troublesome Deviants out of their battleground, they've had little incentive to push more aggressively.

Beyond the city, the Onachus are already an international conspiracy, and they tangle with other heavyweights on the global scene as they hunt down and attempt to suppress or seal similar breaches in reality. Their greatest rivals are the Fafnir Collective, a conspiracy based in northern Europe who use a very similar form of Divergence to the Onachus — albeit with a far more self-centered, avaricious ideology. Similarly, the Yelbeghen of Russia provide an even darker mirror to the Onachus, defiling their own souls through a grotesque Divergence to achieve monstrous power. The Vigilance Society deals with the governmental and nationalist conspiracies with all the paranoia and rivalry one might expect. However, it does cautiously involve itself in limited trade of less promising Eiraf Deviants to secular, political conspiracies in some other Middle Eastern states in return for influence and favor, such as the New Future Vanguard in Iran who pursue radical visions of a posthuman nation of Remade.

The Onachus recruit promising researchers into the Rassiter Foundation from all over the world. They've recently been contacted by the surviving descendants of Hiram Ellicott from Connellsville, Pennsylvania, who have formed a small conspiracy of their own to feud with the company that now owns the Ellicott Caves and the strange phenomena at play there. In Darwin, Australia, a Cephalist Renegade from the Vigilance Society called Beyza Ceylan seeks to create a new conspiracy among the free Remade of the city; she's a rogue element run far beyond the easy reach of the Uyanıklık Cemiyeti, and appeals to her former comrades by email or phone to flee and join her.

Jungle Warfare

Darwin, Australia

In Australia's far north, Darwin's ecosystem is aggressive and voracious, killing and devouring the ignorant and unwary. Plant life grows at almost visible speeds, requiring constant battle to keep from overrunning the areas humans believe they control. The crystal-clear ocean tempts people away from the heat and into its cool relief, but the beauty hides hungry predators ready to eat those who give in to the temptation. Inland is just as dangerous; lush vegetation camouflages the land-locked killers who murder for trespass into their territory just as readily as for a meal. The harsh heat quickly saps moisture, leading the unwary to waterholes where still more predators watch and wait. Survival is difficult, but not impossible. For many Remade, the savage paradise represents freedom, and a chance for vengeance.

Conspiracies war against this deadly backdrop in a perfect reflection of nature's laws. Two powerful predators maneuver to get their jaws around their competitor's throat while smaller hunters snipe at their flanks, hoping to tear free and secure a larger portion of the spoils for themselves. Beneath these, the smallest, most desperate and hungry conspiracies pillage for scraps and try to expand their power bases to avoid falling victim to the expansionistic hunger of everyone above them.

As the war grinds on, the powerful try unorthodox tactics, turning loose those Broken they deem too unruly or weak, hoping to obfuscate and confuse the battleground. Deviants spill onto the streets and take territories across the city and surrounds. With their own stake in the war, these Renegades fight for survival and against recapture. They never forget the conspiracies that hurt them. Revenge may not be their primary focus now, but eventually, they will collect on all debts.

One airport, one train station, one port, and one main road south. The exits are few and easily watched. Remade stay in Darwin because dying is the alternative, and being devoured in the wilderness is barely a choice at all.

Controlled Chaos

Australia's northernmost (and smallest) capital city sprawls across the Northern Territory's northwestern shoreline. Darwin's business district — the seat of government and office headquarters — squats on a low bluff overlooking its harbor and back towards the residential and commercial areas, giving an impression of arrogantly ensuring everyone follows its lead.

The city stands apart from the rest of the nation, being closer to the capitals of five other nations than Australia's own. This proximity to other cultures conditions Darwin residents into an easy acceptance of the unusual. Every Darwinian has a story of why they came to the city and never left. Whether running away from some horror, or just having no other place to go, Darwin is a wonderful place to lose and reinvent oneself.

The wild landscape around the city is hostile to the ignorant and unwary. Crocodiles, sharks, and venomous predators patrol the beguilingly blue, clear ocean, always on the lookout for an easy meal. More crocodiles, snakes, and ferocious wild boars roam the wilderness to the east and south. On land or sea, these natural predators inadvertently take the blame for the actions of Ferals and wild Manticores venting their rage on whomever comes their way. Survival in this land is possible, but it requires knowledge, skill, and more than a little luck.

The clear skies and perfect warm weather of the winter dry season belie the savagery of the oppressive humidity, heat, and tropical storms that batter the city during the summer wet season. Thousands of tourists flood the place during the dry, leaving before the madness-inducing humidity "build-up" announces that the wet is on its way. The flow of tourists makes an easy source of new recruits for conspiracies, and Darwin's no-questions-asked approach to those who come here is perfect cover for conspiracies to bring specialists in unnoticed.

As Baselines struggle to control the natural wilds around Darwin, countless conspiracies skirmish to control the city and surrounds for themselves. Their maneuvers give rise to opportunities for Broken to slip free of their shackles and escape. The two largest conspiracies experiment with tactics of confusion and misdirection, proactively releasing Deviants into the world for their own purposes. Smaller conspiracies move quickly to acquire these loose assets and reassign them to their own holdings, sometimes giving them a powerful tool in the wars but more often opening themselves to more trouble than these Remade are worth.

Broken Dreams

Darwin's transformed live in a time of opportunity and danger. Far more Deviants live free than ever before, thanks to the war's shifting tactics. The old guard Renegades regard these newcomers with a fair degree of suspicion, and some contempt. They haven't earned their freedom with the blood and lives of those who kept them prisoner. To Renegades who have lived revenge for years, these latecomers are poor successors.

Adding to this suspicion is the fact that not all Remade released to the wild are genuine Renegades. A not insignificant number of Devoted also roam free, playing their part with hopes of reward. They appear no different to their Renegade siblings, and know survival requires them to blend with the others. This makes Renegades more paranoid, fearful of exposing their secret

havens to the enemy via these traitors. Renegades live with the daily fear that when the conflict dies down, the conspiracies will know exactly where to look to recapture their ‘assets’.

Night Life

Much of Darwin’s after-hours business occurs within a few blocks of the city’s business district. The small but vibrant club and bar scene is also home to many budget accommodation options to cater to the backpacking tourists. Most establishments have cheap rooms situated at the back or on the upper floors.

During the dry season, every room is jam packed with international tourists looking to experience Australian culture and sunshine. These modern-day explorers wander the city or tour the surrounding national parks during the day, but at night young adults pack the area, fatigued by the day’s activities yet filled with youthful refusal to rest and sleep. Looking to eat, drink, and fuck, these inebriated and incautious fools are prime targets for conspiracies ever hungry for new recruits. This energy appeals to the youthful membership of Gudamiya and the Pantheon of Gaia, both of whom pluck new recruits from the masses with unfortunate regularity.

As the humidity builds and the rains threaten, the density of travelers eases, but never completely dies off. Though the opportunities ebb and flow with the changing seasons, this strip is always a prime hunting ground for nearly every conspiracy looking to draft employees. The presence of so many conspiracy recruiters in such a small location inevitably leads to conflict, often obfuscated by the frequent, alcohol-fueled fistfights on the streets and nearby alleyways. The Society for Cultural Preservation benefits most from these incidents — between genuine drunks or careless recruiters — as the police responders are firmly but unknowingly in the Society’s service, for now.

Games of Chance

Where the nightclubs benefit the Society, Darwin’s casino is an Augmentec stronghold. Only a short distance from the club district, here the rich come to forget their troubles, and the poor try to find respite from debt and despair. For both sides, it’s easy to forget that the house always wins, and nothing comes for free. Some learn too late that all debts must be paid, whether through money, influence, or flesh.

Augmentec plays a careful game with the casino’s clientele. The conspiracy’s American backers have deep pockets that can outlast the funds of most opponents. However, Augmentec has no desire to simply fleece all rich opponents into its debt. The conspiracy prefers the long game, letting its rich prey run with money in their pockets, sometimes more than they began with, sometimes a little less. They come back voluntarily, engage with Augmentec from a perceived position of equals, slowly surrendering their power and influence to the conspiracy while enjoying every minute of falling victim to the trap, until it closes around them and they can’t escape. Augmentec’s smooth-talking representatives know how to play their captured prey even as the victims struggle for freedom. It takes considerable time for these wealthy new associates of the conspiracy to realize that all they have is the illusion of freedom, and they can never escape the web.

The casino’s less wealthy losers often face a more dramatic fate. A rare few possess skills and abilities that Augmentec is happy for them to trade as part payment of their debts. Most owe service to the conspiracy — dangerous, unethical, and illegal activities performed to benefit Augmentec, but hidden behind layers of deniability that bury the victim if caught but never lead

back to the conspiracy. The poorest, those least likely for anyone important to miss, find that their bodies are the only thing of value that the conspiracy will accept as payment.

The Rat's Nest

As a small city with many hostile interests competing for Remade, some wonder how Deviants manage to not only hide, but appear without notice to interfere with conspiracy plans. The tangled network of tunnels beneath the city and surrounds is the answer. Originally constructed with government backing and purpose — to protect fuel supplies from Japanese bombing attack during the Second World War — the tunnels saw little use during the war and were already officially obsolete when completed.

The tunnels lay quiet and officially unused for decades but were never completely silent. Unknown to the ignorant masses above, conspiracies and other interests expanded the network. These add-ons and renovations were uncoordinated, growing the network as a labyrinth of unmapped chambers and passageways that cross over and double back on each other.

Not even the canniest Renegade claims to know the network's full extent. They cross beneath the entire city, with access points hidden away in alleys, beneath office buildings, and spilling out into storm drains near homes.

Everyone in the Web of Pain uses the tunnels. Several Renegades call hidden chambers home. The conspiracies usually stick to the portions they built or have under their control; the cost of exploring the unknown is often great as organizations clash in the darkness, anointing the tunnels in blood. The expanse and chaotic layout mean groups mostly avoid running across others unless they're looking for trouble.

Like most of Darwin's environment, the tunnels aren't exactly safe. Many are in danger of collapsing from decades of plant invasion and surface development. Predators, both natural and unnatural, also make homes and hunting grounds in the dark, taking victims trying to navigate the confusion.

Beyond the City Lights

Darwin's outskirts are no safer than the city itself. Conspiracies value the remoteness for the privacy and control they gain. Isolation and danger from the natural world outside compounds make it easier to keep a short leash on their Remade. With vast space available away from hostile competitors, many smaller organizations base themselves in the wilderness and engage in guerrilla warfare against the larger conspiracies. The Pantheon of Gaia thrives in the wilderness in a way the other conspiracies can't match. Augmentec and the Society have been largely unsuccessful in establishing their power outside the city. Both have built small compounds barely beyond Darwin's limits, which suffer dogged attacks and sabotage from many enemies. The cost of maintaining these properties is nearly prohibitive to the larger two conspiracies but pride and stubbornness so far prevent them from abandoning the attempts.

Despite the dangers, some Remade find the courage and opportunity to escape compounds. They invariably find themselves in unfamiliar territory where everything wants them dead. The heat makes finding fresh water a priority, but every waterhole and stream could be home to creatures just waiting to make a meal of the unwary Deviant. These creatures sometimes include the Remade's predecessors, who managed to not only escape, but to survive.

Come One, Come All

Darwin teems with conspiracies vying for dominance in the isolated city. The biggest are the well-entrenched Society for Cultural Preservation and the aggressively expansionist Augmentec, but many smaller, hungrier conspiracies fight for scraps and fever-dream of something better. Gudamiya knows well the weaknesses of the other conspiracies and protects its people and sacred sites from everyone. Phoenix Power Explorations covertly runs mining interests throughout the region in the search for energy resources, sweeping aside local opposition, some of whom find themselves forcefully recruited into Phoenix's 'human' resources. This desecration of the natural world enrages the Pantheon of Gaia into action against the miners. Meanwhile, the Sixth Number maintains a low profile and hopes the others don't pay close attention to its globally destructive goals. So far, they haven't.

The Society for Cultural Preservation

Every culture has its stories, and the Society for Cultural Preservation is very good at listening. The cultural initiations and hidden practices that open a world of possibility. The men and women of potential beyond the lesser humans around them. Demigods who lead nations and armies. Shamans, healers, spirit-talkers. Accidents of birth, payments in blood, sacrifices of the flesh. Stories of pain, and suffering, and power. Stories of Divergence.

The Society was always at the forefront of the British Empire's desire for conquest and expansion. Where the pathfinders travelled, when explorers encountered new cultures, the Society was there. When Britain introduced civilization to the far reaches of the world, the Society preserved everything of value within its vaults.

The Society's approach to triggering Divergence is egalitarian — the conspiracy will try anything to see what works. The Society's preservation of cultures is genuine, but it inevitably discards the unique qualities of any culture in favor of homogenizing the elements leading to power. The Society is also pragmatic enough to find use for any Broken but has a preference for Coactives and focuses its synthetic rituals to tap into sacred sites of spiritual power and merge whatever is there with the human victim.

Augmentec

Augmented development, national prosperity. Augmentec's mission statement promises clients what they need to strengthen their interests. Most of Augmentec's customers are national governments or the powerful corporations who pull their strings. Backed by powerful lobbying interests within the United States of America, Augmentec officially exists within the myriad contractors and technology companies, existing to feed the U.S. military-industrial complex that keeps the right individuals wealthy and powerful.

Augmentec's business is ostensibly the continuation and propagation of conflict for the sake of profit, but the fighting is only a means to an end. Augmentec is more interested in perfecting the Divergence, in advancing the technology required to meld human and machine. Augmentec doesn't offer its special services outside American clients yet. The conspiracy's stakeholders provide Augmentec with bountiful resources it uses to ensure carefully selected clients get everything they need. The company prides itself on results, and the way of achieving this is to ensure it only takes on the projects where it can succeed in making a difference. The bean-counters figure Darwin and the synergy between US and Australian military interests to be one such project.

Augmentec favors Invasives that merge next-generation military hardware within the human body, but its exposure to other transformed in Darwin have expanded the conspiracy's interests, especially into the Chimeric field. Augmentec's development laboratories now specialize in harvesting the more unusual organs from any Remade it captures, preparing them for grafting into more pliable and loyal volunteers.

Phoenix Power Explorations

A conspiracy expanding its control of energy and mining interests into the metaphysical space for control of humanity. Like its namesake, Phoenix reinvents itself to keep with the times, dying behind asset-less shell corporations and bankrupt figurehead company directors. The conspiracy takes no pleasure in the ruins it leaves behind as it understands that business is impersonal. All that exists in succeeding is the willingness to take whatever it can and the foresight to cut losses and run before facing consequences.

Phoenix has a high rate of turnover for the people in power compared to many conspiracies. Few of Phoenix's controlling board and ambitious corporate climbers can maintain the company's dispassionate façade for long, inevitably falling prey to their baser human impulses, maneuvering against rivals and accepting a greater than necessary loss in pursuit of an individual goal. Phoenix tolerates a certain level of emotion and loss of control, but when individuals overstep what is good for the conspiracy the Divinatrix speaks out. When that occurs, the board has little choice but to eliminate the dangerously emotional weakness growing within.

Gudamiya

Younger generations across the world feel isolated and alienated from politics of destruction and greed that appear to only serve to make the mega-wealthy even richer. These feelings intensify among those forced to watch their ancestral lands taken and exploited by people with no care for their deeper spiritual meaning. Gudamiya is a response to this generational disconnect and feelings of uselessness. This conspiracy is also a direct challenge to the evils that created it, fighting fire with fire.

The seeds for Gudamiya came from the discarded transformed across Darwin. Released back into the world without care that their lives were ruined and they could never return home, various young Deviants came together beyond simple cohorts for their own purposes. The cult of personality formed around Anna "Awarraan" Stone, a young indigenous woman snatched from the streets and forced into the Divergence. Her rage is almost unmatched among the Broken, fueled by the assault upon her body and soul, and her enslaved participation in destroying families and forcing people from land the conspiracies wanted. Awarraan formed Gudamiya around piecemeal fragments of lore and culture she picked up from her upbringing, and those of other Deviants drawn to her cause.

Unfortunately, the nature of conspiracies is to pursue their goals with little regard to how their actions impact others, and Gudamiya is no exception. The group's cause is superficially admirable, but the members' rage leaves a trail of destruction in its wake as they take back from other conspiracies what they believe is theirs.

Pantheon of Gaia

The Pantheon of Gaia believes that Gaia — as the personification of the living Earth — is sick and dying from human development and expansion. Humanity is a cancer that needs treatment. Much like cancer therapies, the Pantheon combines surgical precision for eliminating discretely

harmful populations, and expansive toxic therapies for the broader population. The Remade are the scalpel and the chemotherapy in the Pantheon's metaphor, sometimes sent to eliminate specific problems, other times unleashed for widespread destruction as they see fit.

The Pantheon knows it is at risk of elimination by other conspiracies and survives by primarily keeping to the wilds outside the city and arranging itself in a loose cell structure. Most individuals within each nodule usually only know their immediate peers and maybe some faithful from a nodule further down from them. Some senior members know one or two people from nodules closer to the central Mother Temple. The disorganized arrangement increases the difficulty of coordinating conspiracy activities, but ensures no one part of the group can compromise the whole.

The Pantheon doesn't believe in destroying all humanity and has a growing list of people who can return to a more natural balance and should survive the eradication. The members of the Pantheon, and some of their families and friends, are, of course, on this list.

The Sixth Number

This newcomer has little to do with others in the Web of Pain, with goals shrouded in mystery. The Sixth Number wishes to keep it this way. Other conspiracies are often looking to crush or exploit their competitors, and the Sixth Number believe that its enemies would move faster to eliminate it if they knew its true purpose.

Gears, Levers and Pulleys — The Conspiracies

This section covers the six most prominent and enduring conspiracies currently operating in the Darwin area, detailing their key Nodes and Icons and giving an overview of around half their remaining Nodes. Individual Storyteller's can detail the rest to tailor the Web of Pain to their chronicle's needs.

Numerous small conspiracies beyond the six below appear or move into the region every year, as do local offshoots of larger national or international interests. These are rarely higher than Standing 1 and most disappear quickly, overwhelmed and consumed by the established powers.

The Society for Cultural Preservation

Standing: 6

Principles: The secrets of the past inform our future; take what is useful, discard what is not; we don't have to be the first, but we will be the last.

Virtue: Thorough

Vice: Destructive

Attributes: Power 4, Finesse 6, Resistance 8

Conspiracy Actions: 3

Association: 11

Key Nodes: As a well-entrenched conspiracy, the Society has many Nodes, some openly connected to the group's public image, others hidden in plain sight, and more locked away in the shadows. Those detailed below are the most well-known to the Web of Pain.

Hierarchal Node: The Home Office, The Society Club

Temporal Nodes: Devon Warehouses Ltd, The Maritime Vessel *Old Frontiers*

Exploitative Nodes: Harlow and Rendell

Structural Nodes: Community Assistance Logistics, Cultural Outreach Social Media, SCP Regional Corporate Headquarters

Icons: London Backing, Healing Pools, All Modes Transport Fleet

The Home Office: The Society is headquartered in London, which carefully monitors the Darwin offshoot's progress and stands ready to replace its management in the event of catastrophic loss.

London Backing: If another of the conspiracy's Hierarchical Nodes is destroyed, the conspiracy may replace it as a Complexity 3 downtime action (instead of Complexity 7).

Devon Warehouses Ltd: A warehouse complex appearing like any other in the city's industrial outskirts, Devon Warehouses boast a larger footprint and more security than its competitors. Arranged in a layered grid, mundane businesses rent the outer sheds while the Society keeps its treasures hidden and safe towards the center. Among these, carefully geomantically arranged in an otherwise empty warehouse, are the *Healing Pools*. John Bell leads security around the area and knows — in general terms — the occupants and contents of every lot in the facility.

Healing Pools: Painstakingly recreated stone by stone stolen from sacred locations across the Pacific, the Healing Pools allow the Society to revitalize injured forces with remarkable speed and maintain their dominance over other conspiracies. The pools replicate the effects of the Healing Touch 5 Variation (p. XX), but shut down for replenishment once used. The pools become inactive for one or two hours at Magnitude 1 or 2, are unusable for a day at Magnitude 3, for a week at Magnitude 4, and a month at Magnitude 5. The subject immersed in the pool enjoys the benefits of the Variation until the end of the chapter.

Community Assistance Logistics: CAL's resources provide the Society with a mobility and response capacity to rival professional militaries. CAL maintains vehicles to rapidly move field teams to promising finds wherever they may be in the southern hemisphere and has the connections and funds to access anything bigger for larger deployments. Cameron Allan worked logistics in the military before discharging to start his own trucking company. Thanks to the Society's business, CAL grew and expanded rapidly. A micromanager, Allan doesn't trust his subordinates to reveal all his contacts and connections. The managers of each of his transport streams would likely fall to infighting for control of the company if Allan were to disappear.

All Modes Transport Fleet: CAL can get conspiracy members almost anywhere in short order. Individuals can move anywhere in the Darwin region without requiring permits or leaving a paper trail within an hour, and anywhere across the world in less than a day. CAL can also arrange the loan of almost any kind of vehicle to characters, depending on their standing in the Society and whether their actions meet conspiracy needs.

Others: Sebastian Irvine currently holds the most sway over **The Society Club**, which is the ever-changing location where the Society's movers and shakers meet, the time and place of each meeting communicated via cyphers. The **Maritime Vessel *Old Frontiers*** is the Society's flagship bringing aid and cultural researchers to islands throughout the Pacific Ocean. Its hidden holds carry away more than most know. The law firm **Harlow and Rendell** are on constant retainer, ready to challenge any competitors who make the mistake of engaging the Society

through civilized channels. **Cultural Outreach Social Media** is the first point of contact for many interested in understanding or joining the Society's public mission. The professionally managed websites and social media profiles give the ignorant a strongly sympathetic view of the Society. The **SCP Regional Corporate Headquarters** is another public facade for the Society in Darwin's heart, employing dozens of unknowing pawns and filtering messages between Nodes and to other conspiracies.

Augmentec

Standing: 5

Principles: Money talks; let nothing stand in our way; exploit every weakness.

Virtue: Largess

Vice: Ruthless

Attributes: Power 7, Finesse 4, Resistance 5

Conspiracy Actions: 3

Association: 8

Key Nodes: As a powerfully aggressive and expansionist conspiracy, Augmentec has many Nodes that its competitors haven't unearthed. Below are those identified with the conspiracy, or which the organization relies upon most heavily.

Hierarchal Node: The Casino

Temporal Nodes: U.S. Marine Training, Testing, and Development Regiment; Precision Robotics Australia

Exploitative Node: Darwin Airport,

Structural Node: Augmentec Corporation Offices

Icons: Endless Funds, Weapons Development, Cutting Edge Gear

The Casino: The money flowing to and from the casino's vaults is central to Augmentec's influence in Darwin, as is the leverage given over those who lose more than they can afford. Carla da Costa is Director of Operations and knows almost everything that occurs in her casino. She passes on nearly everything but withholds some secrets for her own personal use.

Endless Funds: The money pouring into the Casino's coffers gives Augmentec disposable cash to purchase almost anything it needs. Once per chapter, agents of this Node can procure items as if they had Resources 5, and all Augmentec agents receive a free dot of Resources.

U.S. Marine Training, Testing and Development Regiment: When the U.S. military proposed an ongoing presence in Darwin, Augmentec's backers ensured it was a detachment compatible with the conspiracy's methods and goals. The conspiracy has great influence over the local detachment — officially listed as rotating training deployments — with Colonel William Perry in command of the US presence and ensuring Augmentec receives extreme cooperation in its weapons research and equipment development programs.

Weapons Development: Augmentec's subsidiaries design and build the next generation of weaponry to sell around the world. Augmentec weapons add one to Damage, reduce Initiative

penalties by one, and double range. However, the weapons break beyond repair the first time a wielder suffers a dramatic failure on an attack.

Precision Robotics Australia: Augmentec favors Divergences triggered through implantation of cutting-edge equipment. It needs someone to make that equipment. The Australian branch of the multinational Precision Robotics is a typical example of the industry partners linked in Augmentec's supply chain. Dr Fiona Weist runs the design and manufacture elements of the company. She's a world leader in human-machine interface technology in the public media, with a similar reputation within Augmentec's more shadowy circles.

Cutting Edge Gear: The systems installed within Augmentec's Remade are better than their competitors. Once per chapter, a transformed originating from Augmentec enjoys two Scar-free dots of Invasive Variations until the end of the scene. Adaptations cannot overcome this per-chapter limit.

Others: Augmentec moves many supplies — including live cargo — through **Darwin Airport** on their way to the conspiracy's secure facilities. The **Augmentec Corporation Offices** in Darwin's business district serves the same function of the public facade put up by the Society, managing the overt elements of Augmentec's business model and unknowingly moving covert messages for the conspiracy.

Phoenix Power Explorations

Standing: 3

Principles: Power is wherever you look; explore until you find what you need; control the market, set the price

Virtue: Frugal

Vice: Negotiable

Attributes: Power 6, Finesse 3, Resistance 3

Conspiracy Actions: 2

Association: 6

Key Nodes: Less powerful than some other conspiracies warring in Darwin, Phoenix has a knack for securing resources the bigger players want, giving it bargaining power but also frequently bringing the conspiracy into direct confrontation with the larger competitors.

Hierarchal Node: Phoenix Investments and Returns

Temporal Node: Energy Exploration Group

Exploitative Node: Territory Times

Structural Node: EEG Building

Icons: The Divinatrix, Investigative Exposé

Phoenix Investments and Returns: Phoenix Investments is a privately-held investment group with interests in major corporations across the globe, most of which give a generous return for the group's investment. The Divinatrix is the key to the conspiracy's success and wealth, a

prognosticating Devoted Cephalist passing predictions and instructions to the group in return for comfort and protection.

The Divinatrix: Hidden away from the world and sustained through complex life support systems and a bewildering cocktail of drugs, the Divinatrix is Phoenix's greatest advantage and biggest weakness. The Divinatrix wields the Precognition 5 Variation, which the conspiracy uses to plan its moves and disadvantage its competitors.

Territory Times: Phoenix only recently gained control of Darwin's largest media organization. The conspiracy took controlling financial interest through dummy corporations and coopted private investors over a year ago, and has spent the intervening time discovering and eliminating the tendrils of other conspiracies from within the company's different branches. PPE installed Dinithi Prasanna as Editor-in-Chief, and she rules with deceptive friendliness that overlays her ruthless ambition. Prasanna and Phoenix aren't interested in nonstop smearing of their competitors and are willing to run favorable articles for an agreeable return. However, just because the Territory Times chooses to not run devastating — or simply embarrassing — stories about other conspiracies doesn't mean that it doesn't keep detailed archives of whatever secrets they uncover.

Investigative Exposé: Phoenix uses its media domination to secure embarrassing and disruptive information on other conspiracies. Once per story, Phoenix may increase the damage it inflicts with a sabotage or war action against another conspiracy (p. XX) by one without requiring additional Effort. This journalistic reach exposes and confounds Remade's hidden actions as well — once per chapter, the Storyteller can direct a character working against Phoenix's interests to convert a failed dice roll into a dramatic failure. If the dramatic failure would normally earn a Beat for the character, it still does.

Others: Phoenix's mineralogy, oil, and gas explorations via the **Energy Exploration Group** give it easy access across the country and within Australia's territorial waters with few questions asked. The **EEG Building** occupies the same conceptual space as the Society's and Augmentec's offices but provides a separation from Phoenix and the more public face of the conspiracy.

Gudamiya

Standing: 2

Principles: Take back what is ours; power is our heritage; destroy all invaders

Virtue: Patient

Vice: Vindictive

Attributes: Power 3, Finesse 3, Resistance 4

Conspiracy Actions: 1

Association: 7

Key Nodes: Small but determined, Gudamiya lacks the resources of the larger conspiracies, but compensates with extreme focus on its narrow areas of interest and an uncanny ability to hit other conspiracies where they hurt.

Hierarchal Node: Communal Council

Exploitative Node: Dungalaba Youth Drop-in Centre

Icons: Hidden Secrets

Communal Council: The disaffected youth who make up Gudamiya build a haphazard structure where everyone's voice has value, though not always equal. They bring together fractured lessons they've taken from various cultures, mashing them to give the conspiracy its unique identity. Anna "Awarpan" Stone brought the Gudamiya together and continues to have the greatest sway in guiding its actions. The conspiracy opens its arms to any Remade who can prove their loyalty, with an emphasis on giving individuals opportunities to demonstrate commitment. The varied nature of its membership and the desire of the transformed to prove themselves and belong means Gudamiya has information on the strengths and weaknesses of nearly every other conspiracy.

Hidden Secrets: The Broken who come together in Gudamiya contribute much fragmented knowledge about the conspiracies from which they escaped. Characters undertaking action against other conspiracies on behalf of the Communal Council gain the Informed Condition regarding a conspiracy of their choice, once per chapter.

Others: Young people with nowhere else to turn drop into the **Dungalaba Youth Drop-in Centre**, inadvertently exposing themselves to Gudamiya's awareness.

Pantheon of Gaia

Standing: 1

Principles: Humanity is a cancer; destroy modernity, return the balance; Nature reclaims!

Virtue: Wild

Vice: Predatory

Attributes: Power 4, Finesse 2, Resistance 2

Conspiracy Actions: 1

Association: 5

Key Nodes: The Pantheon survives by basing itself outside the city, surrounded by harsh bushland where other conspiracies quite rightly fear to venture. It works through a loosely-affiliated cell network, which makes coordination difficult, but eradication harder still.

Hierarchal Node: The Mother Temple

Temporal Node: Albie's Access Adventurers

Icons: Gaia's Boon

The Mother Temple: Worshipping outside the city in the wilds that other conspiracies fear, the Pantheon's central clergy name themselves for Gaia's mythical children and descendants, hiding their own identities and keeping the names and locations of the broader church secret even from each other. The leader of the Pantheon — Uranus, Gaia's constant companion — decreed that each one is responsible for the lesser nodules they nurture, a decree that has cascaded throughout the conspiracy's entire structure. The nature of this arrangement means that many members of the cult belong to multiple cells and know more members of the Pantheon than they think. This internal tangle could prove to be the conspiracies undoing.

Gaia's Boon: The mysticism of the Pantheon yields some tangible power. The wilds surrounding Darwin are always dangerous for anyone who chances them, but those serving Gaia's purpose are somewhat protected. Agents of this conspiracy may reroll a failed roll once per chapter that relates to Survival or avoiding or overcoming dangers in the wilderness.

Others: Albie's Access Adventures leads thrill-seekers to harsh landscapes to see dangerous predators first-hand. The conspiracy members send reports of promising candidates up the chain for processing. Sometimes it takes the initiative and arranges 'accidents' in the worst areas. This thrill of real danger only adds to Albie's success, and each adventurer signed a waiver indemnifying the tour company of blame.

The Sixth Number

Standing: 1

Principles: Discover the Sixth Number; transcend the flesh; complete the Zero Solution.

Virtue: Measured

Vice: Fanatical

Attributes: Power 2, Finesse 3, Resistance 3

Conspiracy Actions: 1

Association: 6

Key Nodes: The Sixth Number is new to the region with goals and resources largely unknown to other conspiracies.

Hierarchal Node: The Five

Exploitative Node: Quantum Mathematics Department

Icons: The Zero Solution

The Five: Five individuals run the Sixth Number, searching for their lost mathematical peer. One initiated the foundation of the conspiracy by seeding near-impossible equations in hidden places around the world. Two and Three provided their solutions within weeks and joined the growing conspiracy, whereas Four took close to a year to join the ranks. Five has only recently joined the group and they now debate how much they should influence locating Six. According to the group's calculations, the Six will transcend into pure mathematical constants and rule alongside the quantum computational demons unleashed into the world. However, if they resolve the Zero Solution before discovering Six, they face subjugation and breaking like every other physical being.

The Zero Solution: An apocalyptic trigger intended to spread throughout computer networks and infect devices everywhere, synchronizing their calculations towards quantum dissolving the physical world into one of mathematical purity. Quantum demons will destroy and enslave every physical creature and force them to descend. Only the chosen few such as the Six will ascend into states of constancy. At least, this is what the conspiracy believes it will unleash. The Sixth Number has a standing Complexity 10 action which, if uninterrupted, unleashes disaster on the world.

Others: Graduate students and post-doctoral fellows from the university's **Quantum Mathematics Department** work constantly to solve the Zero equation, ignorant of what its completion will mean.

The Hydra's Heads — The Web of Pain

The many conspiracies in Darwin make it difficult for Deviants — or even Baselines — to go about their business without tripping over the interconnected filaments of the web. The Society, Augmentec, and Phoenix Energy Explorations maintain official corporate offices and workforces within city boundaries, while keeping their deniable holdings far from official prying eyes. The conspiracies use these offices as communications channels between them and any smaller groups who care to make themselves known and officially join the game. The conspiracies frequently hide carefully worded demands, counter-demands, and threats among the countless routine letters and emails that pass through the offices every day. These communications inevitably find their way to the right people, who pore over the content, trying to discover clues about weakness or strategy against their opponents. While these offices aren't 'off-limits' to the shadow activities of competing conspiracies, they're usually left alone because interfering with them attracts too much attention, and the ordinary wage earners staffing them have no idea of the layers that exist beyond their awareness. While they officially despise the bigger players and each other, even Gudamiya, the Pantheon of Gaia and the Sixth Number maintain connections to public entities and organizations in the city to facilitate contact via this network when needed.

The Web of Pain extends beyond the Darwin region, stretching across oceans to connect around the world. The Sixth Number has links with the University of Delaware as its tendrils in Darwin University extend through the academic network and share data in mathematical circles to crack the answer to the Zero equation. The Society communicates with the Onachus in Ankara via the London head office, as old conspiracies keep themselves updated on the strength and continued existence of their largest regional competitors. Conversely, Augmentec enjoys lucrative business dealings with Ankara's Vigilance Society through deniable cutouts and freelance arms dealers. Weapons and technology aren't the only things exchanged between the conspiracies — each has made cautious enquiries about sharing Divergence information to improve the armamentariums of both.

Progenitor University

Newark, Delaware, U.S.A.

Built in 1743 and chartered as an institute of higher learning in 1833, the University of Delaware has a long and storied history. Among its alumni are signers of the Declaration of Independence, vice presidents, governors, and Nobel Prize winners. Situated in the heart of Newark, a historic small town in the second-smallest state in the U.S., the University is almost idyllic.

Despite its small size, the University's scientific research facilities are both extensive and modern. Deep-pocketed donors have gifted the school with a new cryogenics lab, a magnetic experimentation lab, and a guest lecturer program that attracts scientific luminaries from all over the world to demonstrate their discoveries. This last often provides networking opportunities to graduate students seeking prestigious internships or lucrative positions in government or corporate scientific research programs.

While the success and popularity of this unique guest lecturer program allows the school to punch well above its weight class in attracting talented students to its science programs, some of

the professors the University invites arrive with considerable baggage or advance fields of study that are outright controversial. Dr. Marvin Walk, the chairman of the committee that organizes the visiting lecturer series, insists that it is good for students to encounter such figures during their academic careers, as challenges to their deeply held assumptions offer opportunities to grow as scientists. The announcement of Dr. Lisa Gottfred as this year's guest lecturer has given even longtime supporters of the program pause. Her links to several different white supremacist and "racial intelligence" organizations threaten to turn dormitory grumbling into something explosive.

The University of Delaware

Much of the main campus crowds around the Green, a smooth lawn crisscrossed by brickwork sidewalks. On nice days, students flock to the green to study, catch up with each other, or just relax with a picnic blanket and a ukulele. Beneath the Green, however, lies a network of steam tunnels, riot passages for police, and nuclear shelters. Built in the sixties, they connect most of the newer buildings through stretches of darkness.

The DuPont Tunnels

So-called because they begin in DuPont Hall, the tunnels run along one side of the Green. The tunnels were built in the 60s, when the twin threats of nuclear war and counterculture riots loomed large on the horizon. There's a full mile of tunnels, twisting and turning in the darkness, and intersecting with the storm drains on campus for easy access. In the 90s, when the campus was redone in hopes of a brighter future, some of the tunnels were closed off, locked behind steel doors or sealed off with hastily-constructed cinderblock walls.

Some, however, were integrated into the design of the building. The basements of DuPont, Wolf, and Allison, shod in clean white linoleum and hung with cheerful posters, were once nuclear shelters or tunnels meant for police access. This provides a major benefit to some of the more unorthodox experiments at the University; DuPont gets much of its material science research done here, so the blast shielding that was already in place proves useful for experiments with exotic materials.

Allison Hall

One of the newest buildings to be constructed on top of the tunnels, Allison Hall is technically two buildings, Allison Hall East and Allison Hall West, connected by outdoor walkways. Allison Hall West is the newer of the two, and does not connect to the service tunnels. Allison Hall East is home to a wildly disparate collection of majors. The spacious classrooms are ideal for hosting students of many different disciplines, and while many of the tables and desks haven't been replaced since the 70s, the other tech is cutting-edge. Each year's guest lecturer has their office in this building, and most use one of its classrooms as their main lecture hall.

Wolf Hall

Wolf Hall is the middle child of the buildings on the DuPont tunnel system. It houses the University's College of Engineering, as well as its Physics and Biology departments. The building itself is labyrinthine, with above-ground corridors that connect to DuPont, as well as the tunnels below, and several experimental facilities in the basement. These include a fully functioning hydromagnetics laboratory and several medical biology labs full of twice-sealed chemicals and dissection equipment.

DuPont Hall

The oldest of the halls on top of the DuPont Tunnels serves as the nexus for all the tunnels on campus. DuPont Hall hosts the electrical and computer engineering programs and is a vast technological wonderland. While the facade of the building is colonial red brick, much like the rest of the campus, the inside is updated every year with the latest tech, so the engineering students are always ahead of their peers at other schools. Computer engineering labs have taken over most of the tunnels beneath DuPont, each full of softly-glowing screens and the whir of processors. Even at night, one can find engineering students here, working frantically on projects they need to have finished by the next morning.

Colburn Labs

Colburn Laboratory, fondly known as Colburn Labs or simple “ole Cole,” is the home of the University of Delaware’s chemical engineering and material sciences departments. Newer than Allison Hall, it sits at the end of the DuPont Tunnels, with its basements building into deeper sub-basements. Here, one can find huge tanks of liquid nitrogen, cryogenics laboratories, molten salts even hotter than lithium, and compounds of materials yet to be named.

Morris Library

Morris library is the University’s four-story research library. Although close to the Green, it is not on the DuPont Tunnel system. In addition to a wide assortment of texts suitable for undergraduate and graduate studies, one of the sub-basements contains a small library of occult lore, including several pages of Dr. John Dee’s notes on magic and the body and a clay tablet written in a long-forgotten language that reveals the location of a lost temple of the dead Cult of Ascalon.

ART NOTE: YOU CAN EASILY FIND PICTURES OF THE UDEL GREEN ON THE INTERNET. IT WOULD BE REALLY COOL IF WE COULD DO SOMETHING WITH THAT.

Student Life

Although a thriving research university on the surface, the University of Delaware has some very real problems. Among its most troubling statistics are its high rates of binge drinking, alcohol-related fatalities, and suicide. Some blame its fraternities and sororities for this, at least partially. Its Greek culture is particularly toxic, with initiation rituals turned deadly that look less like hazing incidents that got out of hand and more like occult ceremonies featuring human sacrifice.

Mental health issues are a leading cause of withdrawal from the University, especially among students in its science programs. Its graduate students are especially susceptible to the depression and anxiety that plague the department. The school attributes the high dropout rate to the heavy workloads necessary to make their students competitive in the wider world, one that a fulltime job as a research or teaching assistant can elevate to crushing levels. Many who leave the University of Delaware’s graduate programs in science or engineering abandon the field entirely, in some cases leaving behind academic pursuits forever.

The University’s board of trustees has historically supported even radical free speech. In years past, this has permitted the campus newspaper to publish articles deeply critical of school policies and trustee decisions. However, it has also allowed desktop-published newspapers like *The 1488 Times* to circulate widely, its alt-right headlines and articles sharing equal space with

USA Today, *The New York Times*, and *The Newark Post* on newspaper racks throughout the university campus. It has likewise provided self-styled alt-right activists a platform for attracting new members among the student body, which it has done with alarming success.

The DuPont Guest Lecturer Series

Although billed publicly as a way to bring important scientific minds to teach at the University of Delaware for a year, the DuPont Guest Lecturer Series seldom invites Nobel Prize winners. Rather, these guests have one thing in common — all are successful Progenitors who have learned how to reproduce their results fairly consistently. Each teaches a few classes in advanced physics, biology, chemistry, or whatever other fields brought them to the study of the Divergence, but the main purpose for which they come to the University is to provide a demonstration of the techniques they use to create Deviants. Thanks to this program, the University of Delaware has become a place where the Progenitors of tomorrow come to learn the history and current theories about the Divergence.

Every guest lecturer has his own methodology for producing Remade. Some are quite cavalier with the lives of their test subjects, while others strive to avoid any fatalities. Many espouse controversial political positions, but many others are apolitical scholars of the occult for whom the Divergence is merely an interesting phenomenon. One year's guest lecturer might be a lone professor for whom her work is a labor of love, while the next is "on loan" from another conspiracy that doesn't mind sharing some of its secrets in hopes of attracting new blood from the University's graduating students.

The DuPont Guest Lecturer Committee

Each year, a committee of professors representing each of the six natural science departments — biological sciences, chemistry and biochemistry, linguistics and cognitive sciences, mathematical studies, physics and astronomy, and psychological and brain sciences — meets several times to select potential guest lecturers. Months of discussion lead to a few months of invitations extended, rejected, and accepted, until the Committee ultimately selects the next year's guest lecturer.

The contract each guest lecturer signs guarantees at least one successful Divergence each year, although one per semester is greatly preferred. More than that tends to attract unwelcome attention to the program, which the Committee prefers to avoid. The Committee provides access to all the university's scientific research equipment and helps the guest Progenitor find, recruit, and retain acceptable test subjects from among the student body. It ensures a supply of graduate students who serve as assistants. When necessary, it arranges for the disposal of any failed test subjects. In exchange, the guest lecturer receives a stipend that most tenured professors at the University would envy.

Graduate Students

The Committee does not expect the guest lecturer to perform all the tedious work that goes into producing one of the Remade. An aging Progenitor, for example, cannot perform certain tests herself, or wrestle a struggling subject onto a gurney. Some lecturers bring one or two assistants with them to the university, typically Devoted or trusted colleagues, but they can hardly be expected to do the work of an entire staff. In order to carry out some of the more difficult parts of a Divergence, the Committee enlists graduate students and assigns them to the program.

Many of the graduate students fit the typical mold. They live in communal housing — usually with other students involved in the program. They drink too much coffee, stay up too late, and do unreasonable things for a small stipend and a shot at changing the world one day.

They are all complicit.

They may not enjoy pulling the lever, or using the ECT machine. They almost definitely do not enjoy administering hours of repetitive tests to subjects and recording brainwave activity. Many of them are burgeoning alcoholics and hope to forget what they've seen. The Committee pays them with money, glowing recommendations, and introductions to members of other Progenitor conspiracies. Many establish good working relationships with the guest lecturer, which they parlay into tenure track positions at other universities. At the very least, the experience makes them valuable recruits for many other conspiracies in the Web of Pain.

Those who do not comply can expect to find themselves on the outside of everything. They cannot get funding or recommendations. Departmental budget cuts mean that research assistant and adjunct jobs are difficult to come by without the Committee's say-so. If she doesn't play along with the guest lecturer, it's entirely likely that an unlucky grad student will be cast out into the cold world beyond the walls of academia altogether. And if she attempts to stop the demonstration or draw the scrutiny of the outside world to it, the Committee has the resources to ensure her silence as surely as it eliminates uncooperative or failed test subjects.

University Administration

Although the success of the DuPont Guest Lecturer Series has granted Dr. Walk and the Committee a fair amount of pull at the University, its continuance depends on a great deal of willful blindness on the part of the school's administration. Fortunately, many of the conspiracies the Committee has befriended over the years have deep pockets, which has allowed Dr. Walk to completely corrupt the administrative staff of the University.

The Committee uses this power to secure enrollment for the children and protégés of powerful Progenitors, providing these students with unique opportunities to study other Divergence methodologies, albeit at a considerably higher price than the ordinary University tuition. This provides the Committee with the funds it needs to bribe administrators to ensure the program continues without interference.

Subverted security staff grant access to parts of the campus normally off-limits to students and professors, including the dorm rooms of recalcitrant test subjects who might otherwise wash out of the guest lecturer's demonstration. They also misdirect law enforcement concerning the sudden death or disappearance of anyone the Committee needed to eliminate. Students who die are staged as suicides or drunk-driving accidents. If they have no obvious mutations, they can be left in their dorm room with a noose around their neck, but those who have extra limbs or deformities usually end up on the evening news as a barely-identifiable body after a horrendous accident.

Guest Lecturer: Doctor Lisa Gottfred

Dr. Lisa Gottfred is the current DuPont Guest Lecturer. While she has her doctorate in Medical Biology, she is a tenured professor of education at the University of Minnesota's St. Cloud campus. Her classroom is always decorated with plants and beautiful crystal lightcatchers in the windows. With her bright blue eyes and her blonde-grey hair, always pulled back into an old-

fashioned bun, she could be somebody's beloved aunt or grandmother. She maintains surprisingly convenient office hours. Her voice is soft, her comments gentle, and her door always open.

Prior to coming to Minnesota, Dr. Gottfred was a lead researcher for The Manifest Destiny Foundation. Created by a mill owner in the early 1900s after he lost a legal battle to his workers' union, the Manifest Destiny Foundation seeks to promote "race realism" in academia and scientific inquiry. In theory, this means treating race as a real and valid factor in people's lives. In practice, it usually manifests as angry articles in academic journals explaining why people of color are stupid and do not deserve to be educated because "they won't get it anyway." Although she officially retired from that organization five years ago, she still writes articles for the Foundation and occasionally accepts generous consulting fees from them.

In fact, she is a very successful Progenitor and one of the first to identify the effects of genetics on a candidate's suitability for Divergence. Among conspiracies that seek to create Mutants, Gottfred is a living legend — exactly the sort of guest lecturer the Committee hopes to entice. Unfortunately, she comes with the baggage of being a white supremacist, which has long encumbered her acceptance in academic circles.

Her presence at the University of Delaware is controversial, despite the city's largely homogenous white population. It has also proven disruptive in other ways, drudging up and emboldening The 1488 Club — a local alt-right organization that has long sought to expand its presence on the campus of the university. This group of neo-Nazis hopes to enlist Gottfred's support in giving them a greater voice in Newark and beyond.

Gottfred's Secret Methodology

Although Dr. Gottfred produced her first Deviant decades ago and devoted twenty years to perfecting her techniques for triggering the Divergence, she has never fully documented the process she uses to screen potential test subjects for viability as Remade. Even The Manifest Destiny Foundation never successfully wrested her secrets from her, such that they are unable to produce new Deviants except in consultation with her. As she approaches the end of her seventh decade of life, however, Gottfred has expressed worry about her scientific legacy. She knows that she must pass on her methodology to someone who will build on her work, but it is equally important to her that any such successor share her values.

She has announced that she will choose a protégé from among those who enroll in her special lecture and who assist in her demonstration of the Divergence. Anyone with Gottfred's secret would find all the conspiracies of the Web of Pain open to him, a fact she will fully use to motivate the graduate students to perform horrific tests on experimental subjects as a test of their personal loyalty to her and their scientific resolve. The stress of this regimen of inflicting physical pain on test subjects may yet rise to a trauma sufficient to transform some of her assistants into Cephalists. It is unclear whether or not this is her true intention.

Gottfred's Office

At first glance, Dr. Gottfred's office, tucked away in a corner of the first floor of Allison Hall, looks homey and inviting. The windows look south over a garden that blooms with dogwood and roses in the spring, and the windows are full of crystals and stained glass art. Dr. Lisa Gottfred has covered her desk in a pretty wool shawl, and there is always soft classical music playing in

the background. Whenever she is on campus and not teaching, her door is open and she can be found here.

Her office becomes more disconcerting the longer one spends in it. White supremacist symbols that can easily be explained away, like the triskelion and the clover, permeate the art in the room. Her bookshelves are full of texts on educational conditioning, racial intelligence, and medical experimentation, right next to books about how to teach preschoolers and SAT prep guides. In her desk, she keeps a battered paperback of *Mein Kampf* under copies of *Positive Thinking Every Day* and *The Secret*. First editions of *Might is Right* and *Man, The Unknown* are locked in one of her cabinets.

Gottfred's Assistants

Dr. Gottfred has brought two Devoted with her to the University of Delaware. Both are Mutants who are ostensibly "on loan" from The Manifest Destiny Foundation, although they are loyal to Gottfred first and foremost.

Virginia Dare is the older of the two, and took her name after the first white child born in the New World. She helps with more physical tasks and directs the graduate students when Gottfred isn't available.

Father Lance checks up on the health and well-being of test subjects and ensures any Remade remain in containment. While he seems kind and gentle, his rare flares of temper are legendary among members of the Manifest Destiny Foundation.

Conspiracies of Newark

The DuPont Guest Lecturer Series is the only conspiracy with a major presence in Newark. However, most guest lecturers have at least some connection to another conspiracy, and Dr. Lisa Gottfred is no exception.

The DuPont Guest Lecturer Series

Standing: 1

Principles: Educating the Progenitors of tomorrow; show respect and you will receive it; let none stand in the way of scientific progress

Virtue: Open-Minded

Vice: Permissive

Attributes: Power 3, Finesse 3, Resistance 2

Conspiracy Actions: 1

Association: 5

Hierarchal Node: DuPont Guest Lecturer Committee

Exploitative Node: University Administration

Structural Node: Graduate Students

Icon: Alternate Lecturers

DuPont Guest Lecturer Committee: The committee directs the activity of the other Nodes or delegates it to the guest lecturer. The Node's Linchpin is Dr. Marvin Walk, the chairman of the Committee and the head of the Biological Sciences Department.

Alternate Lecturers: Not every guest lecturer serves out the entire year of his contract. Conflicting priorities and pedagogical inadequacies can force an early departure. Freak accidents and the unexpected arrival of Renegade former test subjects can cut a Progenitor's life short mid-semester. The Committee keeps several alternate lecturers in reserve for just such an occasion, each one capable of accomplishing the Divergence on quite short notice, if necessary — although their methodologies can be somewhat crude, resulting in a higher failure rate. As long as the Committee remains intact, the Graduate Students Node is not destroyed if its current Linchpin is killed, although the conspiracy suffers damage to its Association normally. Instead, a new Linchpin arrives to take over the Node at the beginning of the next chapter.

University Administration: The corrupt staff of the university's administrative offices provides cover for the activities of the Committee and their guest lecturers. The Node's Linchpin is James Dwyer, a campus security officer who has worked at the University of Delaware for nearly 40 years. He knows every nook and cranny of the school grounds and has the full trust of the university staff, but he is one of the Committee's most prized assets. Now approaching the age of 70, and with a wife whose chronic health issues add up to large medical expenses, Dwyer's ability to retire comfortably was in doubt until he started accepting bribes from the Committee. Now, he has staged so many suicides and covered up so many student disappearances that he is terrified that the Committee will make him disappear if he stops.

Graduate Students: This Node does most of the grunt work the guest lecturers require. Although some find the work distasteful and turn to drug and alcohol abuse to avoid having to consider the damage they are doing to the lecturer's test subjects, a substantial minority have an active interest in learning from the techniques and methodologies of successful Progenitors. A handful, prodded by rumors that Dr. Gottfred is looking for a worthy successor to whom she can reveal her secrets, will stop at nothing to prove themselves to her. The guest lecturer is the Node's Linchpin. Without her, the graduate students are forced into comparative idleness, and those attempting to curry favor with her will lose any progress they might have made.

The Manifest Destiny Foundation

Standing: 2

Principles: White makes right; master race 2.0; in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god

Virtue: Courteous

Vice: Xenophobic

Attributes: Power 3, Finesse 4, Resistance: 3

Conspiracy Actions: 1

Association: 6

Local Nodes: The Manifest Destiny Foundation has a minimal presence in Newark. Dr. Gottfred is their main representative.

Temporal Node: Gottfred Consulting

Exploitative Node: The 1488 Club

Icon: Driving While White

Gottfred Consulting: Dr. Lisa Gottfred, with the assistance of her Devoted, can produce Mutants with some regularity. As long as she has the leisure to carefully screen them for genetic, physical, and psychological fitness, she can avoid fatal failures nearly 90% of the time. She has been much less successful in identifying controllable factors that will allow her to do the same with Cephalist Divergences, but she is eager to test and improve her methodology there. The Manifest Destiny Foundation would prefer Dr. Gottfred abandon her current line of inquiry, but without her continued cooperation and consultations, they would lose their ability to produce Deviants entirely, so they are not pushing the issue.

The 1488 Club: This Newark-based white supremacist organization is a relatively new phenomenon, but its members are hungry for more influence. The Foundation found it quite easy to subvert the Club in order to make use of its resources. The Club, coupled with Gottfred's presence at the University, affords the Foundation an opportunity to win new converts to their cause, which they do not intend to let slip by. The Club also gives the Foundation access to a couple dozen foot soldiers on the ground if it needs to come to Dr. Gottfred's aid.

Driving While White: For the most part, local police treat Club members with kid gloves, carefully protecting their freedom of speech, even when members commit acts of violence. Members of the Node enjoy two free dots of Status when dealing with local law enforcement.

In the Wider Web

The DuPont Guest Lecturer Series is a feeder organization for at least a dozen other science-focused conspiracies in the Web of Pain. Graduate students who elect to study the methodology of a visiting Progenitor quite often join a conspiracy once they complete their studies — whether they go to work in the private sector, in government, or in academia. The ESC in Connellsville, Pennsylvania is particularly eager to attract graduate students to its internship program.

Even beyond the visiting Progenitors themselves, all the members of the Committee have connections to one or more conspiracies. For example, before coming to the University of Delaware, Dr. Walk spent two years as a research assistant at the Society of Cultural Preservation's London headquarters.

The Secret of Ellicott Cave

Connellsville, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Tales of strange creatures and unexplained disappearances have been part of Connellsville's lore since its founding in 1793. These stories all have their origin in a medium-sized limestone cave located roughly a mile from the eastern edge of town, on the fringes of the forested state land that surrounds the town to the south and east.

In addition to numerous gorgeous stalactite and stalagmite formations, yellow-green crystals ranging in size from fingernails to fists cover the walls. A small creek runs through the center of the cave, and these crystals adorn its channel. This creek ends in a small pool just outside and to the left of the cave's entrance. This pool is slightly more than 20 feet across and only a few feet deep. The water does not continue away from the pool, instead sinking into the earth through a variety of small cracks and fissures.

A local entrepreneur named Hiram Ellicott discovered the cave in 1907, and named it after himself. In an attempt to further enhance the town's growing economy, Hiram Ellicott stabilized the portion of the cave closest to the opening, put in paths, and tried to transform the cave into a tourist destination. Two years later, after several reports of mysterious illnesses, one death, and an unconfirmed report of something strange and terrible happening to one patron, local authorities closed the cave to tourists.

Investigators discovered that the cave and to a lesser extent water from the stream that flowed out of the cave was mildly toxic. Most people who spend too much time in the cave or who drink or bathe in the water suffer flu-like symptoms, which occasionally prove fatal in vulnerable populations such as the young, elderly, or immune compromised. As a result, the town gated the cave and fenced off the pool shortly after the end of WWII.

Today, Ellicott Cave remains gated, with a sturdy fence around both the cave's entrance and the pool beside it. Officially, the local government works with the Ellicott Study Center (ESC, generally rendered as "the Esk") to control access to the cave. The official reason for closing the cave and the associated pool is because the cave is unsafe, and residents worry about children getting inside. Teachers and other authorities repeatedly inform local children and teens that sneaking into the cave will make them sick, and could kill them. While the cave is dangerous, the ESC is actually in charge of it, and works to prevent locals from exposing themselves to its dangers, because too much publicity about the cave or people harmed by it risks exposing the ESC's true interest in Ellicott Cave.

A Rusting Town

Connellsville is one of many shrinking and impoverished cities and towns in central Pennsylvania. Its population is 7,500 and has been falling for decades. However, unlike most similar communities, Connellsville occasionally draws people to it from hundreds of miles away. These people feel compelled to enter the cave, and many who do undergo a hideous metamorphosis, becoming Deviants.

The town's single remaining large employer is the ESC, a biochemical research facility that Burgess Pharmaceuticals established in the late 1980s, ostensibly to study the unusual organisms and biochemistry in Ellicott Cave. It employs more than 400 locals, but all its senior management, research, and security staff are highly trained outsiders who live and work in Connellsville. The vast majority of its local employees work as lower level administrative or maintenance staff, but their generous pay and benefits are a great help to the community.

Most residents avoid spending time with tourists, because everyone here knows that visitors occasionally vanish. Connellsville gets little tourism, most of which consists of individuals or families who need a place to stay for the night on their way to another destination. However, several times a year, travelers show up to Connellsville because they specifically wished to come there. Some are hikers. Others state that they simply "felt drawn to the town," and every year a few of them vanish mysteriously. Most seemingly check out of their rooms, taking their belongings, but no one sees them leave. However, a handful simply vanish, leaving their possessions behind. Residents of Connellsville have learned not to ask questions about these visitors. While these outsiders give many reasons for their visits, almost all either ask if there are any nearby caves or specifically come seeking to visit Ellicott Cave.

The Lure of the Cave

The crystals in Ellicott Cave give off a strange radiation that leeches into the waters of its creek and pool. The pool is an Intensity 2 radiation hazard, while the depths of the cave where the crystals are densest are Intensity 3 (p. XX). This radiation does not fit the profile of any known form of radiation, and it is also closely tied to the cave itself. Both the water and the crystals cease to affect people more than a few hours after either have left the cave. After this time, the water appears to be ordinary water, and the crystals are equally unremarkable calcite.

Ellicott Cave also has two other, stranger properties — attraction and transformation. It regularly attracts people who possess some sort of limited supernatural perceptions or abilities, drawing them via exceptionally vivid dreams that include the person descending into the cave, touching the crystals, and watching them begin to glow with an unearthly yellow-green light. In these dreams, the cave feels exceedingly wondrous and numinously important. Most who dream of Ellicott Cave feel desperately driven to find it, when they awaken. Supernaturally attuned Baselines passing through town almost always experience these visions, as well, waking with knowledge of where to find the cave that calls to them.

Although anyone exposed to the radiation of Ellicott Cave has the potential to undergo a metamorphosis, those whom the cave attracts are far more susceptible to its transformational influence. Most quickly fall ill after a single visit, and those who recover subsequently lose all interest in the cave. The remainder suffer the soul-shattering experience of Divergence. Often, this transformation occurs after a single visit to the cave or one drink from the pool in front of the cave.

Researchers from the ESC have also discovered that while most animals seem to instinctively avoid Ellicott Cave, it attracts a few of these animals, and they also sometimes transform into Manticores.

Burgess Pharmaceuticals

Almost 30 years ago, researchers at Burgess Pharmaceuticals began indirectly studying both the cave and the cave's effects on people and animals. Direct research on the cave has been extremely limited, since no one understands how to shield researchers from its effects. Even suits designed to protect wearers from harmful bacteria, viruses, chemicals, and dangerous levels of conventional radiation do not protect users from becoming ill or transforming. Although the director of the ESC permits employees to visit the caves and study them, she expects anyone who does to be a volunteer fully aware of the risks. Burgess Pharmaceuticals wishes to avoid losing researchers or having any of them blow the whistle on the ESC's activities or reveal the secret of Ellicott Cave to outsiders.

In addition, the ESC works to prevent any locals from visiting the cave. Their goal is both to avoid stories about the cave-produced illnesses from alerting state or federal public health officials, and to eliminate any chance that a local might transform into one of the Remade. Instead, the ESC uses the few outside volunteers that it discovers online to study human interactions with the cave. The ESC obtains additional people who feel drawn to the cave through a secret and moderately lucrative arrangement with the town's government.

In return for a variety of gifts, the mayor and the sheriff both immediately contact the ESC if anyone seeks permission from the local government to gain access to Ellicott Cave. At this point, the ESC's research division performs a background check on the person and makes certain that they are not someone who would attract too much attention if they vanished. Next, one of the

ESC's psychologists contacts the person, pretending to be a representative of the government in charge of cave safety. The psychologist interviews the individual and requests a physical, allegedly to make certain that they are healthy enough to visit the cave. When possible, the interviewer attempts to find out the reason for the visit. If the person mentioned dreams about the cave or that they possess unusual abilities, the interviewer mentions being an amateur parapsychologist who asks if the individual would be interested in parapsychological tests. At this point, the ESC refuses permission to anyone who would be missed, and gives others permission, assuming they are willing to sign an NDA.

The ESC requests that visitors wear monitoring equipment while inside the cave. Even if someone refuses to wear these, Ellicott Cave contains a wealth of surveillance equipment, as does the pool outside. In addition to being useful for observing the activities of anyone allowed into the cave, the cameras and other sensors in and around the cave also allow researchers to swiftly detect anyone attempting to sneak into the pool or cave. ESC employees monitor these intruders, and then ESC employees dressed as police apprehend the intruders when they emerge. The local authorities report anyone who dies or transforms as having snuck into an unsafe local cave and died. The ESC releases anyone who survives unchanged with a fine and a warning.

Individuals the ESC permits to visit the cave or pool can do so several times, but guards always escort them to and from the site. These escorts make certain that no one else is around the cave when anyone enters or leaves. Also, the ESC repeatedly reminds visitors that violating the NDA they signed will result in extreme financial penalties.

Although Burgess Pharmaceuticals does not understand the cause of the cave's transformative powers or why some people become ill from exposure, they have developed a variety of supportive treatments for the illness caused by the cave's radiation. These treatments greatly reduce the incidence of fatality from exposure to the cave, and the ESC gives them to anyone suspected of exposure.

Visitors who transform into one of the Remade usually do so in cave. However, transformations can occur as much as two days afterward. As a result, researchers keep everyone who visits the cave and has not transformed around, offering free medical checkups, tests of psychic ability, and other distractions until there is evidence that the individual is unlikely to transform. The ESC then keeps any new Deviants for study, allegedly for their own safety.

Researchers regularly keep these Broken for between two and six months, during which time they explore the limits of the Deviant's abilities and the details of their altered biology and psychology. After this time, the ESC offers a few Remade with particularly useful abilities employment at the facility. This offer includes housing and medical assistance, but requires the Broken to agree to keep their condition and whereabouts secret, and not to attempt to escape. However, once researchers have completed their study of Deviants that they either do not believe will be useful, or which they consider violent, likely to attempt to escape, or otherwise problematic, they sell the individual to another conspiracy.

Although a few ESC employees who that work with the transformed are unhappy with selling "surplus" Remade, and would prefer to find a way to help them return to the way they were before, or at least better-adjust to their condition. However, the director of the ESC understands that while research into the caves and the Broken it produces is fascinating, it hasn't proven to be at all lucrative. Deviants with useful abilities sell for large sums of money. Since the ESC began selling Remade almost 20 years ago, this research facility has ceased being a revenue drain on

Burgess Pharmaceuticals, and for two years in the last decade, it made a small profit. The director makes certain that all senior employees understand that before the practice of selling Deviants began, Burgess Pharmaceuticals almost closed down the ESC several times, and that selling unneeded Remade prevents this from happening. The director also takes employee morale and the feelings of employees towards particular Deviants into account when deciding which ones to keep at the facility and which ones to sell.

Dissuasion and Erasure

Descriptions and discussions of Ellicott Cave occasionally appear on paranormal discussion boards, but the ESC does its best to keep anyone from posting the cave's location. Burgess Pharmaceuticals wishes people attracted by the cave to continue visiting it, but attempts to prevent it from becoming a site of interest to people fascinated by the paranormal. The publicity and exposure caused by such visits could risk exposing the truth about the transformations and the ESC's research.

Burgess Pharmaceuticals employees discretely contact anyone who seems to know about the cave and is too eager to talk about their theories. At first, they try to dissuade the curious by providing information about other unusual sites that they claim are far more interesting or authentic. If this fails, their next step is to employ hackers to discredit the person by making fake posts in their name and distracting them by committing identity theft. On the few occasions where these means fail, the ESC gets directly involved and uses one of the Remade they "employ" to alter the person's mind, while hackers alter their posts. These same Burgess employees occasionally post wildly incorrect locations for Ellicott cave on these discussion boards to make any attempts to determine the cave's actual location more difficult by people who don't feel drawn there.

Most of the people who have recurring dreams of the cave have little trouble finding it. If someone who seems to feel Ellicott Cave's call posts about it on one of the discussion boards that Burgess Pharmaceuticals monitors, employees observe the individual, and if they seem to be planning to travel to the cave, asks members of the ESC to contact this person. If the person who feels called to the cave is someone whose absence would be too noticeable, the research team pretends to be part of a government agency and warns the person from attempting to visit or discuss the cave, providing them with graphically dire warnings about toxic chemicals, grotesque cancers, and dissolving skin. Once again, ESC personnel use mental alteration by a Deviant as a last resort, if other efforts fail. However, if the seeker's disappearance will not be noticed, the ESC's contact personnel allow access to the cave but attempt to control the circumstances of the visit by characterizing it as participation in a geo-psychic research project.

Power and Influence

The ESC and Burgess Pharmaceuticals possess a great deal of both official and unofficial power in Connellsville, simply because the ESC is by far the town's largest employer, and one of the few that offers good pay with full benefits. Burgess Pharmaceuticals also regularly donates to local political campaigns, and rewards the mayor and sheriff with numerous small but often quite valuable gifts, including expensive liquor and travel discounts. These bribes make certain that both officials are exceedingly loyal to the ESC, and that they are more than willing to look the other way about anything that the ESC asks them to.

To further quell any discontent, Burgess Pharmaceuticals does its best to aid the residents of Connellsville. In addition to keeping locals safe from any interaction with Deviants or exposure

to Ellicott Cave, the corporation has also donates generously to the local hospital and to the impoverished local schools. In addition, it provides college scholarships to talented local students, and allows siblings and parents of employees to buy into the excellent low-cost health plan they offer to all local employees. As a result, almost everyone in the town benefits from Burgess' generosity, and Connellsville's inhabitants are somewhat better off than the residents of most other towns in this region.

Secrets and Surveillance

The director of the ESC understands that sometimes people sneak past or break open fences and gates, and that some Variations allow Deviants easy access to almost any location. As a result, outsiders occasionally manage to break into Ellicott Cave without permission. Also, Remade occasionally leave the cave before the ESC can capture them. In addition, over the past 35 years, eight Broken have escaped from the locked portions of the ESC's lab.

To handle these problems and to help identify the occasional Manticore produced by exposure to Ellicott Cave, the ESC keeps Connellsville and the forests around it under heavy surveillance. The laboratory maintains a network of discreet CCTV camera all over the town, as well as concealed solar-powered miniature cameras in the land around it. ESC employees have even placed cameras in the various abandoned buildings on the outskirts of Connellsville, and in the forest on the south and east sides of town.

In addition to allowing researchers to locate escaped Deviants, and to either observe or apprehend people attempting to break into the cave, these cameras provide a moderate amount of video and audio of trysts and substance abuse use by dozens of locals. On a few occasions the ESC's director, Dr. Melissa Sanders, has used this footage to threaten locals into silence. Although she greatly prefers offering rewards like jobs, scholarships for children, and occasional one-time payments, Dr. Sanders is willing to openly threaten the few people who either demand too much money for their silence or whose silence she cannot easily purchase. These threats, combined with the impressive degree of political and economic power that Burgess Pharmaceuticals holds in Connellsville, continues to protect Ellicott cave's secrets.

The Forest

The large amount of densely forested state land that forms the town's eastern and southern borders has proven somewhat problematic to Burgess' efforts, especially since Ellicott Cave is located on the edge of this huge forest. This forest represents an obvious destination for escaped Remade. The ESC maintains surveillance cameras in the forest, but the size of the region and its wild nature mean that continuous, in-person surveillance is impractical, and cameras regularly fail due to natural causes.

On several occasions, Renegades attempting to sneak into Connellsville to return to the cave, attack the ESC, or free others of their kind from captivity have snuck in through the forest. As a result, it's a serious vulnerability. However, it also provides the ESC with several useful opportunities.

Researchers can test some Variations more easily tested outdoors, and the ESC's cryptozoologist believes that forest is currently home to at least half a dozen Manticore wild things (p. XX). Over the past 25 years, the ESC has captured five Manticores from the forest. These Manticores continue to be a source of local

legends in the campgrounds, recreation areas, and small communities located in and near this forest.

Local Knowledge and Resistance

Few locals speak openly about the occasional disappearances or the other mysteries surrounding Ellicott Cave and the ESC. Concerned citizens remind anyone who asks too many questions, of the handful of people who did so and then either suddenly lost their jobs or experienced other problems with their finances. While few speak of what happened next, everyone in the town is aware that these problems swiftly vanished soon after the individual ceased speaking out or openly asking uncomfortable questions. However, many locals know that Connellsville is not a typical town and that both Ellicott Cave and the ESC are somehow connected to these oddities. Popular theories range from the cave containing a crashed alien spacecraft to Burgess Pharmaceuticals using the cave to store radioactive waste.

High school students, and a few of the more outspoken adults, whisper about strange experiments, monsters, and the odd visitors who periodically vanish. None of the locals has any solid evidence that anything illegal or supernatural is going on, other than the occasional reports of strange sights or sounds coming from the forest, and the fact that every year or two, a visitor vanishes from one of the town's two hotels without paying their bills or taking their belongings.

Mayor Melinda Wilder knows something is going on with the ESC, but she also knows that Burgess Pharmaceuticals has been very generous to Connellsville, and she can see how poorly nearby towns that lack such corporate largesse are faring. In addition, her son Jeremy is a teenager who feels the call of Ellicott Cave. Although Mayor Wilder has no idea what the cave does, she knows that some of the travelers and drifters who come seeking it vanish, and so she is very pleased that ESC personnel have made a special effort to keep Jeremy away from the cave. He's tried to get in twice, and they picked him up and returned him to her both times. The second time, they showed him footage of the effects of flesh-eating bacteria supposedly found in the cave, and seem to have scared him off, for now.

Mayor Wilder hopes that when Jeremy graduates from the local high school in two years, he'll go off to college and remain far from Connellsville and Ellicott Cave. Dr. Sanders of the ESC has hinted that if Jeremy can get into a college, the ESC will provide him with a scholarship, provided that he stays out of Ellicott Cave. Because of how they are helping Jeremy, Mayor Wilder is particularly well-disposed towards the ESC and is definitely willing to bend the rules a bit to help keep the press, law enforcement, and overly curious locals away from both Ellicott Cave and the ESC.

A handful of people in town know some portion of the truth. One local high school student saw people taking a Deviant into the ESC building, and three other teens saw an escaped, and somewhat inhuman-looking Remade running through the woods, but since both incidents occurred at night, none of the students was able to take useful photos. Also, in the last decade, Charlene Jackson, the town's veterinarian, met two recently transformed Broken, one of whom had snuck into the cave and was running from ESC patrols and the ESC had held the other Remade captive for two weeks before she escaped. Charlene helped both escape from Connellsville, but had heard enough stories to know that she didn't want to let anyone know what she had seen or done.

All the mid- and upper-level personnel working at the ESC know the truth, but understand their careers, and possibly their lives, might be in danger if they reveal what they know. In addition, almost all of them are loyal to Burgess Pharmaceuticals, either because of the excellent pay and benefits they receive, or because they believe in their work. However, one employee is secretly troubled by the ESC's policies, and occasionally even secretly defies the ESC.

Jason Zamora is the ESC's assistant director. He loves his work, and passionately believes in the value of the ESC's research, but objects to the fact that Burgess Pharmaceuticals sells Broken it cannot use to other organizations. Jason is unwilling to risk his reputation or income to make more than the occasional token protest against this practice, but the fact that Burgess is effectively selling slaves bothers him, and so he salves his conscience by allowing a few Remade to escape. Jason does not want anyone to discover his activities, and so he makes certain that these escapes appear to be accidents, or the fault of security personnel Jason dislikes. He never lets other captive Deviants know he is helping them, but over the last decade he's allowed three to escape by arranging seemingly accidental power failures and computer problems. Jason only does this for Remade who in some way seem to him to be especially "deserving of help," and consoles himself that the others have in some way earned their fate. However, he was quite distressed that guards apprehended one of the four Broken he attempted to help escape before they managed to get more than a few miles from Connellsville.

Conspiracy Personnel

The following individuals are important people at the ESC.

Dr. Melinda Sanders: Dr. Sanders has been the director of the ESC for the last 12 years. She cares deeply about her work, because she has a secret that she has shared with no one else. She has a limited ability to read minds and when she concentrates, she can often sense the surface thoughts of anyone she is talking to. Unfortunately, Dr. Sanders also feels as strongly drawn to the caves as any of the people she has watched transform. However, she understands that if she transformed, the result would be terrible, and the fate that awaits her after her Divergence would be worse. Therefore, Dr. Sanders restrains her desire to enter Ellicott Cave, which she dreams about almost nightly.

She someday hopes to unlock the secret of Ellicott Cave and permit people, with herself first in line, to undergo an entirely beneficial transformation. Dr. Sanders regularly uses her supernatural gift when interviewing prospective employees and individuals who are seeking to visit the cave, to make certain that none of them lie to her. However, she has avoided spending too much time with the Remade after one looked at her and whispered, "I know the cave calls to you, too."

Elizabeth Chen: Known to the people working at the facility as Liz or LC, Liz Chen is one of two Remade currently working at the facility. She visited the cave and transformed eight years ago, and she has lived and worked at the facility ever since. LC possesses two Variations that Dr. Sanders finds to be exceedingly useful, she can track both humans and Remade exceptionally well, and she can erase memories.

Most of the time, LC appears completely human, and while she lives in an apartment maintained at the facility, the ESC permits her regular trips into Connellsville. However, she must wear a tracking anklet that instantly warns Dr. Sanders if she either attempts to go too far away or to tamper with the anklet. Knowing that disobedience would result in her swift sale, Liz has never tried either.

Jose Perez: Jose is head of security at the ESC. He's a decorated Marine veteran and has worked in private security for the past 12 years. He's worked at the ESC for the last five years. He believes the Remade to be both unnatural and dangerous, and is determined to prevent any of them from escaping captivity. He admires Dr. Sanders, but dislikes Jason Zamora, and Jason feels the same way about him. Jose is deeply upset that two Broken escaped during his tenure, and he will be furious if he ever learns that Jason Zamora is responsible for these two escapes.

Senior Vice President Maxine Fink: Maxine oversees the ESC's activities from Burgess Pharmaceuticals' home office in Pittsburgh. She recognizes that R&D is a long-term investment, and she sees the promise of profit in the ESC, but she also needs to be able to make the case to her bosses that it hasn't become a waste of company resources. She finds the sale of Remade distasteful, but allowing the ESC to turn a profit, however small, keeps the program off the chopping block, which is her main priority.

Jason Zamora: Jason is the assistant director of the project and is also one of the people who spends the most time working directly with the newly transformed Remade. He has worked at this facility for the last 18 years, working his way up from research assistant to assistant director. In addition to helping Dr. Sanders, Jason studies the Deviant's transformations and their new capabilities and prepares reports on their abilities that Dr. Sanders uses to decide which Broken to sell and to whom. Jason feels compassion for the Remade, but is also aware that many of them can be profoundly dangerous. The transformed both fascinate and horrify Jason, and he hopes to someday find a way to provide safe version of some of their powers to others, and to transform them back to ordinary humans.

His fascination with the Remade and his conflict about their sale has resulted in him having a savior complex towards some of them, particularly towards attractive young women. If doesn't believe he can safely arrange for them to escape Jason occasionally alters his reports about Deviants he particularly likes. He tailors these reports in the hope that organizations he believes to be more humane will purchase these Broken. However, he only makes these changes if the Remade recognize and appreciate his compassion. He swiftly decides that any Deviants who seem too angry about their captivity are aggressive brutes who deserve whatever fate they get.

Connellsville Conspiracies

A small town in an isolated part of Pennsylvania, Connellsville is hardly a teeming hub of conspiracy activity, Ellicott Cave mysteries notwithstanding. In the absence of competition, the ESC has been able to dominate the landscape here, taking its funding from a parent company that has little real interest in its activities, as long as its bottom line remains in the black.

Ellicott Study Center

Standing: 4

Principles: Ellicott Cave is ours alone to study; keep the locals safe to keep our investment safe; stay profitable

Virtue: Generous

Vice: Complacent

Attributes: Power 7, Finesse 3, Resistance 4

Conspiracy Actions: 2

Association: 7

Hierarchal Node: ESC Nerve Center

Temporal Nodes: Information Office, Security Personnel

Exploitative Nodes: Home Office, Local Government, Local Police

Structural Nodes: Containment Facilities, New Market Sales, Operations Center

Icons: In-Kind Favor, Local Power

ESC Nerve Center: Located at the heart of the ESC, this collection of executive offices directs the activity of the conspiracy. Dr. Melinda Sanders is this Node's Linchpin.

Information Office: The ESC maintains an information office for handling questions about their facility and about Ellicott Cave. Both signs and security personnel at Ellicott Cave direct individuals who come seeking access to the cave to the information office. Here, personnel interview individuals obsessed with entering cave, and decide whether to give them access. The information office grants access to suitable candidates after they undergo various tests. Elizabeth Chen is its Linchpin and uses the Memory Thief (Stolen Triumph) 4 Variation to dispose of the memories of any journalists or law enforcement personnel who seem undeterred by the office's dire warnings about flesh-eating bacteria and dangerous radiation.

Security Personnel: While security for the public-facing portions of the ESC consists of locals hired at modest wages, all security associated with the Remade and Ellicott, Cave are well-paid, highly trained, and generally ruthless security contractors. They are well-armed with both lethal and less-than-lethal weapons and observe the cavern, the area around every ESC facility, every hotel or motel in Connellsville, and portions of the nearby forest. The security contractors have recently begun experimenting with using drones armed with dart guns or tasers to patrol remote regions. Its Linchpin, Jose Perez, is the head of security and sees his job as protecting the people of Connellsville from deadly monsters.

Home Office: The ESC has friends in the Pittsburgh office of Burgess Pharmaceuticals, particularly those of the R&D division of which it is nominally a part. Maxine Fink is the Linchpin.

Local Government and Local Police: The current mayor (Melinda Wilder), like all Connellsville's mayors for the last 30 years, receives generous campaign contributions and other gifts from Burgess Pharmaceuticals, as does the current Sherriff, Jon Washington. They both understand how important the ESC is to the local economy, and as long as nothing the ESC does disturbs the town or its inhabitants. Because the ESC has kept Mayor Wilder's son Jeremy out of Ellicott Cave, she is particularly well-disposed towards the ESC.

Local Power: ESC employees gain 8-Again to any Politics and Persuasion rolls to obtain the cooperation of local government and law enforcement and achieve an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Containment Facilities: The labs and containment facilities for studying and housing the Deviants created by Ellicott Cave is in a sub-basement beneath the overt ESC facilities. Here, the ESC keeps the Broken until it completes studying them and sells them to another conspiracy. The attached lab contains records of every Remade created by Ellicott Cave that Burgess Pharmaceuticals has studied.

New Market Sales: When the ESC was over-budget and its revenue remained stubbornly below expectations, Paul Tobin hit upon the idea of selling some of the Remade in the Containment Facilities to other conspiracies. This new revenue stream saved the ESC from being shuttered during the next round of budget cuts, and it catapulted Tobin to the head of marketing for the ESC.

In-Kind Favor: As a Complexity 5 downtime action, the Node can call upon the aid of another conspiracy with which it has an established business relationship. This grants access to a single Node's resources until the end of the next chapter, although the ESC can renew this for another chapter at the cost of 2 Effort.

Operations Center: Most routine administration of the ESC takes place here — from ordering toner and opening the mail to paying invoices and organizing staff teambuilding events. This Node also plays a vital role in laundering the proceeds of selling Deviants to other conspiracies, typically masked as consulting fees for providing access to Ellicott Cave or as mineral rights purchases and sales. Pearl Diehl manages most of these schemes.

Enmeshed in the Web of Pain

Science does not happen in a vacuum, and all the researchers who are interested in Ellicott Cave and the Broken it produces are just as interested in studying other “natural” sources of Divergence, and finding ways to control and harness them. After hearing reports of phenomena in Ankara Turkey creating spontaneous Remade, several Burgess Pharmaceuticals employees are now investigating these rumors. Scientists at Burgess Pharmaceuticals learned of the unusual events in Ankara because a small group of researchers at the University of Delaware are also studying Divergence and had previously traveled to Ankara. Sharing information about events in this city is only a small part of the regular information exchange between ESC employees and these researchers at the University of Delaware. The fact that several graduate students from the Department of Medical Biology have received internships at Burgess Pharmaceuticals has only served to strengthen this connection.

Chapter 7: Storytelling

“If you're going to do something that crazy, save it for when it'll make a difference, Lieutenant Skaaiat had said, and I had agreed. I still agree. The problem is knowing when what you are about to do will make a difference.”

— *Ancillary Justice*, Ann Leckie

The Remade have fallen down a rabbit hole that only goes deeper and deeper, the chaos of their shattered lives a testament to the cruelty of the conspiracies that changed them. They can succumb to their fate, or fight it and carve out a meaningful niche that, if not their old lives, at least provides some semblance of comfort, even in a world changed nearly so radically as they themselves were. And that world is the Storyteller's responsibility — the work of the machinery moving behind the scenes, the hidden engines of the world that take everything the Remade know and twists it into hideous, terrible shapes. The conspiracies within the game are, after all, an extension of the Storyteller — they, too, are only fronts, levers for the Storyteller to build a narrative around the players' characters.

This chapter provides the tools necessary to do the Storyteller's job, from inspiration to design. First, we'll discuss themes, both how to articulate them within the game and how to draw upon

works of media that resonate with the story, using them as inspiration to fuel the world you and your players have created. Next, we'll take a look at horror in roleplaying, and how to play up the gruesome world the Remade inhabit, how to make the characters, and not the players, miserable. An examination of life in poverty — a life that virtually every Remade experiences — follows, with suggestions for playing up the little things that wear away at those subjected to it. Finally, we'll go in-depth with conspiracies, and how to use the rules provided in Chapter Five to their maximum effect.

Theme: Isolation

At its core, *Deviant* is about the experience of isolation, both as a result of physical transformations and being outcast from society as a result of those changes. Ultimately, the Remade are the archetypal Other — the being that it's just easier to not empathize with, the person who is not normal and is therefore lesser, the marked class to end all marked classes. It's impossible to understand **Deviant**, at its core, without understanding privilege, and what it means to have that privilege taken away.

Microaggressions

You'd get more interviews if you changed your name to something less ethnic. What's your real gender? You should go outside and exercise, it's better for you than those medications. No, this establishment doesn't have a ramp at the entrance. You know it's not healthy to be overweight, right? You should smile more, it makes you prettier.

Some people are able to read statements or questions like these as innocuous, perfectly reasonable advice or questions offered in the spirit of generosity. Others — the people they're directed at — feel them like a thousand little cuts. These are microaggressions, and they are a fact of life for anyone who differs from the norm — the edge of institutionalized prejudice that many people don't even realize they're actively participating in. To them, the idea that these statements or questions might hurt is fundamentally alien, and being called out for them feels like an attack out of nowhere, because they don't have the lived experience to understand why they hurt, why they marginalize, why they other.

The Remade, too, experience microaggressions, because the world around them doesn't see them, doesn't understand them, not as they are, not as they're forced to be. Some Remade just can't do the things they used to, because their bodies and minds have been toyed with and changed according to someone else's design. Maybe the Remade isolates herself for the good of those around her, or maybe she's rejected by those she goes to for help — in the end, the result is still isolation, and isolation has a way of deepening itself and encouraging others to participate in enforcing it.

Every Remade will experience this differently. Some will be more able to mainstream themselves than others. Consider how Remade who cannot “pass” feel about those who can. Individual Scars and Variations will naturally result in different treatment by others. Someone who always smells of sulfur will be treated differently in passing than someone whose touch sickens gradually, even though both result in a barrier between the Remade and the rest of the world. Storytellers should take into account not only Variations and Scars, but also the origin and the previous life of their players' Remade, and tailor the way exclusion feels to them on an individual level. Never let up on this, and never let it become normal. The characters should always feel the fishhooks, always feel the ache. Every scene in which the Remade interact with

the outside world should feature these microaggressions, these exclusions, the othering inherent in the Remade condition.

Empathy

Rather than just a Skill, empathy is a key trait of humanity. It's our ability to place ourselves in the shoes of another, to understand their experiences as if they were our own. It is an incredibly powerful ability, with the potential to completely alter how a person sees the world. The empathy circuits in our brains are hardwired in with our social instincts, for we are at our core a gregarious species that seeks out others — others like us.

That's the problem, and that's the reason why humans are incredibly bad at empathy. We evolved in a tribal setting, and we evolved the ability to tell friend from foe right alongside our social instincts. This originally applied only to people within our familial groups, but it's slowly extended outward. That said, the idea that people who aren't from the in-group are still human is a relatively recent development in terms of human history, and there's still a frightening number of people today who haven't worked that out. Even among those who accept people of other ethnicities as human, there's a disturbing tendency to participate in a hierarchy of human-ness.

Now, imagine you've met someone whose head splits open vertically to reveal the thing that lives where the brain ought to be, that lashes out with a six-foot tongue-stinger lined with toothed suckers like a squid's. How well do you think you'd do at treating them like any other person after seeing something like that? Be honest.

Remade face extreme difficulty in connecting with other people, simply because something about them is certain to cause revulsion. The minute that difference becomes apparent, the nature of the relationship will shift, likely permanently, and even if it seems like it may be salvageable, people who have seen the Remade at their worst are never going to entirely forget it. Very few have the sort of empathy that would allow them to connect at a deep level with someone who isn't entirely human anymore. Let's not forget, too, that those who do are the ones who the conspiracy comes for first, whether as a hostage, as bait, as leverage, or even as a turncoat. "They just want to help you!" might well be the worst kind of betrayal.

Human Reactions to Isolation

Humans are a social species. We need a support system of others to whom we can speak, engage in tasks, and generally share our lives with in one way or another. It's built into us on a genetic level, and even the highly introverted ultimately need at least some form of human contact. We don't do well in isolation.

But we isolate humans. We isolate others by imprisoning them, by shunning them, by exiling them, by turning against them en masse. We even isolate ourselves, sometimes, due to mental illness, physical disability, or a host of other reasons that just make it easier not to reach out. The worst and deepest kinds of isolation, such as solitary confinement, are widely regarded as utterly inhumane, and if allowed to persist has been known to inflict serious and lasting psychological damage.

Very few Remade have to cope with extended solitary confinement (unless subjected to it by a conspiracy), but must contend with social isolation stemming from class, circumstance, and, ultimately, their own inhumanity. While this doesn't result in the same kinds of dire psychological distress as solitary confinement, it does inflict a toll in the long term. Depression and anxiety are not uncommon in marginalized populations, for the simple reason that knowing

you're excluded is a weight that never truly lifts from your shoulders, and every moment one suffers under its burden makes it all the harder to break the cycle.

Isolation in a group (codependency)

Remade, of course, do have a built-in support network — the others that, like them, have had their lives stolen from them and their bodies twisted into something other than human. They share circumstances, if not the cause of those circumstances, and understand, at least to some extent, how the other feels. This ready-made in-group rapidly becomes a source of empathy, help, and understanding found nowhere else in the world for the Remade.

The other side of the coin, however, is that when one can only trust a carefully curated few, those few become one's whole world. Relying exclusively on one or a few others for emotional support and self-esteem, two things in short supply for Deviants, can easily lead to codependency — enabling addictions, self-destructive behavior, or other negative habits or traits out of a desire for approval. This is a dangerous thing for Renegades, who do not lead safe or stable lives.

Mood: The Revenge Tragedy

While Loyalty gives the Remade something to hold onto, whether out of compassion, jealousy, or need, Conviction drives them to forsake everything for the chance at revenge. Conviction compels them to expiate their anger, usually on those who wronged them, sometimes indiscriminately. But revenge isn't as easy as the Remade would like to believe. They may have the power to ruin the conspiracy that birthed them, but when they stand in the wreckage of a lab or ritual space, their tormenters' remains scattered about them, it has a way of feeling hollow. Nothing has really changed. They may not be hunted, but they're still a twisted, formerly-human wreck, and without Conviction to cling to, that physical sense of *wrongness* will only grow and fester.

Even without the metaphysical danger of losing a Touchstone, real-world costs to revenge rarely enter the Remade's calculus until it's too late to mend what they've broken in their lives. A human friend who sympathizes with a Remade's desire for vengeance may feel very differently when they see her holding a severed head in her hands. Squatting may become too dangerous following a particularly vicious response to a conspiracy's prying, meaning that not only the transformed, but her neighbors, are out a safe place to stay. Revenge has a way of becoming all-consuming, and it doesn't only eat away at those who seek it.

The Storyteller shouldn't shy away from showcasing the downsides of revenge. Tragedies of vengeance are tragedies because, ultimately, the violence and hatred engender only violence and hatred in turn. The endless cycle, unbroken, perpetuates itself. A tragic revenge story where the protagonist doesn't die or otherwise lose everything at some point is not a tragedy, it's a story about a monster, and not the kind of monster Deviants are. In fact, that kind of monster is much closer to the people who transformed the Remade into what she is.

Tone: Simmering Hate

Hatred all but defines Renegades, fueling and fueled by their Conviction in a deadly and dangerous cycle. It's more than just an abstract drive, though — the rage and hatred boiling in the heart of each and every Deviant is deeply personal. One might keep it, along with their

expressiveness and speech, firmly clamped down; another might well rant and rave, given half the opportunity, screaming because holding it in is too much effort, hurts too much.

For all it burns away at them, though, hatred is a tool for the Remade. The lives they find themselves living aren't easy to cope with, and revenge in particular isn't an easy path to tread. Hate lets the Remade dehumanize their tormenters (in a figurative sense, unlike what the conspiracy did to them), making it that much easier to harm or kill them. As a justification, it's hard to beat, and it keeps feelings of remorse or regret away. As long as you hate someone, really hate them down to the very core of their being, the costs of hurting them seem trivial. When the Deviant's revenge ends up causing collateral damage, either to their friends or to innocents, hatred is what lets them carry on, adding these deaths to the tally of sins they lay at the feet of the conspiracy.

But hatred isn't just a tool, it's way of life. When you adopt it, you adopt it at every turn, and it slowly wends its way into your thinking not just about the subject of your hatred, but about everything — because ultimately, everything can be blamed on the person or persons you hate. This is how hate consumes a person, hollowing them out inside until there's nothing left. Naked hatred alienates others who don't share it (or understand it, even if it seems obviously justified to the transformed). The obsession drives others away, or makes it easy to lose touch, as more and more of the Remade's life begins to revolve around the hatred they carry.

Inhumanity by the Numbers

The genre represented by **Deviant: The Renegades** — that is, the body of literature and media surrounding uncontrolled and unwilling transformation of the flesh — is a wide and expansive one, with many permutations, and **Deviant** is well-equipped to venture to every corner of that genre. Stories range from the viscerally terrifying, with flesh tearing and blood spraying, to the introspective, where the focus is less on the flesh and more upon the nature of humanity. Similarly, the scale of the story can vary wildly, from the street-level battle to a truly cosmic-scale conspiracy where the fate of not just humanity but reality itself may well hang in the balance.

To facilitate quicker understanding and categorization of these subgenres, we employ a two-axis system, with each axis representing the spectrum of possibilities between the extremes noted above; the Grounded/Flying axis, which notes how far-ranging and high-concept the story is, and the Body/Mind axis, which tells us the focus of the alienation. This two-dimensional map of the genre gives us a quick and dirty estimation of what sort of story is being told by any given media. Breaking it down further, we find four quadrants, where similar stories are grouped by tendency — Bleeding, the street-level everything-is-made-of-meat sort of story where everything hurts and no punches are pulled; Catastrophic, where the transgression against humanity is so visceral and horrific that it threatens life, society, and maybe even reality; Melancholic, where the focus is on the loss of humanity, sometimes at one's own hands; and Posthuman, where the world rides so far beyond the norm that when humanity looks back, we can only just see what we've left behind.

Body

Body stories are messy, gory, and gut-wrenching. It's unpleasant, it's not easy to look at, and it's extremely surreal — and that's the point. We so often equate our bodies with our selves that when they break down or behave in a way we don't expect, it's easy for us to read it as betrayal,

and anger is a common reaction to betrayal. Body stories are about being able to feel your heart pounding not just in your chest but in your throat, in your head; about seeing red and losing control. These kinds of stories will have high body counts, not just among Storyteller characters but player characters as well. Losing control is dangerous for the Remade, but in stories like this, it's easy for them to forget that just long enough to make a decision they may well regret.

Examples in Media

- *Bio-Booster Armor Guyver*: Zoanoids are humans transformed and brainwashed by the Chronos Corporation, able to switch at will between their human forms and a terrible, massive, and hideous battle-form that endows them with superhuman abilities and a desire to kill. This transformation is never subtle, and across all adaptations the camera frequently lingers as a human face ripples, distorts, or even tears violently open like a chrysalis.
- *The Fly (1986)*: Seth Brundle invents a teleporter, and in the process of testing it melds his DNA with that of a common house fly. At first, he seems fine — better than fine, as he enjoys increased strength and stamina. Over time, however, the fly DNA begins to assert itself, and he slowly and painfully transforms into a horrific fly-man-hybrid. Not for the weak of stomach.

Mind

Mind stories step outside of what we might think of as body horror, shying away from the physical disgust and moving towards a more philosophical take on self-rejection. These kinds of stories focus less on “What have I become?!” and more on “What does it mean to be human?” Inspirations for this kind of story stretch all the way back to *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, and are still told to this day. In a way, this reflects the opposite impulse from anger at bodily betrayal, above. Instead of anger, the primary impulse is sorrow and fear — the flight reflex overwhelming the inclination to fight. That doesn't mean that these stories can't be violent, but the violence will be much more focused, much more directed, and frequently will disproportionately affect the player characters. It's easier to throw your own life away when it doesn't even feel like your life anymore, and if that's the cost of revenge, then so be it — at least it ends the suffering.

Examples in Media

- *Ancillary Justice*: Breg is an ancillary — a human whose identity was destroyed and whose still-living body is connected to the AI of a massive Radchaai starship. As a “corpse soldier,” one of thousands, equipped with augmentations that make her a nigh-unstoppable killing machine, she conquered dozens of worlds, until her ship was destroyed in a power play by a segment of the hive-mind dictator of the Radch. The only survivor, she identifies more as the ship than the human she once was, and is driven by a powerful thirst for revenge.
- *Annihilation (Southern Reach Book 1)*: Four explorers, stripped of the right to use their names for their own safety, venture into an alien landscape as surveyors. Over the course of the book, it slowly changes them from the inside out, tampering with their minds as they grapple with the incomprehensible world around them and their own creeping inhumanity.

Grounded

Most Remade are on their own, and frequently so are the protagonists of the sort of fiction **Deviant** emulates. Being different isolates you, after all, and stories that trend towards this end

of the axis don't pull punches about that. Grounded stories are about being on the outside looking in, being one of the few aware of a dangerous secret, and frequently being the only one in a position to do something about it. Isolation, yes, but more than that, dehumanization. No one is coming to the protagonist's rescue, and if she reaches out, she's likely to regret what comes next.

Examples in Media

- *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*: A brilliant but weak scientist invents a potion to strengthen his will and constitution, and ends up unleashing an inner monster that slowly takes over his life. It's the archetypal gothic **Deviant** story. Jekyll is responsible for this own plight, and has absolutely no one he can depend upon to help him with his struggle — at least, not without placing them in terrible danger from Hyde's appetites.
- *Stranger Things (2016)*: It's harder to be more helpless against a conspiracy than if you're literally a child, and the few adults who actually take the children seriously in *Stranger Things* aren't much less helpless than the kids are — more, if you consider what Eleven can and does do to multiple adults and the Demogogon.

Flying

By contrast, some stories in the Deviant wheelhouse are less about the isolation forced upon the Remade and more about the effects of transformation on the wider world. Flying stories are big, expansive, have consequences far beyond the lives of the people they focus on. While many protagonists of Flying stories volunteered or otherwise caused their own transformation, this isn't necessarily the case. Conspiracies often have lofty goals, great tasks they are willing to sacrifice human lives to carry out. High-minded ideals override empathy, and people are treated as commodities, often without anyone so much as batting an eye — and if you think this is unusual, we invite you to take a look at the modern job market. Volunteering doesn't always mean having a choice.

Examples in Media

- *Bio-Booster Armor Guyver*: Yes, it's worth mentioning it twice. Early on in the manga, where most adaptations have lingered, *Guyver* is a relatively Grounded story — Shou against the Zoanoids, protecting his friends and his school, and occasionally destroying the odd secret Chronos base. Spoiler Alert: he can't stop the Chronos Corporation, and in the later arcs of the manga, Chronos begins processing mass populations of humans, transforming them into Zoanoids enslaved to the will of the Zoalords. They go public, and Zoanoids receive the heroic treatment. The Guyver, who still struggles on, is labeled a vile terrorist.
- *Prey (2017)*: On a space station in Lunar orbit, the TransStar Corporation has developed technology to implant memories and skills into human minds — and to remove them as well, meaning no one can be sure what they remember is the truth. When TransStar turns to using this technology on an alien species, implanting alien memories to create psionic powers in humans, this love-letter to the classic *System Shock* turns dark in a hurry.
- *Akira*: The classic manga and anime adaptation both fit this extreme of the spectrum. Tetsuo, a victim of military experiments, develops terrifying psychic powers. At first horrified at what he can do, he quickly develops a god complex and destroys Neo-Tokyo in short order. In the anime, this takes place over a relatively short period of time; the manga draws out his

degeneration and ultimate self-destruction. In either case, the consequences of the experiment redefine the world.

Mixing and Matching

There's more to these scales than the extremities, of course, and there's the wide two-dimensional space between them. These examples of **Deviant**-like stories in extant media — far more than mentioned in this book — spread across the four quadrants these spectra create, touching on the same themes to different degree and in different ways. Some navigate around the chart over the course of their narratives, somewhat appropriate for a genre dealing with transformation. **Deviant** is no different, and a chronicle can easily start small, with a very local conspiracy, and wind up dealing with world-spanning threats. Even Superman got his start in Smallville, after all.

Bleeding stories — the axis of Grounded and Body themes — are the core of the **Deviant** experience. Other stories include kernels of the body horror, isolation, and hopelessness that these stories focus on. When a story trends toward this style, it revels in the twisted and the inhuman, turning up the gross-out factor and never looking back. Happy endings are few and far between, and protagonists who survive these kinds of stories may not be the lucky ones.

Melancholic stories — the axis of Ground and Mind themes — place special focus on relationships, or rather the lack or loss of them. Revenge is still a theme but it's a very tightly focused one, and over-the-top violence gives way to more “realistic” takes, with less blood and guts and more “what have I become?” In Melancholic media, the actual transformations aren't the center of the tale, and sometimes aren't even shown — the feeling of isolation is the heart of these stories, more so than in any other kind. That's not the case in a **Deviant** game, of course, but the emphasis on Loyalty over Conviction is clear.

Catastrophic stories — the axis of Flying and Body themes — are where things get big and scary. Transformation isn't always personal, and when it begins to affect the world more than the individual, themes of isolation bleed outward, with mass violence and sudden change standing in metaphorically for personal and emotional violence, though there's plenty of that too. Worlds don't survive Catastrophic stories, and what's left behind afterwards may bear the scars of the event that transformed it forevermore.

Finally, *Posthuman* stories — the axis of Flying and Mind themes — come the closest to stepping outside **Deviant**'s core themes. In stories like this, the Remade are most likely to have volunteered for the process that transformed them, or even inflicted it upon themselves, though they certainly didn't anticipate or want what came next. Posthuman stories are not *transhuman* stories, which concern themselves with what we may make ourselves capable of and what the consequences may be. Rather, Posthuman narratives are about the loss of humanity, frequently en masse, of going so far down a dark road its origin vanishes forever. Posthuman stories exist in the gap between our reach and our grasp, in the realm of the possible but poorly understood, where opportunities are clear but outcomes are not, with the Remade bearing the consequences of this sort of vision.

The Final Act

Everyone shuffles off this mortal coil eventually, but the Remade are frequently ahead of the pack. Trapped in a cycle of violence and vengeance, their lives are far more dangerous than they once were, and serious injury and death are not surprising outcomes. But death doesn't come

with a timetable, and even when we can see it coming, its advent is unpredictable at best. Most Deviants are no more durable than a Baseline, and yet they often set themselves against organizations that employ squads of contract killers — an imbalance a few Variations cannot always make equal. Death happens.

So, You're Dead — Now What?

Death comes in many forms, from a blaze of glory to a tragic inevitability to a noble sacrifice and back again, but ultimately the loss is the same for those left behind. While the Remade are no strangers to violence and death, losing one of their own, a comrade in arms, one of the few people in the world who truly understood what they were going through, is an incalculable loss. Ordinary people have enough trouble coping with the death of a loved one, but Remade rarely have the same kinds of support structures in place to deal with their grief. After all, it's not as though they can tell a therapist the centipede-thing that replaced a friend's spine finally hatched and ate him alive, assuming they can find a therapist they can trust to begin with.

As a result, grief often lingers among the Remade, mixing in with the grief over their lost life, lost friendships, loves, and opportunities; many Deviants develop emotional calluses around these wounds, and may express this as anger, depression, or detachment. Psychologically, the root of it is fear of repeated loss, and the drive to avoid it — unfortunately, the transformed have precious few options for this.

Go on Without Me

This is a story, of course, and death doesn't have to be as random or meaningless as it often is in real life. Ultimately, crafting a satisfying narrative is more important than respecting the letter of the law when it comes to dice rolls, and a character's fate should be in the hands of the player rather than random chance. If a player knows their death is coming, if it fits well as a culmination of that character's narrative, play a little fast and loose with the rules. Give them that last moment, that last burst of energy, that we've all seen so many times in film and television — the heroic last stand, the suicide mission, and so on.

The death of a central character shouldn't be a quick and easy scene, however. Losing a character is emotional not just for the other characters but also for the players, particularly the player of the deceased character. The tension building up to the death and the fallout that comes after are part of the process, and just as important as the character's actual last moments. Storytellers should treat these moments with care, and always be sure that the players are holding together. Don't be surprised if there's a tear or two. Check in on players in the days following their character's death, to make sure they're coping. Grief can land extremely hard, and sometimes it takes a day or two for it to really hit.

There's logistical considerations as well. Characters are a player's primary lever on the setting and the story, and without their character present the rest of the chapter is going to be essentially an improv play put on for their benefit. The simplest solution is to try to arrange the death to come close to the end of the chapter, but that's not always possible. Sometimes, players rush through scenes you thought would take hours to play out, and sometimes they're just plain having too good a time to stop playing. The fallout of a character's death is lucrative role-playing currency for some players. If it's going to be a while, one of the best ways to include the now-characterless player is to give them a Storyteller character to portray, preferably one they're familiar with and can get into character for without too much difficulty. If they're comfortable with it, bring them on as a temporary assistant Storyteller, giving them a rotating cast of

Storyteller characters to play, though make sure there's notes for those characters ready to hand over, as it's unlikely any of players are telepaths.

FNG Syndrome

A character died, everyone had lots of pathos, and maybe a few people cried. All well and good. Now what? Integrating new characters into established games has been a roleplaying conundrum since time immemorial, and **Deviant** is a game that presumes a certain level of character mortality. Thankfully, in the case of character death, the player has been around for the chronicle thus far, eliminating the need to play catch-up with plot, Storyteller characters, and other concerns. It also makes it easy for them to create a new character who will fit in with the group — they'll know the other Remade fairly well, unless they died early on in the chronicle. They can do this at the table with the other players, or they can do it in their own time before the next chapter.

Players will frequently use meta-knowledge to immediately recognize, approach, and adopt new characters, but this always feels a little artificial, especially in a game about conspiracies trying to ruin the characters' lives and enslave them. In real life, integrating newcomers into group chemistry can be daunting — hence the term FNG, or “Fucking New Guy,” referring to an individual who joins an established team and is mistreated or disdained because they haven't shared hardships with the others. While perhaps more believable in the context of the story, pugnacious refusal to accept the newcomer is a good way to derail a chronicle.

Thankfully, methods for avoiding both extremes abound. There's no reason a new character has to show up out of nowhere, after all. Perhaps the player is taking over a Storyteller character who ran afoul of the conspiracy, or who was already transformed to begin with. If the character died during a rescue mission, the new character could be someone brought back at a terrible cost, and in this case, that's actually a very strong impetus to keep the new character close, since their freedom was so dearly bought. The new character might well be the new model, intended to be used against the other characters, in which case the information they have might be critical to protecting themselves against the conspiracy's latest machinations.

The End of the Beginning

Just because a character is dead doesn't mean that their role in the story is over. If nothing else, their memory lives on with the rest of the characters, and will affect them throughout their arc. Dealing with grief is never a quick or easy thing. Bereaved characters must contend with a long-term recovery, and even afterwards will be changed by the process.

Memory isn't the only way deceased characters can affect the story going forward, however. Conspiracies have no compunctions about tampering with the lives of others, violating natural law for their own ends, and nothing requires them to respect death. Perhaps, through super-science, they reanimate the deceased character, or use their body to bind a spirit or demon — or perhaps the character wasn't quite as dead as his comrades thought, and now thirsts for revenge against them for leaving him behind.

If the Storyteller intends to make a Storyteller character out of a former player character, however, be sure that the player is okay with that. Let them keep creative control, and ask them how their character would react in such a situation. Using former player characters in this way is always a sensitive issue, and not something to surprise the player with. Remember — make the characters miserable, not the players.

Body Horror

Horror, and especially horror at the unwilling transformation of the flesh, is at the heart of **Deviant: The Renegades**, and conveying that horror at the table can be a challenging task. Anyone who has seen *The Thing* remembers the first reveal of the twisted, merging dogs in the kennel, but how do you do justice to a scene like that off-the-cuff, during play, and without pushing things too far and making your players uncomfortable?

INHOUSE: BIG FULL PAGE SIDEBAR, BECAUSE SAFETY TOOLS ARE IMPORTANT.

Player Safety and Security

Any game in the **Chronicles of Darkness** benefits from the inclusion of the following tools for controlling comfort level in games — **Deviant** more than most. The point of the game is horror, which walks a fine line between attraction and revulsion, but it's so easy to tip too far over toward revulsion, especially since each player will have a different level of comfort. Safety tools are more often used in games with strangers, such as at conventions, but are still excellent safety options even in long-running groups with lots of trust built up over time. The following tools have been developed by veterans of roleplaying, and lengthier discussions of them can be found online.

- The X-Card system, designed by John Stavropoulos, requires an index card marked with a large, prominent X. At any point in a scene, a player (or the Storyteller) may reach out and tap or otherwise indicate the X-Card; this means that whatever just occurred pushes things too far for them or otherwise makes them uncomfortable. This is a cue to rewind and rework the scene, avoiding the critical issue. The most important part of the X-Card is that no judgement is levied at those who employ it — it's a way to quickly and without explanation signal strong no-go subjects.
- Script Change is a system developed by Brie Sheldon, used to control what subjects are aired, which are lingered over, and which require a short break to process before moving on. Rewinding, much like the X-Card, indicates a desire to revise the scene to excise something uncomfortable. Fast Forwarding, by contrast, is the time-honored tradition of the fade to black, skipping over sensitive topics that a player might not wish to have thrust to center stage. Finally, Pausing simply puts the game on hold for a moment before continuing without any changes. This system can be used with index cards, or by speaking the key words aloud.
- Lines and Veils is a system for discussing in advance what subjects the game will and will not be exploring (lines not crossed), and which will be referenced but not given detail (veils). Participants can always call for new Lines or ask to Veil the remainder of a scene during play.

Body as Self

Able-bodied people often have a one-to-one relationship with their body. Everything is where it belongs, nothing feels out of place, nothing hurts just for the sake of hurting. If something does hurt, it's due to an injury or an illness, something to fix, cure, or heal. This makes it easy to

identify with one's own body, to the point where it's considered the default by our culture (debates about dualism aside). Our proprioceptive sense tells us where parts of our bodies are, and when we look, there they are. Simple. Easy. The norm, according to the majority who are fortunate enough to experience this.

This is the most likely starting point for any given Remade. Exceptions exist, but by sheer statistics most will belong to this category — people who don't experience any significant alienation from their own body. This makes the changes they endure all the more jarring, because they have little or no experience with such a feeling. This category also includes people with disabilities who have either lived with a disability all their life or have fully adapted and integrated mobility devices and other tools into their day to day life — these effectively become extensions of their body, and a Deviant's Scars may well interfere with their ability to use them properly.

Body as Rebel

Not everyone is so lucky, of course. Many people suffer chronic physical or mental health issues that present serious problems when it comes to engaging in everyday life. People with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome must carefully plan out what tasks they are capable of in a given day without deeply exhausting themselves for days or even weeks on end, and even that planning can break down for little to no reason. Addicts must contend with a brain demanding a particular series of chemicals, to the detriment of its normal operation. Tremors, craving, or physical pain without any stimulus are all possible consequences of deprivation. Able-bodied people who experience a serious injury or illness from which they never entirely recover must relearn their capabilities in a body that, to them, suddenly feels wrong.

Many Remade experience these sorts of problems, and this degree of alienation, as a matter of course. Scars and Variations alike push them outside the norm, and even if they have one or more superhuman qualities, the tradeoff is unlikely to be a blessing. They must learn to exist within a body that seems to fight them, seems to monkeywrench even those things that will benefit it, let alone the person inside it.

Body as Prison

Some experience alienation to such a degree that existing in one's body is painful, even torturous. Chronic, severe pain, sometimes without any discernible cause, can easily set one against the entire medical profession, who are loath to prescribe sufficient quantities of painkillers. Resorting to less legal methods of self-medication may put one squarely in the crosshairs of law enforcement, which does not care why you have a basement hothouse full of cannabis plants. Transgender people experience such an alienation from their body, specifically their assigned gender, that fundamentally altering their hormone constitution is the only way to ameliorate it. Even then, dysphoria is likely to be a lifelong companion, assuming one has access adequate transition care or can make the right connections to DIY the process.

Unlike people whose bodies work against the owner, people trapped within a body that seems to actively loathe them are often at odds with the medical establishment. Doctors are frequently uninformed about the kind of chronic problems that generate this degree of alienation, assuming the malady is accepted by the medical establishment to begin with, and whether one's doctor will be prepared to address them is largely luck of the draw. Remade are squarely in this position, if only because their bodies are significant departures from the human norm. Imagine going to the doctor and explaining that you have chronic heartburn because of the bile gland that lets you

spew noxious, flammable acid to a range of 30 feet. It's simply not an option. So, Deviants learn to lie to get what they need, and if doctors are getting better at anything, it's at spotting medication-seeking behavior.

Bringing it Home

The experience of dysphoria and alienation from the body is deeply personal, and the Storyteller will need to tailor the way they evoke that experience for the player to their character. A character who had a drug problem prior to their encounter with a conspiracy will at least have some context for needing to swallow batteries to stay alive, but one who lived a milquetoast suburban life and never got high anywhere but the dentist's office will have a very different experience of what is essentially an addiction with a lethal detox.

The best way to do this is to build a profile of every character, written down and updated, not simply kept in one's head:

- *What is the worst thing your character has ever done?* Whether it was a horrific murder or shoplifting once as an adolescent, what she considers her worst misdeed is a telling indicator of character.
- *What is the worst thing your character can imagine himself doing?* Many Deviants have long since updated this question in the wake of their Divergences, but what is on the table now that may have been unthinkable before?
- *What has your character forgotten?* In the Chronicles of Darkness, nearly everyone has an encounter with the supernatural at some point, but most turn away, rationalize, and forget the experience. What did you witness and when?
- *What is your character's worst fear?* Everyone has one, a fear so deep and so all-consuming it leaves them paralyzed, sweating as their heart pounds against their chest and their stomach rolls over. Sometimes these are the result of something in a character's history, like a fear of flying born of a rough flight, or a scary movie seen as a child. Once you have the character's fear, try to connect it in any way possible to their Scars, to the conspiracy, to anything in their new and frightening life, and when those moments come up, emphasize the similarity.
- *What do you see when you look in the mirror?* There's nothing like looking in the mirror and seeing someone else staring back at you. This isn't so outlandish, as many people endure a serious disconnection between their self-conception and their perception of themselves. People with anorexia literally see themselves as overweight even when their ribs are clearly visible. Transgender people, even after hormone therapy and surgical intervention, still find it all too easy to spot those parts of the body they worked so hard to change. For the Remade, this disconnection is even more radical. Conspiracies aren't limited to the traditional human body plan. Reflections are omnipresent in our world, from mirrors, to windows, to pools of water, to selfie-cameras, and going through life without catching at least a glimpse of yourself — a glimpse of something else where you should be — is impossible. Never let the character forget the difference between what they were and what they are.

Violent Imagery

The horror in **Deviant** doesn't simply stop at the characters' own bodies, of course. It extends outward, showcasing terrifying transformations of others and, frequently, the horrific violence

that follows. Violence is a subject that takes up a disproportionate amount of screen time in media, but this violence is almost always a sanitized version of actual violence, typically in service of chasing a PG-13 (or similar) rating. We see lots of people shot on screen. We don't often see the sucking chest wounds, brains spattered across a wall, the surgical nightmare that comes of removing bullets from organs and bones, the long and painful rehab even the good old-fashioned "flesh wound" requires.

Deviant isn't about sanitized violence (or at least, it doesn't have to be). Remade are the products of violence, and most often the quest for revenge (or just the hope of protecting those around them) results in ever more violence. The conspiracy, after all, cares little for the pawns it slings against Deviants as it tries to take back what it sees as its own, and even less for the innocent bystanders caught in this war in the shadows. Going easy on the violence sells short the cruelty and the callousness of the conspiracy, and what the Remade endure for the sake of survival, for freedom itself.

When Words Fail

The aesthetic of violence is, in the modern world, nearly always a visual one. Most of us have seen at least one movie, or at least a clip from one, with violent imagery taken to ridiculous ends, with squibs overloaded with fake blood, papier-mâché heads detonated in a spray of dyed ballistic jelly, and the like. Some films and television shows, produce a higher fidelity aesthetic of violence, with carefully worked prosthetics and makeup creating a realistic illusion of fatal injury. For those of us fortunate enough to have no direct experience of this level of violence, this is what the mind's eye conjures when we talk about the violent aesthetic — the imitation of it, accurate or otherwise, in a visual medium.

Very few tabletop roleplaying groups have the advantage of professional actors and special effects artists working to perfectly recreate the action taking place within the fiction, so words will have to do. Overly detailed descriptions, ones which verge on the lurid, may seem like the best way to present a violent moment in fiction. Providing lots of detail to players to visualize allows them to construct a minutely detailed mental image of the moment in question. There's just one problem: detail takes a tremendous amount of time to articulate, and violence is so very rarely as drawn out as our language requires descriptions of it to be. In effect, descriptions like this become the former kind of aestheticized violence, the overdone ridiculous sort — the ludicrous amount of blood fountaining from Boss Tanaka's head after O-Ren Ishii cuts it off in *Kill Bill: Volume 1*, for an example, but this moment takes far less time on screen than a detailed description of it would take to articulate.

Violent moments, even the over-the-top ones, are meant to be punchy and shocking (even if they're cheap shocks). Replicating that in speech is difficult, but possible. Moments that land hard do so because they represent a break in mounting tension — for example, a hostage standoff that takes a sudden turn for the tragic after fifteen minutes of connection, building up a viewer's relationship with the hostage-taker, before he presses the shotgun to his chin and pulls the trigger in the space of half a second. You can say, "he puts the shotgun to his chin and BANG!" in a short enough amount of time to retain that suddenness, that "holy shit!" moment of realization. The most successful examples of this sort of shot cut away almost immediately, leaving just the hint of the image to linger in the viewer's mind as shock and horror plays out on the faces of other characters in the scene, mirroring the feelings the violence engenders. Keeping the actual description of the violence sudden, immediate, and without copious detail not only makes the

moment land quickly, it maintains that cut-away-quickly feel. If players really want to know the details — if, for example, they're combing the scene for clues — that's the time to give them. Actual violence should always be sudden, terrifying, and if possible completely unexpected.

Combat

Not all violence comes like a bolt from the blue. Sometimes, the Remade have no choice but to throw down with a gang of foes sent by the conspiracy hounding them. Sometimes, an entire scene is nothing but violence, repeated and total. How does a Storyteller maintain that sharp sense of cut-away when virtually every action is an act of violence? This requires the aid of the players, in the sense that if they belabor the descriptions of what they're doing to their enemies, it'll throw the pacing off. Encourage concise descriptions rather than florid ones. As always, Storytellers should play by these rules themselves — nasty, brutish, and short.

For the Storyteller, running an engaging, shocking, and brutal combat involves careful stage-management and “camera work.” For the purposes of a tabletop game, this means guiding where the attention of the group is at all times, carefully selecting images to convey — a cracking pillar, a fire hydrant cleaved open and spraying water everywhere, a window shattering — to juxtapose them with violent actions, to pull away from the immediate and the intense to showcase the consequences of those acts, to illustrate what's happening in the context of that violence. A gunfight in an empty warehouse is one thing. A gunfight in a farmer's market, with fruit, lead, and blood flying, is something entirely different.

Storytellers should provide lots of setting to work with wherever they set a fight, not just for the above reasons but because it gives players something to play with that isn't a Storyteller character's innards (or their own, for that matter). The goal of the scene is violence, but it needs more ingredients if it's not going to be a pure gore-fest. Try to avoid empty places for fights. Most conspiracies aren't that concerned with following the niceties of a duelist's code, and will strike wherever it gives them the greatest advantage, which is usually a rather everyday location from a Deviant's perspective. Even an empty warehouse can be interesting if your players are dead-set on throwing down there. Rusting catwalks, rats, forgotten industrial waste, or a warehouse that isn't as abandoned as the players thought all add depth to a location, and therefore to the violence taking place in that location. Nowhere, not even the places we think of as empty, is truly bare of set dressing.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Every Remade struggles with the legacy of violence, specifically the violence done to them by the conspiracy that transformed them. Every time they employ a Variation, every time a Scar makes their life more difficult, every time their status separates them from the ordinary people around them, that remembered violence wells up from inside. Trauma leaves marks on people, ones that don't easily heal, and which are all too easy to rend wide open again. Ultimately, violence isn't as quick and easy a solution as people tend to think of it as. It's merely trading convenience in the short term for lingering pain later — on both sides of the equation.

Both surviving and inflicting violence is trauma, plain and simple, and humans don't react well to it. **Deviant** is about the costs and consequences of violence, the scars layered over scars that, at times, may feel like the only thing holding one together. The physical, temporal costs of the Remade life are only one dimension of the pain they must live with. Their inner, emotional life is just as shattered. Even in their quiet moments, even if they can pretend to themselves that the pain isn't there, it's only waiting for a chance to rear back up and ruin everything with a moment

of unneeded terror, a feeling of unprovoked anxiety, the fight-or-flight instinct short-circuited into a never-silent siren in the back of their head. It's never being able to shut yourself off, because the minute you do, it might happen all over again.

Remember, This Is A Game

The classical signs of PTSD — hyper-vigilance and anxiety for example — have been seen a hundred times and in a hundred ways in media. Most of them don't do it justice. We live in a society that is violent in a thousand-thousand different ways, not all of them obvious, and for that reason, purely statistically, you are very likely to have someone in your gaming group who is coping with some form of trauma. Making sure your players are comfortable and in control of their personal narratives within the fiction (even as you set the whole world against their characters) is perhaps the most important job you have as a Storyteller.

Obviously, all the advice in this section hinges on a single factor: are your players comfortable with portraying such an abnormally high level of violence? Violence just isn't a tool in **Deviant**, as it is in other games. It surrounds the characters, defines their lives, and walls them off from the world around them. For the Remade, it's a fact of life, inescapable and ever-present. If making it visceral, immediate, and detailed leaves your players uncomfortable, it's fine to back off. You're not doing it wrong — you're doing it right for you and your friends.

The Personal Side

The inherent horror of **Deviant** isn't just the physical transformation and the violence, of course. Every character dragged into the Remade cycle of violence and vengeance will have personal reactions, personal trauma, and personal alienation from those around them. This horror is just as important as the physical, violent dimension, and not just to the players of those characters. The Storyteller's job is to bring this horror home to the player characters, and to drag that pain and suffering out into the light where everyone can see it.

Violence as a Mirror

The Remade are the victims of violence, against their bodies, minds, and even their souls. This supernatural trauma will never really heal, and is what drives the Remade on their obsessive quests for vengeance. To soothe the pain of the violence done to them, they do violence to others. While that violence is usually rather straightforward by comparison to what they suffered, it nonetheless serves as a mirror to the psyche of the Remade, reflecting in the real world the tumult and terror that they have experienced and continue to experience.

It's important not to lose sight of this fact. The violence the Remade engage in is *never* random. Whether for self-preservation, vengeance, or simply to release the strain and pressure of their now-horrific lives, there is always a reason behind it, and the act itself echoes that reason. Violence for self-preservation will likely be the quickest, the most straightforward, flourishes left aside in the name of surprise and survival. Other kinds of violence, however, will probably be messy. We've talked about how to describe that, but we need to reflect upon the effects of violence on the psyche as well.

Externalizing Grief

Humans cope with grief in different ways. Some cry, some work it out through art or other creative pursuits, and some lash out at the world that has hurt them. Whether it's putting your fist through drywall at the news that a parent has died or shattering a glass against the countertop after a romantic partner has broken it off, when the tension breaks and violence is the only solution the primitive rump of your brain stem recognizes, it rushes out in a torrent before the rest of the brain can catch up. For most of us, this means property damage with a modicum of self-harm. For some, it means assault charges.

Violence isn't the only immediate response, of course — emotional outbursts spread across the spectrum, from paralyzing fear to overwhelming sorrow — but for the Remade, the difference usually isn't so important, because losing control of emotions usually means losing control of self. When the hurt inside Deviants boils over, the consequences are certain to be far more drastic than in the human population. Instead of smashing her favorite glass, a Remade might throw a refrigerator out a sixth-story window, and only seconds later realize there's a sidewalk below. Instead of putting her hand through drywall, she puts her claws through it, followed by the rest of her body, followed by an unprovoked attack on a neighbor still gripped in her unthinking surge of anger. And then there's the transformed with more exotic Scars and Variations — what happens when a Deviant's bodily fluids are a powerful nerve toxin and he falls into a crying fit on a crowded bus?

Violence doesn't have to be outward, either. Self-harm is usually a reaction to stress, whether that stress is external (arising from school, work, family, etc.) or internal (caused by depression or anxiety). It hurts, of course, but the pain isn't the point so much as *controlling where the pain comes from*. Sometimes, violence or destructiveness directed outwards, seemingly random, serves the same purpose, lending a sense of control to an otherwise out-of-control life. The parallel to the Remade should be obvious: their lives are not only out of control, but that control was stolen from them in a violating and invasive way. Destructiveness and violence push back at a world that feels, to them, like a river carrying them towards a waterfall. It feels like a lifeline, even if it doesn't really get them out of the water, and sometimes the feeling is all they can cling to.

Expiation of Anger

Anger is a part of grief, but outbursts don't always represent a loss of control of that grief. Sometimes the action taken is intentional, and driven by a conscious desire to satiate that lizard-brain-stem we all have that just wants to smash and tear and kill whatever has hurt us. This dimension of grief is key to the Remade — anger fuels their Conviction, which drives them to take revenge. This kind of violence is colder, more calculated, but no less brutal. Instead of rushing out in a torrent, it wraps itself around the Deviant's mind like a red-hot serpent, pulls them back from themselves as they carry out cruelties they would never have contemplated in their previous lives. For most, extinguishing rage with vengeance cools the fury, leaving only the weight of the act itself to linger; for the transformed, however, any relief from their hatred is temporary at best. Even if they've wiped out the conspiracy that destroyed their lives, there are always more conspiracies to take their place — and well enough, for that rage is the only thing keeping the Remade together.

Cold Necessity

Violence doesn't always follow the line of vengeance absolutely. The world itself is often violent, not simply to the transformed but those forced to live in similar conditions. Perhaps a

corrupt developer threatens their erstwhile home, using thugs to forcibly evict rent-controlled tenants with steadily escalating violence, and everyone pleads with the Remade (whom everyone can tell is somehow *different*) to intervene on their behalf. Maybe the Deviant ends up on the wrong side of the law and defends themselves rather than risk arrest and imprisonment, only to call down a manhunt now they're a cop-killer. It's easy in the moment to write off such instances as unknowing arms of the conspiracy, especially if the Remade has paranoid tendencies, but many cannot help but recognize they have taken a life that had nothing to do with what happened to them.

Bringing it Out

Grief, anger, and sorrow are all internal characterization, the part of the story-iceberg that lies beneath the surface. What we see in the action of the story is only a fraction of what's going on behind the scenes in the characters' minds. Sometimes, the Storyteller should reveal a little more of the iceberg, of the subsurface motivation, to lend additional heft to the action. Highlighting these inner feelings in moments of powerful pathos makes those feelings concrete, a thing in the open and visible narrative, and makes them all the more real to the players.

The best way to highlight these feelings is, of course, to evoke them, either by creating a situation intended for the character to react to in a particularly open way or by working with the player to develop those feelings in dialogue. This might be something as simple as meeting a child of someone the Remade has killed. Unaware of the conspiracy and the Deviant's part in their parent's death, they might well make an emotional connection. This provides a steady reminder of the costs of revenge, but also gives the transformed a chance to work through their feelings regarding vengeance, all the while dancing around the subject in conversation. These moments should be tense and meaningful, the sorts of scenes that leave viewers on the edge of their seat, paying close attention even to subtleties of word choice.

This can apply even to moments of high action — violence being quick and brutal, there should always be a prologue and an epilogue to buffer it from the rest of the narrative. A prologue might be a dramatic speech about payback, or a scene spent stalking the quarry as the Remade closes in for the kill. Epilogues to violence will generally involve a body count, and the reaction to the violence just perpetrated. *How did this make you feel?* is always a good question to ask in the aftermath of violence, because it's the central question of **Deviant**. This question can come from the Storyteller, from a Storyteller character, from the characters themselves. Sometimes, it'll emerge naturally, as a brief but blessed relief washes over the Remade.

Writers are often told "Show, don't tell," and to some extent those should be a Storyteller's watchwords as well. Written fiction is different from collaborative oral fiction (which is, ultimately, what roleplaying is), so there's more leeway. One can focus directly on a subject without it becoming ham-handed or overdone, and negotiation is an important aspect of gameplay. Don't always follow up violence with the same question. Change up the wording, or leave it off if the moment wasn't particularly tense or dramatic. Storytellers might also encourage their players to bluebook — to react outside of play in written form. Essentially, bluebooking forms outtakes of the main story, side scenes that, to use a cinematic metaphor, might not have made the final cut but were included in the special edition video release, scenes not critical to the story but which serve to illuminate parts of it. If the bluebooking takes place electronically, say in a private social media group, it makes it easy for players to react and

interact in-character outside of the actual game session. Don't be surprised if long, involved conversations start happening there!

Down and Out — Life Without Privilege

Regardless of what one believes the cause to be — whether it's capitalism itself, an uncaring culture, or a dire lack of moral fiber and charity — we cannot deny that we, collectively as a species, are terribly and unjustifiably cruel to others whose only crime is being born in poverty, suffering debilitating mental illness or developmental problems, suffering a disabling injury, or simply being unlucky. When people slip, we exile them to the fringes of our society, offer them little or no support, and force them to survive on what we discard, to live at the mercy of the elements, more often than not. Then, adding insult to injury, we blame them for it, as if the fault were somehow theirs. We write this from an American perspective, but while some countries address the problem a little better, it is a worldwide problem. There is always an underclass, and it is always much larger than the overclass that enjoys a largesse unimaginable to them.

The Precarious Life

Poverty is fundamentally characterized by insecurity — food insecurity, housing insecurity, medical insecurity, and so on. People living in poverty cannot rely on access to goods or services considered necessities by the rest of society. Precariousness is forever living on the edge. It means zero-hour contracts, and working three jobs just to make rent, never mind food. It means skipping meals. It means lying awake at night trying to balance your mental checkbook. It means crippling student loans if you were fortunate enough to even attend college in the first place. It means being told that somehow, somewhere, this is your fault, and that if you would just apply yourself you could dig yourself out of this hole.

But the point of the phrase “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” isn't “work harder,” it's that it's physically impossible. You can pull all you want but Newton's laws ensure your feet will stay flat on the ground. Climbing out of poverty, out of precarious living, is functionally impossible without a tremendous run of luck, a helping hand from someone with sufficient means to do so, or finding a means outside the legitimate system to make a few tax-free bucks. For some, yes, this means crime. After all, society has never given them a fair shake. Why should they play by the rules?

How to Lose Everything

You slip on an icy sidewalk and pull something in your back — the painkillers aren't enough, your performance slips, and the next thing you know you're right-to-worked out of a job. You're involved in an accident, waking up in the emergency room to a bill with at least three zeroes at the end of it that your insurance provider weasels out of with startling finesse. Your car, your only viable means of commuting, just gives up the ghost and dies. A hurricane destroys literally everything you own. Unforeseen problems become major crises when you have no savings to fall back on. A serious illness or injury (or, sometimes, a relatively insignificant one) can result in bankruptcy and homelessness in surprisingly short order.

Bankruptcy isn't an end to debt, however, only a restructuring of it, with lenders being paid directly out of the debtor's paycheck. Few are fortunate enough to own their home outright. Renting or living with a hefty mortgage is the norm, and property prices only climb higher with time. Even if one does own a home, one may well be required to sell it to pay off one's debt. No home address means nothing to put on job applications or forms for government aid, and they

rarely take “N/A” for an answer. The system provides precious few footholds, and the line from gainful employment with a roof over one’s head and living on the streets dumpster-diving for food can be brutally thin.

Homelessness

Living without a home doesn’t always equate to our stereotypical image of the panhandler. In fact, most homeless people work, as many as thirty hours a week (not including time spent seeking work, which is considerable), either in the job they held down before they became homeless or, more likely, doing odd jobs and day labor. Jobs typically available to homeless people rarely pay well and are even less likely to be regular, however, and are often a means of treading water more than a lifeline out of homelessness. Temp agencies routinely target homeless populations, and are notorious for underpaying or not paying at all. However, independently securing work by lining up on a well-known street corner poses many of the same risks, and may well lead to assaults or worse.

Those fortunate enough to own a car may live out of it, though this is frequently illegal. Shelters exist, though they’re increasingly threatened by redevelopment and a lack of funding, and the majority are centered around treating mental illness and addiction in the homeless population, meaning that to even have a chance at one of the limited beds, you’re expected to get with the inevitable twelve-step program that comes along with it. Even the best of these shelters are often dirty, uncomfortable, and dangerous. Random police raids are a frequent occurrence, and the tenants are ever-wary for the possibility of an undercover cop (which can result in violence directed at the suspected officer). It’s no surprise that there is a steady population of homeless people who actually prefer to live on the streets rather than submit to the shelter’s rules and environment. A roof over their head may not be worth the risk and the loss of their freedom, according to their calculus, not to mention the difficulty of holding down regular work when you’re part of a treatment program.

People living on the street are not on their own, however. Subcultures flourish among the homeless population, centered around camps that range from the immediately visible to the immaculately hidden. Hiding in plain sight is a skill that homeless people learn to master quickly, placing their camps in ditches or behind urban infrastructure that others rarely think to look past. Such camps are generally difficult to access, but that adds to their security and exclusivity. Much like neighborhoods, these camps have distinct cultures, with some being considerably higher-class than others. It’s not unusual for the more exclusive and well-hidden to have power, either from an unattended outdoor outlet or negotiated from a nearby business owner (who, among other things, essentially receives 24-hour security services from the camp’s inhabitants). In and around these camps, a complicated and fluid social network typically emerges, with seniority based upon who established a camp and who invited whom in. This seniority confers little actual authority, but a great deal of symbolic weight. These hierarchies can easily shift, especially when a camp is wiped out by the authorities, but even in different camps two people might find their social positions reversed.

Broken Homes

Homelessness isn’t always a function of job loss, natural disaster, medical bankruptcy, or the like. Sometimes, it just happens, and, frequently, the people it just happens to are children. Parents are in a position of absolute power, and the social safety net is rife with cracks for individual children to slip through. Children run away for myriad reasons, and getting away from

abusive parents is only one of them. Many homeless teens — as many as 40%, according to some studies — either run away from home or are thrown out for being gay, transgender, or gender-non-conforming. Social services exist to place homeless youth in foster care, but many homeless youth have already been to foster care and have no desire to return. Some are homeless specifically because they fled foster care, and a history in the system is very common among homeless adults.

Mental Illness

Some homeless people are homeless due to mental illness, to be sure, but this does not account for the prevalence and variety of mental illness among homeless people at large. Much like hanging on to a low-income life, the precarity of homeless life engenders anxiety and depression in epidemic quantities, far more than the housed population. Stress often exacerbates certain illnesses, such as schizophrenia, and no one would deny that homelessness is a significant stressor. Someone might give the impression of a healthy neurotypical person, then experience a serious worsening of their previously-masked symptoms upon becoming homeless. The series of linear steps necessary to access medication may be anywhere from difficult to impossible for someone suffering from severe paranoia or psychosis, assuming they can afford the medication in the first place.

The truth of the matter is simple: we associate homelessness with mental illness not because homelessness causes mental illness (or vice versa), but because the most visible homeless people we most often encounter are those with visible symptoms of mental illness. We don't notice the homeless people who appear mentally stable, but we all notice the guy at the bus stop ranting at invisible aggressors, even if we pretend not to.

Social Invisibility

Social invisibility may be the greatest obstacle for homeless people in reestablishing a stable life, a wall built brick by brick that slowly isolates them from society. Isolation, as noted above, hurts, not only in the emotional sense but in the sense that it, over time, degrades one's essential well-being. This reinforces the oft-cited and thoroughly incorrect idea that homeless people are lazy — when you're depressed, just getting out of bed can be a struggle. Now, imagine that struggle without a bed, without a roof and walls to provide a sense of security, without knowing where your next meal will come from.

This social invisibility isn't perfect, though. It doesn't isolate them from the frequently-violent response of police, who independently or at the request of nearby home or business owners descend upon homeless individuals and communities, rousting them from what little corner of the world they've carved out for themselves. Frequently, these raids destroy what few belongings they own, either accidentally or intentionally. Very few cities tolerate permanent or semi-permanent encampments of homeless people. Some, when they break up such encampments and destroy what little the inhabitants own, bus them to other cities, completely uprooting them from their communities and support structures.

Fatalism is a common worldview among homeless people, if only as a defense mechanism. Even without the authorities, theft and loss of property are common for the simple reason that homeless people have few ways to secure their belongings. Street crime is an ever-present threat when one lives on the street — stories of muggings aren't unusual among the homeless population. People who are unable to cope with this way of life are usually not the ones who elect to live on the streets instead of finding a spot in a shelter.

The Axis of Inhumanity and Poverty

Living without a stable income or housing is difficult enough for humans, but Remade must cope with additional challenges that go above and beyond the exigencies of food, shelter, and work. Twisted by conspiracies into inhuman monsters and hunted by either those same conspiracies or others hungry for their power, the Broken are bereft of many of the programs intended to assist homeless people in reintegrating into society, either because their Scars and Variations make it impossible to access those programs or because they fear that those programs may well be an arm of the conspiracy they're on the run from. A mugging or altercation with drug dealers might result in a body count, but even if it doesn't, it will likely bring down unwanted attention, meaning the Remade must evacuate what little shelter she's carved out for herself.

Fake it 'Til You Make It

Institutions surround us, be they government, private, or non-profit. All have points of contact with those around them, and the Remade are no different. The DMV knows a person's address, has a photo on file, knows what kind of car they drive and what the license plate is. These days, that's easily tracked by largely unobtrusive cameras. Social media networks exist to scrape information on users, building a profile that they monetize by selling to advertisers, but that profile can just as easily be bought by a conspiracy, or that conspiracy can spend the time scraping that information themselves. It's difficult to go through life without interacting with these kinds of institutions, especially for those in poverty who frequently rely on state and federal programs to keep their heads above water. Remade, assuming they can pass for Baselines, can certainly avail themselves of these programs and institutions, but doing so is a serious risk.

Deviant who are fortunate enough to have connections able to provide false identity documents may be able to continue living a more or less normal life during their downtime. The difficulties associated with obtaining and using such ID are discussed in detail in Chapter Two, but in short, they're not perfect and they're not as useful as one might think. Using these IDs should always contain a certain element of risk. This doesn't mean Storytellers should treat every trip to the corner store for a six-pack as a chance to blow a Deviant's cover, but significant interactions with government or large corporations should be laden with anxiety. Play that up; have Storyteller characters spend an inordinate amount of time checking over driver's licenses, birth certificates, and the like, even if they're convinced of their legitimacy. Put random drunk-driving checkpoints along routes the cohort has to travel along, or have the police bust up the fake ID ring who provided the documents in the first place. Never allow the cohort to grow complacent about their documentation, because any interaction could be the one that puts them back on the radar again.

Remade often rely on informal networks that don't report or record personal information, such as criminal organizations, neighborhood associations, or small-scale charities. Storytellers should make sure that plenty of these services exist in the area, not to make life easy for the Broken but to provide ample opportunities for them to interact with Baselines, to build relationships and Loyalty Touchstones that can be tugged on later to provide for drama and plot hooks. Keep in mind that these networks and relationships don't come without strings attached. For charities, it may be something seemingly innocuous, such as holding down a booth at a church fair or something similar, but for criminal networks the favors asked of a beneficiary Deviant are unlikely to be so straightforward. Both, however, have opportunities for danger, either through

attracting the attention of law enforcement or a conspiracy or in being exposed in public and potentially giving oneself away. Even these relative safe harbors are, ultimately, risky for the Remade, and not just because of what they might ask of her.

Trust No One

Associating with Baselines is dangerous, not only for the Broken, but for those Baselines, because unlike the Deviants, they don't have Variations to defend them when conspiracies come knocking. Baselines make excellent pawns or hostages, as far as conspiracies are concerned, and even if a Storyteller character's intentions are for the best, a loose word or two in conversation to the wrong person might see them kidnapped and used as bait. Some organizations might well blame the Remade for this, such that cutting one's losses rather than walking into an obvious trap might burn a critical resource. No such decision should ever be free of consequences. Storytellers should keep the stakes high, even if those stakes are purely personal.

Another dimension of risk associated with these networks is that even they are not proof against conspiracies. While many of them run under the radar, some (criminal organizations, in particular) represent useful allies or pawns, and others may become compromised if the conspiracies learn that the Broken are making use of them. Anyone might be secretly informing on the Remade, and while Storytellers should use this sort of plot twist sparingly (lest the players take the lesson that all human interaction is undesirable), it has the potential to be a powerful reveal, ideally used at the climax of an arc. Finding out that the priest that the entire cohort trusted was informing on them the entire time will be a powerful betrayal, and the fallout will put an entire community into a new and unpleasant light. Give the characters reason to ask the question, "Can I trust this person?" but steer them away from "Can I trust anyone?" The former will contribute to a feeling of tension, even if the Storyteller character's intentions are genuine, while the latter will make it extremely difficult to get characters to interact with anyone at all.

Quid Pro Quo

Many of the informal organizations that Deviants rely on will ultimately come asking for favors. This is even more likely to happen if they learn the truth about the Remade. Their power and their place outside society make for a powerful attraction by those seeking under-the-table gain or retribution on their own terms. The relationship changes markedly, and the requests made only get more and more extreme over time. Informal organizations don't always have to be marginal, either. Consider a loose association of corrupt police who hold a Deviant's anonymity over his head, using him to assassinate anyone who gets in their way. They have the resources of the police and associated institutions to draw upon, at least to a certain point, and certainly enough to threaten the Broken. This may not be good for their long-term health, as Remade are literally driven to destroy those who would enslave them, but they don't know that, and greed is a powerful motivator.

These kinds of relationships — the kind that place the Deviant in a temporary position of weakness or being controlled — make for excellent B-Plots, set against the overarching A-Plot of dealing with a powerful conspiracy. Few stories are straightforward arcs, and having two significant threats on the field at once can make for exciting tension regarding how the cohort deals with the problem in addition to the everyday exigencies of life as Remade. In addition, these side-conspiracies make fertile ground for later, greater conspiracies to come, that either rise out of the side-conspiracy or bring it into their much more significant orbit, using their lessers as a catspaw before arriving properly on the scene. This is an excellent way to organically bring in

new conspiracies when it seems that players are ready to finally destroy the current one, never leaving a vacuum in the narrative that allows tension to sap.

The Little Things

Poverty, and especially homelessness, take a significant toll on a person's health (to the point where life expectancy is wildly divergent based on childhood incomes), and this is no less true for the Broken. The Deviant may be fortunate enough to look human, but any doctor who takes a serious look at them will almost certainly notice something *off* about them. This is problematic enough for Remade lucky enough to enjoy stable housing and income, but homelessness is a rough way of life, and takes its toll on the bodies of those who experience it, making the need for medical attention all the more important (for all that it simultaneously becomes so much harder to access). From exposure to malnutrition, from stress injuries to physical trauma, injuries build up over time. This can take the form of Persistent Conditions, possibly including ones beyond those found in the Appendix — such as a nagging leg injury or a bad back — that only resolve when the character is able to get medical attention and rest.

There's more to coping with life than merely physical injuries, however. Stress is a constant in poverty and especially in homelessness, and has its own attendant effects on health and well-being. Scars in particular are easily exacerbated by stress, especially when that stress is caused by life interfering in the Broken's quest for revenge. Stewing in her hatred, the Remade will be likely to let out their stress and rage through violence far in excess of what she might normally indulge in. Consider Conditions such as Deprived (p. XX) which models stress well, but Leveraged (p. XX) works as well, representing the building pressure and the relief that comes with satiating the need for revenge. This provides an additional source of drama (and Beats) outside of the disadvantages imposed by Scars.

Up and Out

While class mobility has become harder and harder over the past few decades, classes are not wholly ossified. Poverty and homelessness do not have to be permanent, and indeed, many homeless people are only homeless for weeks or months rather than years. Remade are deeper in the hole that most, however, due both to being hunted and by the Scars that plague them and, if they're not careful, will eventually kill them. This additional weight makes it all the harder to claw one's way to a comfortable lifestyle — but, ultimately, it's not impossible.

Off the Grid

A Deviant's Conviction interferes significantly with the quiet life of a hermit, to say nothing of the initial investment required to live off the grid, but just because the lifestyle doesn't mesh well with the Remade condition doesn't mean the principles aren't sound. For one thing, rural communities are often distrustful of governmental or corporate authority. Living in such a situation, anchored to a Loyalty Touchstone, a Deviant might well pass months or years in relative safety. This is an opportunity for downtime, if desired, but also for quiet and intimate moments in larger stories.

Points of contact are critical for these sorts of stories, because they give depth and focus both to the narrative and to the setting. A rural farming town or a mining town up in the mountains wouldn't feel the same without the gruff but likeable granger or the firebrand mineworker union rep. They make great Touchstones and are handy sources of plot hooks, and allowing characters

to feel a brief but significant connection to others is also a great way to set them up for a gut-punch when agents of the conspiracy roll into town.

Remember that the setting itself is also a character. We're often accustomed to urban or suburban life, but rural life is a completely different animal. Play up the isolation, whether it's the wide-open big-sky plains with nothing but rolling hills all the way to the horizon or the chilly and damp conifer forests of the Pacific Northwest. Weather is a character, and if it seems cliché to use weather to set the mood, it's only because it works so well. The economy itself is a character: a town that is economically depressed will have an entirely different character than one supported by industry or business. Like Storyteller characters, these features of the environment can serve as hooks for the conspiracy. Imagine a conspiracy's agribusiness arm testing a new fungicide with catastrophic results, or its agents swinging a local election by seeming to come to the economic rescue with new investments. There is nowhere on the planet that is not potentially subject to the conspiracy's whims, as long as that's what serves the pacing and narrative of the story you're telling.

It's also possible to live off the grid in urban, suburban, or exurban settings without suffering homelessness. Consider this fact: there are more empty houses in the United States than homeless people, as many as nine to one, according to some measures. Most of these are the remains of the speculative housing bubble, while others are boondoggle exurbs that collapsed financially or investments for overseas clients hoping for the security of land value. These are perfectly serviceable homes — insulated, wired for electricity, water, sewer, and data — that are empty by virtue of no one having paid a bank for it. A person with a bit of skill at breaking and entering — most household locks aren't that impressive — can squat for quite a while, so long as they don't get attached to any particular house and manage to maintain a low profile. For the Remade, such a house might make an ideal place to hunker down for a while when the conspiracy encroaches, to lick their wounds and prepare their next attack.

Illegitimate Sources of Income

Living well requires money, yes, but no one said that money had to come through legitimate means. For all their suffering, the Remade still have their Variations, which makes each and every one an out-of-context problem for law enforcement and security services. For players who like heists and stories centered on crime, this can be a fun diversion from the main story, even if the characters themselves are itching to get back to the *real* work of dismantling their foes. For Storytellers, it's an excellent source of plot hooks and side stories to supplement the overarching narrative.

It's important not to let these side stories grow to such an extent that they take over the chronicle, however. At most, a heist should only be a scene or two, with a few dice rolls to establish how the heist goes down. Rather than letting the heist get bogged down in planning (which we guarantee your players will do with gusto), segue right into the action after a brief description of each character's preparation, and let flashbacks tell the story of how the characters anticipated the problems they're running into.

Deviants who rely upon high-stakes theft to pay their way to revenge are precisely the sort who come to the attention of criminal enterprises, whether they want that attention or not. Consider the nature of the setting — a port city on the coast might play host to a smuggling ring running everything from heroin to exotic pets to human trafficking, while an isolated city in the Midwest could have their own homegrown criminal families or regional branches of larger cartels. Laws

don't exist to identify the things people don't do, but to mark those acts and enterprises as undesirable and punishable. If there's a service to provide, no matter how unseemly it is, somewhere someone is trying to make a buck off of it, and the Remade are potential money ticket like no other.

This is potentially lucrative for Deviants, but being integrated into a criminal network is a good way to find oneself at the mercy not only of that network, but exposed to any potential conspiracy moles within it. Tracking those very moles by infiltrating the network might make a great story arc, albeit one fraught with danger. Crime media is practically built upon the betrayals and violence, and that's not *too* far from the truth. In the absence of a controlling authority, whoever can cause the most harm can dictate terms. Not everything is part of the Web of Pain, but that doesn't mean it can't hurt.

Heist Planning

Dice Pool: Variable

Roll Results

Success: When a roll fails during the heist, the player may elect to have that roll be considered a success instead.

Exceptional Success: Two rolls may be reversed in this fashion.

Failure: All rolls during the heist stand as rolled.

Dramatic Failure: The character is Leveraged (p. XX) as a result of their preparation. Other Conditions may be substituted if the Storyteller determines it fits the narrative better.

How to Secretly Rule the World: Managing Conspiracies

Conspiracies are the focus of every Remade's life, both for the sake of revenge and for the emotional and psychic anchor they represent. Keeping conspiracies active, interesting, and threatening is a major part of the Storyteller's job in a **Deviant** game. Players have a great deal of control over how a conspiracy is shaped and what sort of threats it will deploy against their characters, but it's the Storyteller who brings it all together and synthesizes it, and who plants the seeds for conspiracies to come. This is more collaborative than other Chronicles of Darkness games, but the Storyteller still has plenty to do.

The first and most important job a Storyteller has is making the conspiracy feel real, giving it a sense of weight that, while not directly apparent, can be felt behind the scenes until it strikes — like violence breaking tension within a scene, this breaks tension within a story. Conspiracies are composed of many elements, from its structure to its composition to its methodologies to its motivations, and while characters may not have immediate understanding of all of these, the Storyteller absolutely must.

Motivations

Just like people, conspiracies have drives — in other words, Principles and Anchors. Keeping track of these desires is a necessity for Storytellers, because those desires will inform the conspiracy's actions and give the story depth. While a conspiracy and a Progenitor may have a key ideology, that doesn't mean they're identical throughout the organization. Humans have motivations of their own, and while they may accept the drives of the group, they'll have their own opinions about them. Individual takes on the conspiracy's purpose will manifest through

action and dialogue. Having two of a conspiracy's lackeys have slightly different understandings of what goes on at headquarters presents the picture of something large enough that no one person can see the whole of it, which makes the conspiracy much more real and terrifying.

That said, there's a reason the eye and the pyramid are the classic conspiracy theorist's image of the Illuminati. The classic conspiracy is a hierarchical thing, and even loose conglomerations of the like-minded with no clear power structure are willing to seize and exercise power not only over society but over individual humans, willing to destroy their lives for an idea. Even if individuals within the conspiracy have reservations about certain aspects of the conspiracy's aims, or at least a different idea of how it'll work out in the end, ultimately those individuals are doing the work of those at the peak of the pyramid, those whose ideals are most closely in line with the collective drives of the conspiracy. That's not a bad thing. It's another source of tension and drama, centered on the possibility of getting insiders to "do the right thing," or to otherwise aid the cohort in their quest for revenge. Faceless and implacable conspiracies are no fun, but hand-and-footholds of this kind give players a way to grasp the whole and offer the leverage for their characters to get what they want.

Memorable foes, Linchpins, and Progenitors are key to signaling these differences to players. It's not a matter of naming every single Storyteller character the characters ever interact with (if only because that's an untenable amount of work for the Storyteller), but making sure that when players do fixate on one or two (as they almost certainly will) those characters have depth and complexity beneath their surface appearance. When you dangle a Storyteller character in front of players, have a plan of action. Even incidental revelations can hook players' interest, whether it's a curious letter they find when rifling through the target's mail or a voicemail message on an unattended phone.

Another way to play up conspiracy-related themes in the chronicle is to seed them into everyday life for the characters. A TV spot, an article in the newspaper (which you could write ahead of time and even print out, if your group is into physical gameplay artifacts), or idle conversation with other Storyteller characters can touch on issues similar to the conspiracy's *raison d'être*. Apart from offering an opportunity to air different points of view on the subject, it also gives the conspiracy a sense of being interconnected with the entire narrative, being so all-encompassing that it surrounds the characters at all times, even when they aren't in the thick of their enemies.

The Secret Rule of Storytelling

It's a story we're all familiar with: the Storyteller shows up on game night with a three-inch binder stuffed full of notes, character ideas, and contingencies for a the finale of an arc set in the headquarters of the conspiracy — and the players decide that, instead, they'd rather crash a space shuttle into the super-Devoted that was supposed to be the centerpiece of an immaculately-prepared knock-down-drag-out fight. What now, smarty pants? This isn't (or at least, shouldn't be) a call for ironclad railroading and absolute Storyteller control of the plot. Far from it: we suggest you, the Storyteller, learn to love it, because *players will never cease to exceed your expectations*. That's at the heart of why we all love this hobby — we never know how these stories we tell together are going to shake out, and that's beautiful.

It can be frustrating when all your work seems to be for naught, but if you don't overinvest in specific courses of action or narrative tracks to big set-pieces, these

moments don't hit quite so hard. Plan ahead, yes, especially if you find improvisation without some kind of support challenging, but don't lock in those plans. If a scene can go multiple ways (and most can), diagram out the effects of what you consider to be the most likely choices. Even if players surprise you, you'll have done some thinking ahead, and you'll likely be able to adapt one of your scenarios to match the reality at the table. As players progress through the larger narrative, their decisions will radiate outward in a butterfly-effect way, and you can adjust future events to fit. With a little experience, you'll be adapting on the fly with the best of them.

The Web of Pain

For all that their condition isolates the Remade, **Deviant** is a game of relationships, and relationships ultimately define both Deviants and the world around them. Managing the lion's share of those relationships is the Storyteller's responsibility, be it between a Storyteller character or institution and a player character or between two Storyteller characters. Having a solid understanding of how the world connects behind the scenes makes it much easier to adjust the setting to match player expectations and actions, in addition to giving the Storyteller options when the players inevitably surprise her.

Maintaining a relationship diagram makes it much easier to manage this fictional social network. You can use pen and paper, though that tends to get crowded in a hurry, or a digital mind-mapping program, if you're comfortable with it. If you're up for it, create an alternate version for your players, keeping the complete conspiracy diagram to yourself. This allows them to fill in the blanks as they discover more and more of the conspiracy's true nature, and makes for a fun element of mystery and puzzle solving. Don't just represent relationships between people, either. Keep track of professional and institutional relationships. Knowing how the local FBI office feels about the local ATF office helps color the relationships of Storyteller characters associated with them. This extends to conspiracies as well — each has institutional knowledge and culture, and a conspiracy's connections often give the Storyteller unexpected tools for interfering with or hunting down the cohort.

Feedback — Listening to Your Players

The most important part of a Storyteller's job is listening to her players, maintaining a sense of how they're interacting with the fiction personally and through their character. This isn't just for the sake of making sure everyone feels safe and welcome at the table, but for adjusting the story to fit the players' expectations. The Storyteller has a great deal of power in terms of the narrative and the characterization, and it's important to give every player a stake in the story's progress. If the world doesn't react to the needs and desires (and subsequent actions) of both characters and players, it's not going to be an engaging chronicle.

So, Your Favorite Baddie Died

The dice are cruel, and sometimes players are crueler, and so the small-time operator the Storyteller was setting up to become a three-arc villain ends up with a knife under his ribs in a back alley during the second chapter. She might have the temptation to bring them back, either by retconning the situation or claiming a miraculous survival — and sometimes that's doable. Sometimes that's even dramatic and fun! But when a Storyteller character is well and truly dead,

unmistakably so, it's time to accept the loss and move on. Don't fret over having to change things, because a dead body is always a great source of questions that demand answers. If the bit player was really going to wind up somewhere important, someone else will step in to fill his shoes. If the Storyteller's particularly clever (or knows her players well enough to anticipate their murderous tendencies), she might even have a Plan B waiting in the wings in case the worst befalls her precious villain, one that will make the players wish they'd left their knives sheathed.

What Players Want

Understanding your players' desires is the key to making them feel like their characters are a part of the narrative as a cohesive story that emerges naturally from around the game table (or the video chat, or however you get your group together). There's a significant bit of sleight of hand going on behind the scenes on the Storyteller's part to make that all happen, and it involves a key skill that often goes unmentioned: *learning to read the signals the players are sending*.

Everything they do, from in-character action to out-of-character spending of Experiences, tells the Storyteller what they're looking to get out of play. If they invest in Firearms, they probably want set-pieces centering on gunplay (be it a tense close-range gunfight with pistols or a game of cat-and-mouse between two snipers). Players who put Experiences into their Persuasion or Subterfuge clearly want to be the face of the group, and will enjoy winding Storyteller characters around their fingers. Intentional, focused observation of the players themselves is an invaluable resource when it comes to steering the narrative in a direction they'll want to go in, even if they didn't realize it themselves.

This principle applies to any kind of gaming, regardless of the setting or system, but it's especially important to **Deviant**, where players have a direct hand in the creation of their own conspiracies and antagonists. It may seem like they're doing the Storyteller's work for her, but that's not the case at all, because the mechanical aspect of play is only the foundation upon which the narrative rests. Storytellers should pay careful attention to the process, and to what the players are saying during it. Even a few casual words can provide a hook that will delight players chapters down the road, when an idle thought they expressed turns out to be the key to understanding and defeating their most recent antagonist. As things change and develop during play, move the narrative towards where the players have aimed themselves. No matter what they aim at, after all, they should be hitting something, and it should be something they'll find exciting, fun, and above all interesting.

No Plan of Battle Survives the Enemy

Players surprising the Storyteller is an inevitability — some would say a feature — of narrative games. Three to five people will have at least seven ideas about where they're going, and the odds that the Storyteller's guessed the one they'll choose, even if she's been studious about listening to and observing her players, are not on her side. Dealing with this fact can be stressful for neophyte Storytellers, and even for seasoned ones at times, especially for those Storytellers fond of scripting things. Scripts can be handy, because they give a firm idea of what a Storyteller character is willing to say, freeing the Storyteller from having to make it up on the spot. Relying too much on scripting, though, from dialogue to plot, can make a Storyteller's response to anything wandering out of the box she's constructed inflexible.

Rather than scripting a story, plan. Think about where the story could go, not where you hope it will. Nail down set-pieces and cool moments, have them ready to pull out on demand, and lay down strings between them that the players will hopefully follow. More often than not, they will, if not necessarily in the order you thought they might. Storytelling is improv, not writing, and being ready for the most likely eventualities and the necessities of the story — the Big Reveal, the Final Battle, and so on — will let the Storyteller focus on what the players are doing in the here and now without having to sweat too much about whether they're "on track." Storytellers uncomfortable with improvisation may find it helpful to create Storyteller characters tied to certain aspects of the setting, locations where events can happen, and the like, writing them down on index cards or another system that makes accessing them easy. Creating an entire world beforehand sounds daunting, but Storytellers who do so get the unparalleled joy of watching their players tear through it. It may sound strange to revel in the wreckage of something one has spent so much time crafting, but it all but ensures that the joy of surprise isn't tainted by the sting of anxiety, and it makes the Storyteller seem really on top of things even when she's not.

Simplify!

Players have a single character sheet with a variety of bells and whistles attached, and are familiar with their conspiracy's traits. That's all they have to worry about, while the Storyteller has to worry about literally everything else in the chronicle. For this reason, it behooves the Storyteller to simplify everything she can. Instead of character sheets for every Storyteller character, create a library of stock archetypes and, at need, sprinkle in a few extra Skills or Merits to add depth and personality. Such archetypal characters don't even need to be complete — all they really *need* are the dice pools they're likely to actually use and the static traits players' abilities are most likely to interact with! If something unexpected comes up, ballpark it. What matters is that, to the players, there's a seamless mechanical underpinning to the narrative. One exception: major antagonists, especially recurring ones, absolutely *should* receive the benefit of a full character sheet. Rather than stock characters, these are the keystones of the Storyteller's arsenal, and need to be able to hold that weight.

This advice applies to other avenues of the Storyteller's job, as well. Apart from the major plot beats, don't plan too heavily for anything more than a chapter or two in the future. By the time the story gets there, the players will almost certainly have done *something* invalidating chunks of the Storyteller's planning, forcing her to go back and spend time revising she could be using for other tasks. Jotting down notes for the players' Variations means less digging through the book in the middle of the session and saves valuable gaming-time. This goes double for any antagonists the Storyteller has on deck!

Getting Your Fishhooks In

Pulling players into the narrative is a bit more complex a task than it might seem — more than simply telling a collaborative story. Thankfully, the Storyteller has a fantastic arsenal of fishhooks at her disposal to land this catch, and if she's careful she'll make the narrative seem boundless and open even as she's reeling the players in down a relatively narrow channel.

Relationships ground us and give us context and community in real life, and the same goes for characters within the fiction. The Remade have few friends remaining, but what friends they have mean the world to them. The only thing they might sacrifice their relationships for is the revenge they obsessively seek, so it follows that the Storyteller should make a character's Touchstones as real and as immediate as she can. Little details make characters feel real to

players — a habit of smoking e-cigs, a playful wink, a style of dress, and so on. If the Storyteller has some personal knowledge of quirks like these, she can lean on that to bring them to life when she's describing or portraying these Storyteller characters. Reactions to these traits may vary, as a player or character who really loathes vaping may take offense at the habit, and that's *fine* because it means that *they care about that character*. Getting players to care about Storyteller characters is the entire point of the exercise, and if done particularly well those characters may well enter the group's overarching table-mythology of in-jokes, an honor that few receive.

Keep in mind that the Storyteller is the single focal point for the players' characters to interact with the rest of the narrative. Making Storyteller characters stand out from each other doesn't just mean getting to play voice actor, it means body language, word choice, all the little details that make it clear who's speaking and who they are. A CEO might sit ramrod straight and clearly enunciate every word he says, to the point where he comes off as more than a little dangerous-in-the-serial-killer-sense — or he might habitually rest his head on his chin and be terribly bored with the characters (and, likely, everything around him). Both speak to the character's inner life, and both make him feel like he's taking up space at the game table.

All Roads Lead to Hell

The world a Storyteller weaves should seem expansive, but the truth is that the characters live in a Potemkin village of the imagination. The world doesn't extend beyond the backdrop of wherever the players go. The difference is that the Storyteller reconstructs this Potemkin village whenever the players venture beyond the façade. The Storyteller has to be ready for these eventualities, and some tips for that are discussed above, but here we'll talk about the practice of making a real, breathing world that is, in the end, nothing but verbal set dressing. All the Storyteller has to worry about is building the world that the players' characters can see at the exact moment and being ready to build wherever they go next.

Balancing the immediate and the possible is a task of preparedness, improvisation, and knowing the players. It's also the ability to move smoothly from one setting or situation to another with the appropriate pacing. There's a difference between a hard cut (“*You're going to the warehouse district? Alright, when you get there...*”) and a transition (“*How do you get there? Car? What do you listen to on the radio on the way?*”). If the Storyteller needs time to think, the latter is a useful tool to get players to roleplay for a minute or two while she gets her next scene in order mentally. On the other hand, if she's been preparing as the last scene winds down (or if she got lucky and planned for something the players want to do), cutting right to the action puts players on the spot and makes them pay attention, the same way a sharp cut in film or television is jarring.

Reorganizing around the players is easier if the Storyteller keeps the rest of the world floating, keeping it and its relation to the current scene in the back of her head at all times. Taking notes can be helpful to keep it in order, either as linear text or a mindmap that illustrates the potential paths players might take from the current scene. Never forget that Storyteller characters have their own lives and motivations, and are busy working toward them in the background. If the Storyteller drops hints and the players don't follow them up, that doesn't mean the plotline is off-limits, it just means the players have given the Storyteller the opportunity to build something fun and dangerous behind the scenes, which can intrude into the path they've taken at a convenient time in the future. This isn't an excuse to screw over the players, but a way to make the world

moving behind the scenes feel much larger than it really is (not to mention a good way to motivate players who are dithering over what to do next).

A Conspiracy's Role

Deviants' obsessive focus on revenge puts a conspiracy center-stage in their minds, and to be sure the Remade play a major role in a conspiracy's plans, but there's almost always more to it than a simple desire to enslave, vivisect, or whatever cruelty the conspiracy has in mind. The transformed aren't the *ends* for the conspiracy; they're the *means*. Even if the conspiracy has a disturbing take on transhumanism at the center of their ideology, intending to use what they learn from the Broken to transform themselves (and, in their minds, do it "right"), that transformation is almost certainly not the end goal. The conspiracy's plans hinge on what they can do with what they learn from the Remade, and while to the cohort they make seem like implacable monsters hunting them simply for the sake of doing so, the Storyteller needs to know the next phase of the conspiracy's plan. **Deviant** focuses on the endgame of revenge, but knowing the conspiracy's endgame allows her to make decisions on the conspiracy's behalf that seem organic and realistic. Even if the conspiracy will never realize its dreams, players will be able to understand what they're striving for. Besides, the Storyteller needs *something* for the mad scientist or the chief cultist to monologue about — it might as well be internally consistent.

What matters most for the purposes of the chronicle is what the conspiracy poses a threat to, because that informs both its actions and the context in which the Remade are mostly likely to encounter it in the wild. The most obvious and universal threat is, of course, a threat to other people, be they innocent bystanders, pawns in the conspiracy's game, or specific targets either related or unrelated to the Deviants themselves. This sort of wide-angle targeting could easily affect a Remade's Loyalty Touchstones, and defending unrelated innocents is a good source of new Loyalty Touchstones.

Some conspiracies have wider aims of the world-altering sort. They mean to take over a major country, start a war, destroy an economy. They may be genocidal maniacs, or they may have political ambitions that require a certain segment of the population or power structure to be "removed from the equation." They mean to remake the world in their own image, and to them, the more eggs broken while making the omelet, the bigger and better the omelet. Discovering the deep and sweeping plans of the conspiracy is a wonderful revelation for players and characters alike. For the characters, it casts their craving for revenge in an entirely new and far more heroic light, which may well spur them to unconsidered action. Saving the world is a great way to end a chronicle, if the narrative's reached that scale.

But what if the Storyteller and the players want to keep going, ratcheting the stakes up further even after such a climactic battle? Fortunately, conspiracies aren't limited to the prosaic rules of reality-as-we-know-it. Conspiracies at this level aren't content with world domination, or at least not in the petty way those that came before them were. Instead, they intend to remake *reality itself*. Such power is inherently dangerous, but in the hands of amoral maniacs it's a thousandfold worse. Their plans might involve tearing down the barrier between the physical and spirit worlds, raising the dead en masse, or engaging in the mass transformation of humans. Perhaps they verge into the realm of the conceptual, hoping to annihilate the division between human souls, or to travel through and alter time as they wish (which is to say, to destroy it completely from the perspective of everyone else). As long as the Storyteller can conceptualize a conspiracy's master plan and articulate it to the players in a villain's dramatic speech, it's fair game.

Revenge's Endgame

The Remade are on a quest for vengeance, and they'll get it, sooner or later (or die trying). Those moments are the key points in what's left of the Remade's life, and it's absolutely critical for them to carry that weight within the narrative. In other words, it has to feel as meaningful for the player as it does for the character, if not in the same way. More than any other moment, those are the moments of pathos that will define the chronicle, so the Storyteller should do everything in her power to make them iconic. Don't have the fight in a warehouse; have it in a secret laboratory inside that warehouse with dozens of human-sized test tubes for players to shatter, and plenty of flammable chemicals inside them to start a fire that will slowly spread up the walls and ceiling, leaving only the catwalk for the final confrontation. These are the moments when cinematic violence is not only permissible, it's *encouraged*.

Big set pieces like this, however, are vulnerable to the Secret Rule of Storytelling, as discussed above. Storytellers can design a conspiracy web to lead to a particular location, but players may well decide to deal with that location in a way that doesn't allow all the bells and whistles associated with the location to go off. Unlike the rest of the chronicle, though, these moments are important enough that a little railroading, as long as it's subtle, will be more than offset by the amazing scene where a Remade's Conviction is finally sated. Create a path of least resistance, and while players won't always go for those, the more they poke and prod at their leads, the more that route will stand out as the best option. Give them an insider willing to help — to open doors, to blank a certain set of security cameras, and the like. The fiction can remain exciting and tense even as the mechanics give a little under the weight of player agency and Storyteller fiat.

That's Not How I Remember It

Sometimes characters change their minds. Sometimes *players* change their minds. Storytellers often feel a strong sense of ownership over the chronicles they put together and run for their friends, but the story is a collaborative one, and players should absolutely have a veto if they decide that their characters' aims have changed, or if they themselves have a reason to change the endgame for their character.

Finally, sometimes characters don't get what they want. Sometimes, their Scars or their dangerous lives catch up with them, and they don't live to take revenge on the conspiracy that violated them. Those are valid endings too, if bittersweet or just plain bitter. Try to give those endings meaning too. They may not be that signature moment of revenge, but they're just as important, because this character's story is coming to an end. Their friends may carry the torch onward for that character, forever changed by that character's impact in their lives, but the player of that character is going to show up to the next session with a new character, new plot threads, and very likely a very different viewpoint on the cohort's vengeance-quest.

Moving On

The Remade have taken their revenge, a conspiracy lies in shambles, the conspirators dead — all is right with the world. Except, of course, it isn't, because Conviction and Loyalty are the only things holding the Remade together. Without an enemy to fight or someone to protect, their Scars will inevitably worsen over time, and they will die or transform into something even less human than they already are. That's a valid ending to a chronicle — a sad and painful contentment, knowing that the world will be a better place for their sacrifice, knowing that no one will ever have to suffer the way they did. Characters may choose to die on their own terms, perhaps in the very scene that they take their revenge, a final climax like no other.

But the end of a conspiracy doesn't have to be the end of the chronicle. The world is full of bad actors, people willing to discard empathy and consideration for others in the name of power — people who, upon noticing the Remade, would desperately want to tinker with them or turn them to their own ends. In short, there's always a bigger conspiracy to fight, as long as the players want to keep their characters running on the treadmill of revenge.

Introducing a new conspiracy is easier if its precursors have appeared previously in the chronicle, but it's not a necessity. What matters most is making the conspiracy's intrusion into the cohort's lives personal. Give them a reason to hate the conspiracy, to refocus their now-idle ire upon it. Give them a drive that makes them anathema to the characters, so they'll want to do so. Be wary of scale creep, but don't necessarily shy away from it entirely. The Storyteller should pace herself, ratcheting up the consequences of failure bit by bit as conspiracies fall and conspiracies rise. By now, she should know her players well enough to know where they'd want the line to be drawn — or, for that matter, if they'd want it drawn at all.

Appendix One: Equipment

Weapons

Melee Weapons Chart

[BEGIN CHART]

Type	Damage	Initiative	Strength	Size	Availability	Special
Sap	0	-1	1	1	•	Stun
Brass Knuckles	0	0	1	1	•	Uses Brawl to attack
Baton	1	-1	2	2	n/a	
Crowbar	2	-2	2	2	•	
Tire Iron	1	-3	2	2	••	+1 Defense
Chain	1	-3	2	2	•	Grapple
Shield (small)	0	-2	2	2	••	Concealed
Shield (large)	2	-4	3	3	••	Concealed
Knife	0	-1	1	1	•	
Rapier	1	-2	1	2	••	Armor piercing 1
Machete	2	-2	2	2	••	
Hatchet	1	-2	1	1	•	
Fire Axe	3	-4	3	3	••	9-again, two-handed
Chainsaw	5	-6	4	3	•••	9-again, two-handed
Spear*	2	-2	2	4	•	+1 Defense, two-handed

[END OF CHART]

Type: A weapon's type is a general classification that can apply to anything your character picks up. A tire iron might be any metal club, such as an antique mace, a metal baseball bat, or a hammer, while a hatchet might be a meat cleaver or an antique hand axe.

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Weapons always deal lethal damage against ordinary people. The type of damage may vary against supernatural opponents.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the weapon. If using more than one weapon, take the higher penalty and increase by 1.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a -1 penalty on attack rolls.

Size: Size 1 items can be hidden in a hand; two Size 2 items can be hidden in a coat; Size 3+ items cannot be hidden.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or the level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

Concealed: A character who wields a shield but doesn't use it to attack can add its Size to his Defense, and uses its Size as a concealment modifier against ranged attacks.

Grapple: Add the chain's weapon modifier to grappling dice pools.

Stun: Halve the victim's Size when aiming for the head with intent to stun.

Two-handed: This weapon requires two hands. It can be used one-handed, but doing so increases the Strength requirement by 1.

* The reach of a spear gives +1 to Defense against opponents who are unarmed or wield weapons of Size 1.

Ranged Weapons Chart

[BEGIN CHART]

Type	Damage Example	Range	Clip Special	Initiative	Strength	Size	Availability
Revolver, light (Special)	1	20/40/80	6	0	2	1	•• SW M640 (.38)
Revolver, heavy (Magnum)	2	35/70/140	6	-2	3	1	•• SW M29 (.44)
Pistol, light	1	20/40/80	17+1	0	2	1	••• Glock 17 (9mm)
Pistol, heavy (ACP)	2	30/60/120	7+1	-2	3	1	••• Colt M1911A1 (.45)
SMG, small* (9mm)	1	25/50/100	30+1	-2	2	1	••• Ingram Mac-10
SMG, large*	2	50/100/200	30+1	-3	3	2	••• HK MP-5 (9mm)
Rifle (30.06)	4	200/400/800	5+1	-5	2	3	•• Remington M-700

Assault Rifle*	3	150/300/600	42+1	-3	3	3	•••	Steyr AUG (5.56mm)
Shotgun**	3	20/40/80	5+1	-4	3	2	••	Remington M870 (12-gauge)
Crossbow***	2	40/80/160	1	-5	3	3	•••	

[END CHART]

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Weapons always deal lethal damage against ordinary people. The type of damage may vary against supernatural opponents.

Ranges: The listed numbers are short/medium/long ranges in yards/meters. Attacks at medium range suffer a -1 penalty. Attacks at long range suffer a -2 penalty.

Clip: The number of rounds a gun can hold. A +1 indicates that a bullet can be held in the chamber, ready to fire.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the weapon. If using more than one weapon, take the higher penalty and increase it by 1.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a -1 on attack rolls.

Size: Weapons of Size 1 can be fired one-handed; Size 2 weapons must be fired two-handed and can be hidden in a coat; Size 3 weapons can be fired two-handed, but not hidden on one's person.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or the level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

* The weapon is capable of autofire, including short bursts, medium bursts, and long bursts.

** Attack rolls gain the 9-again quality.

*** Crossbows take three turns to reload between shots.

Grenades

[BEGIN CHART]

Type	Damage	Availability	Initiative	Tags	Blast Area	Force	Range	Strength	Size
Frag, Standard	2	0	10	3	Thrown (A)	2	1	••••	Knockdown
Frag, Heavy	3	-1	5	4	Thrown (A)	2	1	••••	Knockdown
Molotov Ignited, Muffled	1	-2	3	2	Thrown	2	2	•	Incendiary,
Pipe Bomb Knockdown	1	-1	5	2	Thrown	2	1	•	Ignited,
Smoke – Muffled	0	10	–	Thrown (A)	2	1	••	Concealment,	
Stun	0	0	5	2	Thrown (A)	2	1	••	Knockdown

Thermite	3	5	4	Thrown (A)	2	1	••••	Incendiary
White Phosphorous	3	5	4	Thrown (A)	2	1	••••	Concealment, Incendiary

[END CHART]

Damage: Indicates the damage automatically dealt to those within the blast radius (p. XX).

Initiative: The initiative penalty wielding the weapon inflicts.

Blast Area: The diameter of the explosion, in meters or yards.

Force: The additional damage inflicted by the explosion (p. XX).

Range: Throwing a grenade is a Dexterity + Athletics roll. Success means the grenade lands within the blast area of its intended target. An exceptional success places the grenade within ground zero of the target. Additional successes on the attack roll do not otherwise increase the damage the explosive inflicts.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a -1 on attack rolls.

Size: Size 1 items can be hidden in a hand; two Size 2 items can be hidden in a coat; Size 3+ items cannot be hidden.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or the level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

Concealment: Characters in the blast area suffer the Blinded Tilt in both eyes until they leave the area. Those within the secondary blast area instead suffer the Blinded Tilt. Those concealed by the smoke enjoy total concealment (p. XX) against attacks. The smoke dissipates after two minutes.

Ignited: The user must light a fuse or rag as an action before throwing it on the next turn.

Incendiary: Characters in the blast area catch fire automatically as though exposed to a torch with a heat bonus equal to the incendiary grenade's damage bonus. This is instead a bonfire at ground zero. Within the secondary blast area, the heat bonus is halved (rounded up). The affected area also gains the Inferno Tilt.

Knockdown: Characters in the blast area who suffer more damage from the blast than half their Size (rounded up) suffer the Knocked Down and Stunned Tilts. Those in the secondary blast area instead suffer the Knocked Down Tilt if they suffer damage more damage than half their Size.

Muffled: The device does *not* impose the Deafened Tilt as do other explosives.

Armor

[BEGIN CHART]

Type	Rating	Strength	Defense	Speed	Availability	Coverage
Modern						
Reinforced clothing*	1/0	1	0	0	•	Torso, arms, legs
Kevlar vest*	1/3	1	0	0	•	Torso

Flak jacket	2/4	1	-1	0	••	Torso, arms
Full riot gear	3/5	2	-2	-1	•••	Torso, arms, legs

Archaic

Leather (hard)	2/0	2	-1	0	•	Torso, arms
Chainmail	3/1	3	-2	-2	••	Torso, arms
Plate	4/2	3	-2	-3	••••	Torso, arms, legs

[END CHART]

Rating: Armor provides protection against normal attacks and firearms attacks. The number before the slash is for general armor, while the number after the slash is for ballistic armor.

Strength: If a character's Strength is lower than that required for her armor, reduce her Brawl and Weaponry dice pools by one.

Defense: The penalty imposed on a character's Defense when wearing the armor.

Speed: The penalty to a character's Speed when wearing the armor.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or the level of Social Merit needed to acquire the armor.

Coverage: The areas of a character protected by the armor. Unless an attacker targets a specific unarmored location (see "Specified Targets," p. XX), the armor's protection applies. Wearing a helmet increases the armor's coverage to include a character's head.

* This armor is concealed, either as normal clothing (e.g. biker leathers) or from being worn under a jacket or baggy shirt. Attackers have no idea the target is wearing armor until after they land a successful hit.

Services

[CHART]

Service	Availability	Die Bonus
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Academics

Forensic accountant consulting	••••	+3
Research assistance from grad students	••	+2
Semiotic analysis of a work of art	••	+2

Computer

Data recovery specialist	••••	+3
Graphic/web design or forgery	••	+2
Targeted malware or DDOS attack	•••	+2

Crafts

Custom equipment modifications	•••	+2
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No-questions-asked vehicle tow ••• +2

Targeted sabotage •• +2

Investigation

Crime scene cover-up •••• +3

Private investigation/background check •• +2

Search and seizure warrant •••• +3

Medicine

Black-market surgeon •••• +3

Rush plastic surgery •••• +2

Under-the-counter prescription drug or toxin ••• +2

Occult

Conspiracy spy or turncoat ••• +2

Esoteric consultant/sage •••• +3

Psychic/medium ••• +2

Politics

Astroturfing ••• +2

Lobbying effort (read: bribe) •••• +3

Opposition research ••• +2

Science

Hazmat cleanup crew ••• +3

Lab access •• +2

Volatile compounds or explosives dealer/consultant •••• +3

Athletics

Arranging an “accidental” injury while target is exercising or playing sports ••• +2

Access gym membership lists and member data ••• +2

Rigging an athletic competition •••• +3

Brawl

Hired muscle or bodyguard service ••• +2

Hiring goons to “send a message” •••• +3

Provoking a pre-planned barfight or riot ••• +2

Drive

Professional stunt driver ••• +2

Staged car crash ••• +3

Uber/Lyft/taxi ride • +1

Firearms

Cover fire from local mafia or gangs ••• +3

Exotic/experimental gun repair ••• +2

Procuring smuggled military arms •••• +2

Larceny

Burglary/robbery support team ••• +2

Security vulnerability analysis ••• +2

Stolen key or keycard ••• +2

Stealth

Strategic distraction ••• +3

Tailing a suspect ••• +2

Targeted vandalism •• +2

Survival

Search party or wilderness tracker ••• +2

Trail guide •• +3

Weatherproof a shelter •• +2

Weaponry

Forge/modify an archaic weapon ••• +2

Identify wound from obscure weapon ••• +2

Training in archaic warfare ••• +2

Animal Ken

Determining source stock of Chimeric/Manticore •••• +3

Identifying animal by droppings, fur, or photographs •• +2

Animal or Manticore trainer ••• +2

Empathy

Cold reader •• +2

“Good cop” interrogator ••• +2

Professionally produced dossier or psychographic profile •••• +3

Expression

Freelance writer/editor • +2

Influence over major news outlet ••• +3

Guerilla marketing consultant ••• +2

Intimidation

“Bad cop” interrogator	•••	+2
Cyberstalking	••	+2
Leg-breakers	••••	+3

Persuasion

Con artist/accomplice	••	+2
P.R./propaganda campaign	••••	+3
Procurer	•••	+2

Socialize

Catering	• to ••••	+1 to +3
Live entertainment	••	+2
Seamstress/tailor	•••	+2

Streetwise

Black market access	••	+2
Street/prescription drug dealer	•••	+2
Find crash space	••	+1

Subterfuge

Amateur actor/actress	••	+2
Document/ID counterfeiter	•• or •••	+1 or +2
FX make-up artist	•••	+2

[[END CHART]]

[PAGE BREAK]

Appendix Two: Tilts

Tilts come in two forms: Personal and Environmental.

Personal Tilts only apply to one character, and include ways in which that character can overcome the effect. In many cases (Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened, and Leg Wrack), if a Personal Tilt is caused by an attack to a specified target (p. XX), mark an X under the leftmost Health box inflicted in that attack, and the Tilt ends when the damage that caused it is healed.

Environmental Tilts affect the whole scene, and offer ways for individual characters to mitigate their effects.

[THE FOLLOWING ARE ALL TILTS]

Tilts

The list below gives some common Tilts that can be used to model difficulties in combat or the effects of Scars, Variations, or hostile supernatural powers.

Arm Wrack

Personal

Description: The character's arm is painfully (and debilitatingly) injured.

Effect: The affected character drops whatever they're holding in that arm and can't use it to attack opponents. If this effect spreads to both limbs, roll only a chance die on any rolls that require manual dexterity, and take -3 to all other Physical actions.

Causing the Tilt: Supernatural power or targeted blow to the arm (-2) that deals damage in excess of Stamina, or to a hand (-4) that deals any damage.

Ending the Tilt: The relevant damage heals.

Beaten Down

Personal

Description: The character has had the fight knocked out of him.

Effect: The character cannot take active part in the fight without extra effort. The player must spend a point of Willpower *each time* he wants the character to take a violent action in the fight. He can still run, Dodge, and apply Defense.

Causing the Tilt: The character suffers bashing damage in excess of his Stamina *or* any amount of lethal damage.

Ending the Tilt: The character surrenders and gives the aggressor what he wants. At this point, the character regains a point of Willpower and takes a Beat, but can take no further action in the fight.

Blazing Light

Environmental

Description: Bright light in the area hurts the eyes.

Effect: Characters suffer a -3 penalty to any rolls that rely on vision, and the pain and distraction causes a -1 penalty to any other rolls. Characters closing their eyes to avoid the pain suffer the Blinded Tilt in both eyes.

Causing the Tilt: Sunlight reflecting off snow, sand, or water at just the right angle; the Bioluminescence Variation.

Ending the Tilt: Dimming the light, removing elements of the terrain that reflect it into eyes, or donning protective eyewear.

Blinded

Personal

Description: The character's eyes are damaged or removed.

Effect: The character suffers a -3 penalty to any rolls that rely on vision. Increase to -5 and loss of all Defense if both eyes are affected.

Causing the Tilt: Supernatural power, darkness, or targeted blow (-5) that inflicts damage. An attacker can inflict temporary blindness by slashing at her opponent's brow, throwing sand into his eyes, or kicking up dirt. This requires an attack roll of Dexterity + Athletics with a -3 penalty. (Defense applies.) If the attack succeeds, the target is Blinded for the next turn.

Ending the Tilt: The relevant damage heals.

Blizzard

Environmental

Description: Heavy snowfall carpets the ground and is whipped up by howling winds into a barrage of whirling white.

Effect: Rolls to see things close to the character's person suffer a -1 penalty. Each additional 10 yards/meters inflicts an additional -1 penalty (cumulative) on all visual Perception rolls. This penalty also applies to ranged attacks.

Every four inches of snow applies a -1 penalty to appropriate Physical rolls, including combat rolls.

Causing the Tilt: For the most part, the weather is out of the characters' control.

Ending the Tilt: Without supernatural powers, characters can't end a blizzard. Proper equipment (such as goggles and snow boots) can add +1 to +3 to a roll, offsetting some of the penalties.

Deafened

Personal

Description: The character can't hear.

Effect: If the character is deaf in one ear, he suffers a -3 penalty to hearing-based Perception rolls. A character struck deaf in both ears only gets a chance die on such rolls, and suffers a -2 penalty to all combat-related dice rolls.

Causing the Tilt: A particularly loud noise within 10 feet of the character may cause temporary hearing loss, usually in both ears. A supernatural power, or a targeted blow (-4) that inflicts damage.

Ending the Tilt: Deafness caused by loud noises fades after (10 - the victim's Stamina + Resolve) turns. If caused by damage, the relevant damage heals.

Drugged

Personal

Description: The character's mind is addled by mind-altering substances.

Effect: A generic narcotic can be represented with one set of modifiers; the character suffers a -2 modifier to Speed (and static Defense, if used) and a -3 penalty to all rolls in combat. The character ignores wound penalties.

Causing the Tilt: Drugs are ingested by or injected into the character, voluntarily or not. Injecting another character with drugs is a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, suffering a -1 modifier for the improvised weapon.

Ending the Tilt: A drugged character can shake off the effects for a turn by succeeding on a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll, with a -1 to -3 penalty based the potency of the drug (use -2 as the default).

Earthquake

Environmental

Description: Everything shudders and shakes, and rents tear the ground wide open.

Effect: When the earthquake's actually occurring, all Dexterity-based dice pools (and Defense) suffer a -1 to -5 penalty. Characters take between 1 and 3 points of lethal damage per turn of the earthquake's duration. A reflexive Stamina + Athletics roll downgrades that damage to bashing — or cancels it, on an exceptional success.

Causing the Tilt: Without tremendous supernatural power, it's almost impossible to cause an earthquake. A powerful explosion could create the same effect.

Ending the Tilt: Earthquakes are quick events. It's very rare for one to last more than a minute (20 turns).

Extreme Cold

Environmental (sometimes Personal)

Description: Bone-chilling winds bite through the character, or trudging through knee-deep snow takes all of the sensation from his limbs.

Effect: When the temperature is below freezing, characters can't heal bashing damage. Supernatural beings and characters who heal faster than normal halve their normal healing rate. For every hour that a character is affected, he accrues a -1 penalty to all rolls. When that penalty hits -5, he instead suffers a point of lethal damage per hour.

Causing the Tilt: A frozen environment, a walk-in freezer, etc.

Ending the Tilt: Find a source of warmth or warm clothing. A character who has hypothermia requires medical attention.

Extreme Heat

Environmental (sometimes Personal)

Description: The character might be stumbling through the desert with the sun beating down on him, or running through the steam tunnels surrounding an old boiler room. This Tilt can also be the result of a debilitating fever.

Effect: Characters can't heal bashing damage. Supernatural beings and characters who heal faster than normal instead halve their normal healing rate. For every hour that a character is continuously affected by this Tilt, he accrues a -1 penalty to all rolls. When that penalty hits -5, he instead suffers a point of lethal damage per hour.

Causing the Tilt: This Tilt is usually caused by environmental factors — being out at noon in the desert, or spending too long in a sauna or forge.

Ending the Tilt: Get out of the heat. In a desert or similar environment, finding shade is paramount.

Flooded

Environmental

Description: Some liquid has risen enough to impede the character's progress.

Effect: Each foot of liquid inflicts a -2 penalty to all Physical dice pools. If the water goes up over her head, the character has to swim (Dexterity + Athletics). Alternatively, she can try to hold her breath (Stamina + Composure).

Causing the Tilt: Normally, this Tilt is the result of heavy rain, sudden snowmelt, or a broken water main.

Ending the Tilt: Characters can escape flooding by getting to high ground, which is enough to mitigate this Tilt.

Heavy Rain

Environmental

Description: Torrential rain lashes down in knives.

Effect: Heavy rains cause a Perception penalty of -3 dice to Perception rolls.

Causing the Tilt: Short of a supernatural power or a fleet of cloud-seeding aircraft, Heavy Rain is the result of natural weather patterns.

Ending the Tilt: The best way out of the rain is to get indoors.

Heavy Winds

Environmental

Description: Howling winds buffet at the characters.

Effect: Heavy winds are loud, so characters suffer a -3 modifier to aural Perception rolls. Also, the wind inflicts a penalty to all Physical rolls. Grade the wind from one to five; one is tropical-storm level (around 40 MPH), three is hurricane level (around 80 MPH), and five is tornado level (150+ MPH). The wind's grade represents the penalty applied to Physical dice rolls. Characters outside take bashing damage each turn equal to the wind's rating. Characters can make a reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll to avoid damage.

Causing the Tilt: Heavy winds are a fact of life, from siroccos in the desert, to tornados in the Midwest US, to wind shears everywhere.

Ending the Tilt: Getting out of the wind is the best way to end this Tilt.

Ice

Environmental

Description: The ground's covered in a layer of ice that sends wheels spinning and people's feet flying out from under them.

Effect: Divide the character's Speed in half. All Physical rolls (and Defense) suffer a -2 penalty. Attempting to move at full Speed increases the Physical penalty to -4. Any dramatic failure on a Physical roll inflicts the Knocked Down Tilt. When driving halve Acceleration, and take a -5 penalty to Drive rolls.

Causing the Tilt: This Tilt applies to any surface that's slick and slippery, including a spill of industrial lubricant or just a well-polished wooden or linoleum floor.

Ending the Tilt: "Get off the ice" is good advice, but that can take work. Characters can use heat or fire to melt ice, or throw down copious quantities of salt or grit to increase traction.

Immobilized

Personal

Description: Something holds the character fast, preventing him from moving.

Effect: The character can't do anything. He can't apply Defense against incoming attacks, and can't take combat-related actions. If someone's holding him down, he can spend a point of Willpower to deliver a head butt or similar attack.

Causing the Tilt: The usual way to inflict this Tilt is through the Restrain grappling move.

Ending the Tilt: An Immobilized target can break free by escaping from a grapple or snapping whatever binds her. If held by an item, the character must make a Strength + Athletics roll penalized by the item's Durability. Take a -2 penalty for restrained limbs; increase to -4 if hogtied. A success breaks free. Each roll, successful or not, deals a point of bashing damage.

Inferno

Environmental

Description: The area is on fire. Anything flammable is either already burning or will be soon.

Effect: All characters suffer a -2 to all rolls due to smoke and heat. After two turns, any character that breathes also suffers 2B per turn due to smoke inhalation. After three turns, the character also suffers 1L per turn from burns and must succeed on a Dexterity + Stamina roll each turn to avoid catching fire (see p. XX).

Causing the Tilt: Objects or people catching fire and letting it spread can cause this Tilt, as well as supernatural powers or particularly volatile explosions.

Ending the Tilt: Different types of fire require different methods to extinguish; in general, cutting off the fire from its fuel sources does the trick. Water, carbon dioxide, sand, and baking soda can be useful, depending on the size and type of the fire. Eventually all fires burn themselves out, but that can be cold comfort in the aftermath of a destructive blaze.

Insane

Personal

Description: The character suffers from a panic attack, sudden imbalance, or a full-on psychotic break.

Effect: The character gains a +1 bonus to all combat rolls, but takes actions after everyone else. A character suffering from this Tilt cannot spend Willpower in combat, and suffers a -3 penalty to all Social rolls.

Causing the Tilt: Any character with an appropriate Condition may acquire the Insane Tilt. The Storyteller can call for a Resolve + Composure roll to resist a general anxiety that gnaws at the character's mind.

Ending the Tilt: The specific effects of this Tilt don't normally last beyond the end of the scene. To end earlier, roll Resolve + Composure as an instant action, contested by a dice pool of (10 – her Willpower dots). Take no other actions this turn, and don't apply Defense to attacks.

Insensate

Personal

Description: The character shuts down, either due to extreme fear or sudden pleasure.

Effect: The character can't take any actions until the Tilt is resolved. He can apply Defense to incoming attacks, and if he takes any damage from an attack, the Tilt ends.

Causing the Tilt: Several supernatural powers can leave their victim in a trance-like state of heightened emotion. A hallucinogenic drug might have similar effects; administering such a drug is a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, which suffers a –1 modifier.

Ending the Tilt: The Tilt wears off at the end of the scene. The victim can spend a point of Willpower before then to act normally for one turn. A successful attack will also end the Tilt. If a character has been knocked insensible by drugs, then when this Tilt ends it is replaced with the Drugged Tilt.

Knocked Down

Personal

Description: Something knocks the character to the floor.

Effect: The character is knocked off her feet. If she hasn't already acted this turn, she loses her action. Once she's on the ground, a character is considered prone. The character can still apply Defense against incoming attacks, and can attempt to attack from the ground at a –2 penalty.

Causing the Tilt: A melee weapon (damage modifier +2 or greater), or a firearm (damage modifier of +3 or greater) can knock a character down. A close combat attack with a targeted attack against the legs (–2 modifier) can knock someone down. If successful, the target is knocked down, but takes only half damage.

Ending the Tilt: Standing up takes an action. A character who hasn't yet acted can make a Dexterity + Athletics roll, minus weapon modifier. If successful, she avoids the effects of this Tilt.

Leg Wrack

Personal

Description: Pain or numbness in the leg

Effect: If their leg is broken, sprained, or dislocated, halve the character's Speed and suffer a –2 penalty on Physical rolls that require movement (and Defense). If both legs are wracked, the character falls over — taking the Knocked Down Tilt. Speed is reduced to 1; moving precludes other actions. Physical rolls that require movement are reduced to a chance die.

Causing the Tilt: Supernatural power or targeted blow (–2) inflicting damage in excess of Stamina.

Ending the Tilt: The relevant damage heals.

Poisoned

Personal

Description: Poison is tearing the character apart from the inside.

Effect: A poison is either “moderate” or “grave.” A moderate poison causes 1 point of bashing damage per turn. A grave poison deals 1 point of lethal damage per turn.

Causing the Tilt: Ingesting or inhaling a poison inflicts this Tilt. Injecting an opponent with a poison counts as a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, and suffers a -1 modifier.

Ending the Tilt: Immediate medical attention. Roll Stamina + Resolve as a reflexive action each turn. If the character intends to act, the roll suffers a -3 penalty. Success counteracts the damage for one turn.

Poor Light

Environmental

Dim illumination, strobes, or flickering lights make it difficult to track movement and see clearly.

Effect: Affected characters suffer a -2 penalty to visual-based Perception rolls, including ranged combat, rising to -3 at medium range and -4 at long range.

Causing the Tilt: This Tilt applies to scenes of “natural” darkness with dim ambient light, such as the outdoors at night away from urban light pollution, and to disconcerting environments like a nightclub with its effects system on.

Ending the Tilt: Bring, find, or create a light source.

Sick

Personal

Description: The character suffers from nausea, fever, or related symptoms.

Effect: A sickness is either “moderate” or “grave.” A moderate sickness causes a -1 penalty to all actions during combat. That penalty increases by 1 every two turns. A grave sickness inflicts the same dice penalties as a mild sickness, plus 1 point of bashing damage per turn.

Causing the Tilt: Exposure to disease either from living sources or sample.

Ending the Tilt: Penalties fade at a rate of one point per turn once the character has a chance to rest. Any damage remains until the character can heal.

Stunned

Personal

Description: The character is dazed and unable to think straight.

Effect: The character loses her next action, and halves her Defense until she can next act.

Causing the Tilt: A character can be stunned by any attack that does at least as much damage as their Size in a single hit. Some weapons have a “stun” special ability. These double the weapon modifier only for the purposes of working out whether the attacker inflicts the Stunned Tilt. Attacks against the target’s head count the character’s Size as 1 lower.

Ending the Tilt: The effects of this Tilt last one turn. The character can end the Tilt during their own action by reflexively spending a point of Willpower, but -3 modifier applies to any actions they take that turn.

[QUICK REFERENCE TABLE]

Personal Tilts

Tilt Effects

Arm Wrack One arm: Drop anything held. Both arms: Chance die on rolls requiring manual dexterity, -3 to other Physical actions.

Beaten Down Cannot take violent action in combat without spending Willpower.

Blinded One eye: -3 to vision-related rolls. Both eyes: -5 to vision-related rolls, lose all Defense.

Deafened One ear: -3 to Perception rolls. Both ears: Chance die on Perception rolls, -2 to combat rolls.

Drugged -2 Speed, -3 to combat rolls (including Defense and Perception). Ignore wound penalties.

Immobilized No combat actions. Can't move or apply Defense.

Insane +1 to combat rolls, act after everyone else, -3 to Social rolls, can't spend Willpower.

Insensate No combat actions. Can move and apply Defense. Taking damage ends the Tilt.

Knocked Down Lose action this turn (if it hasn't been taken), knocked prone. Can apply Defense, attack from ground at -2.

Leg Wrack One leg: half Speed, -2 penalty on Physical rolls for movement. Both legs: Knocked Down, give up action to move at Speed 1, movement-based Physical rolls reduced to chance die.

Poisoned Moderate: One point of bashing damage per turn. Grave: One point of lethal damage per turn.

Sick Moderate: -1 to all actions. Penalty increases by 1 every two turns. Grave: As moderate, but also inflicts one point of bashing damage per turn.

Stunned Lose next action. Half Defense until the characters next acts.

Environmental Tilts

Tilt Effects

Blazing Light -3 penalty to vision-related rolls and -1 penalty to all other rolls. Closing eyes imposes Blinded Tilt in both eyes, instead.

Blizzard -1 penalty to visual Perception and ranged attack rolls, increased by 1 per 10 yards/meters. -1 penalty to Physical rolls per four inches of snow.

Earthquake Penalty to Dexterity rolls depending on severity. Take one to three lethal damage per turn, Stamina + Athletics downgrades to bashing.

Extreme Cold Bashing damage doesn't heal. -1 penalty to all rolls, increasing by 1 per hour. At -5, further hours deal one point of lethal damage.

Extreme Heat Bashing damage doesn't heal. -1 penalty to all rolls, increasing by 1 per hour. At -5, further hours deal one point of lethal damage.

Flooded -2 to Physical dice pools per foot of flooding. Once water is over head, character must swim or hold breath.

Heavy Rain -3 to aural and visual Perception rolls.

Heavy Winds -3 modifier to aural Perception rolls. Winds rated between 1 and 5, severity acts as penalty to Physical rolls and deals that much bashing damage per turn, Dexterity + Athletics to avoid.

Ice -2 Speed, -2 to Physical actions. Can move at normal speed but -4 Physical actions. Dramatic Failure causes Knocked Down; Drive rolls are at -5 and half Acceleration.

Inferno -2 to rolls. After 2 turns, 2B damage per turn. After 3 turns, 1L per turn and may catch fire.

Poor Light -2 penalty to visual-based Perception rolls, including ranged combat, rising to -3 at medium range and -4 at long range

[END TABLE]

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Appendix Three: Conditions

The list below provides some common Conditions that you can apply to characters throughout the chronicle.

[THE FOLLOWING ARE ALL CONDITIONS]

Addicted (Persistent)

Your character is addicted to something, whether it's drugs, gambling, or other destructive behaviors. She needs to indulge her addiction regularly to keep it under control, and it takes over her life. Choose a specific addiction upon taking this Condition; characters can take this Condition multiple times for different addictions. Being unable to feed the addiction results in the Deprived Condition.

Possible Sources: Alcoholism; substance abuse; the Addictive Variation Scar

Resolution: Gain or lose a dot of Integrity, or achieve exceptional success on a breaking point; for Remade, heal a medium or major Instability.

Beat: Your character chooses to get a fix rather than fulfill an obligation, or causes significant complications for her cohort by indulging her addiction.

Amnesia (Persistent)

Your character is missing a portion of her memory. An entire period of her life is just gone. This causes massive difficulties with friends and loved ones.

Resolution: You regain your memory and learn the truth. Depending on the circumstances, this may constitute a breaking point.

Beat: Something problematic arises, such as a forgotten arrest warrant or old enemy.

Bestial

Your character acts on primal, physical impulses. Frightening things make him run. He meets aggressive threats with violence and anger. Take a -2 die penalty to all rolls to resist physical impulse. As well, take a -2 penalty to Defense due to impulsive action. Any rolls to compel your character to impulsive, aggressive action or escape achieve exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Possible Sources: The Alternate Persona Scar.

Resolution: Cause damage in someone's last three Health boxes.

Blind (Persistent)

Your character cannot see. Any rolls requiring sight may only use a chance die. If she could reasonably substitute another sense, make the roll at -3 instead. In a combat situation, she suffers the drawbacks of the Blinded Tilt (p. XX). This Condition may be temporary, but if that's the result of a combat effect, the Blindness Tilt would apply instead.

Possible Sources: The Deterioration or Sensory Deprivation Scar

Resolution: Your character regains her sight.

Beat: Your character encounters a limitation or difficulty that inconveniences her.

Broken (Persistent)

Whatever you did or saw, something inside you snapped. You can barely muster up the will to do your job anymore, and anything more emotionally intense than a raised voice makes you flinch and back down. Apply a -2 to all Social rolls and rolls involving Resolve and a -5 to all use of the Intimidation Skill.

Resolution: Regain a dot of Integrity, lose *another* dot of Integrity, or achieve an exceptional success on a breaking point; for Remade, heal a medium or major Instability.

Beat: You back down from a confrontation or fail a roll due to this Condition.

Deaf

Injury to the brain or structures of one or both ears causes deafness. In the latter case this might come from sudden or repeated exposure to loud noise, such as from a powerful PA system or firearms. Deafness imposes the same effects as the Deafened Tilt (one ear: -3 to perception rolls; both ears: chance die on Perception rolls, -2 to combat rolls.)

This Condition may also be Persistent.

Possible Sources: The Deterioration or Sensory Deprivation Scar

Resolution: Appropriate medical or supernatural treatment. A hearing aid, cochlear implant, or similar prosthetic aid can provide assistance.

Deprived

Your character suffers from an addiction. Because she is without it, she's unable to focus or contain herself. Remove one die from her Stamina, Resolve, and Composure dice pools. This does not influence derived traits or Scar Resistance rolls.

Possible Sources: Failing to feed an addiction.

Resolution: Your character indulges her addiction.

Disabled (Persistent)

Your character has limited or no ability to walk. Her Speed trait is effectively 1. She must rely on a wheelchair or other device to travel. A manual wheelchair's Speed is equal to her Strength and requires use of her hands. Electric wheelchairs have a Speed of 3, but allow the free use of the character's hands. An injury can cause this Condition temporarily, in which case it resolves when the injury heals and the character regains mobility.

Possible Sources: The Fragility, Missing Limb, or Sensory Deprivation Scar

Resolution: Mundane or supernatural means cure the character's disability.

Beat: Your character's limited mobility inconveniences her or makes her slow to respond.

Distracted

Constant confusion and distractions buffet your character from all sides. She cannot take extended actions, and suffers a -2 die penalty to all rolls involving perception, concentration, and precision.

Possible Sources: Being in a highly confusing environment; the Glitch Scar

Resolution: Leaving the environment.

Embarrassing Secret

Your character has a secret from his past that could come back to haunt him. If this secret gets out, he could be ostracized or maybe even arrested. If it becomes known, this Condition is exchanged for Notoriety (p. XX).

Resolution: The character's secret is made public, or the character does whatever is necessary to make sure it never comes to light.

Beat: n/a

End Stage

The Divergence has reached a terminal stage, as new mutations proliferate and existing ones worsen beyond the capacity of the human mind and body to compensate for them. Any of the Deviant's Magnitude 5 Variations (as well as those of lower Magnitude that represent the maximum Magnitude for that Variation) exceed their usual capabilities and activate immediately. A character with Gigantic 5 might grow to Size 30, for example, or a per-scene, per-chapter, or per-story limit might not apply to a Variation that normally has one. Although this can be potent, it is primarily a narrative effect — the explosive power of a supernova that will leave only a dead star behind.

Unless the character resolves this Condition by the end of the current chapter, he dies. No medical intervention, Variation, or supernatural influence can prevent or reverse this death. The

forces at work are too much for the human body to bear, and the Deviant's cracked soul shatters beyond repair.

Possible Sources: Suffering a major Instability in the character's rightmost Stability box.

Resolution: Heal a major Instability by destroying a Conviction Touchstone.

Fatigued

Your character has never been so tired in all her life. For every six hours he goes without sleeping, take a cumulative -1 die penalty to all actions. At every six-hour interval, make a Stamina + Resolve roll (with the penalty) to resist falling asleep.

Possible Sources: Staying awake for 24 hours; being dosed with a sedative or anesthetic; the Dependency, Genetic Disorder, or Hemophilia Scar

Resolution: Getting a full night's sleep.

Fragile

The equipment the character is using to aid his action won't last long for some reason, whether because it's an object put together with duct tape and bubble gum, or because his relationship with the people involved sours, or because his computer ends up suffering a blue screen of death and the data is corrupted. A plan may be Fragile because of disrupted communication between the characters, or because of an unexpected hurdle, etc. The equipment ceases to exist in any usable form after a number of uses equal to its creator's dots in the Skill used to build it. If the creator's Skill rating is unknown, the Storyteller may roll 1-3 dice each time the equipment sees use, with a failure resulting in its breaking.

Possible Sources: Achieving a failure on a Build Equipment roll

Resolution: The equipment falls apart one way or another. Plans grant one Beat to each player whose character is involved when this Condition resolves.

Frightened

Something's scared your character to the point where he loses rational thought. Maybe he's just looked down at a 100-story drop, or seen a tarantula the size of his fist crawling up his leg. Whatever the case, he needs to leave right now. His only priority is getting the fuck away from the thing that's frightened him — to hell with his stuff, his friends, and his allies. If someone tries to stop him from escaping, he fights his way past them. He can't approach the source of his fear or act against it — and if the only way out involves going near the source of his fear, he collapses on the ground in terror. Supernatural creatures prone to loss of control must make their usual rolls to avoid doing so. Suppressing this Condition's effects for a turn costs a point of Willpower.

Possible Sources: Coming face to face with a phobia

Resolution: The character escapes from the source of his fear; the scene ends.

Fugue (Persistent)

Something terrible happened. Rather than deal with it or let it break you, your mind shuts it out. You are prone to blackouts and lost time. Whenever circumstances become too similar to the situation that led to your gaining this Condition, the player rolls Resolve + Composure. If you

fail the roll, the Storyteller controls your character for the next scene; your character, left to his own devices, will seek to avoid the conflict and get away from the area.

Resolution: Regain a dot of Integrity, lose *another* dot of Integrity, or achieve an exceptional success on a breaking point; for Remade, heal a medium or major Instability.

Beat: You enter a fugue state as described above.

Guilty

Your character is experiencing deep-seated feelings of guilt and remorse. This Condition is commonly applied after a successful breaking point roll (p. XX). While the character is under the effects of this Condition, he receives a -2 to any Resolve or Composure rolls to defend against Subterfuge, Empathy, or Intimidation rolls.

Resolution: The character confesses his crimes and makes restitution for whatever he did.

Hunted (Persistent)

Someone who poses a serious threat to the character's safety and well-being, physically or emotionally (or both), is after her. For Remade, it's usually a conspiracy agent. Whoever it is might be intent on direct violence, or simply wish to torment her.

Beat: The character's persecutors find her.

Resolution: The character stops her persecutors, either through direct means like violence, or indirect means like changes in lifestyle that deny them access to her or taking down part of the Web of Pain.

Informed

Your character has a breadth of research information based on the topic she investigated. When you make a roll relating to the topic, you may choose to resolve this Condition. If you resolve it and the roll fails, consider it to have a single success. If it succeeds, consider it an exceptional success.

The roll that benefits from the Informed Condition can be any relevant Skill roll. For example, a character with Informed (Werewolves) might gain its benefits when using researched information to build a silver bear trap with the Crafts Skill. Combat rolls cannot benefit from this Condition.

Resolution: Your character uses her research to gain information; you resolve the Condition as described above.

Inspired

Your character is deeply inspired. When your character takes an action pertaining to that inspiration, you may resolve this Condition. An exceptional success on that roll requires only three successes instead of five, and you gain a point of Willpower.

Resolution: You spend inspiration to spur yourself to greater success, resolving the Condition as described above.

Intoxicated

Your character is drunk, drugged, or otherwise dulled to the world around her. While she's probably not hallucinating, her inhibitions and reactions are both lower than they should be.

Your character suffers a -2 die penalty to all Dexterity and Wits dice pools. Characters using Social maneuvering against her face two fewer Doors than usual.

Possible Sources: Heavy drinking or drug use, the Addictive Variation Scar

Resolution: Sleep it off.

Leveraged

Another character has blackmailed, tricked, convinced, or otherwise leveraged yours into doing what they wish. You may have the Leveraged Condition multiple times for different characters. Any time the specified character requests something of yours, resolve this Condition if your character does as requested without rolling to resist.

Resolution: Your character may either resolve the Condition by complying with a request as above, or if you apply the Leveraged Condition to the specified character.

Madness (Persistent)

Your character saw or did something that jarred her loose from reality. This isn't a mental illness born of brain chemistry — that, at least, might be treatable. This madness is the product of supernatural tampering or witnessing something that humanity was never meant to comprehend. The Storyteller has a pool of dice equal to 10 - (character's Integrity) or 10 - (Resolve + Acclimation). Once per chapter, the Storyteller can apply those dice as a negative modifier to any Mental or Social roll made for the character.

Resolution: Regain a dot of Integrity, lose *another* dot of Integrity, or achieve an exceptional success on a breaking point; for Remade, heal a medium or major Instability.

Beat: You fail a roll because of this Condition.

Notoriety

Whether or not your character actually did something heinous in the past, the wrong people think he did and now he's ostracized by the general public. Suffer a -2 on any Social rolls against those who know of his notoriety. If using Social maneuvering (p. XX), the character must open one extra Door if his target knows of his notoriety.

Possible Sources: The Conspicuous Appearance or Lying Eyes Condition

Resolution: The story is debunked or the character's name is cleared.

Shaken

Something has severely frightened your character. Any time your character is taking an action where that fear might hinder her, you may opt to fail the roll and resolve this Condition.

Resolution: The character gives into her fear and fails a roll as described above.

Spooked

Your character has seen something supernatural — not overt enough to terrify her, but unmistakably otherworldly. How your character responds to this is up to you, but it captivates her and dominates her focus.

Resolution: This Condition is resolved when your character's fear and fascination causes her to do something that hinders the group or complicates things (she goes off alone to investigate a strange noise, stays up all night researching, runs away instead of holding her ground, etc.).

Steadfast

Your character is confident and resolved. When you've failed a roll, you may choose to resolve this Condition to instead treat the action as if you'd rolled a single success. If the roll is a chance die, you may choose to resolve this Condition and roll a single regular die instead.

Resolution: Your character's confidence carries him through and the worst is avoided; the Condition is resolved as described above.

Stoic

Your character shuts down the parts of herself that care. She won't open up to anyone and pretends she's fine when she isn't. Gain a two-die bonus to Subterfuge rolls to hide her emotions or avoid talking about a traumatic experience. She doesn't suffer the untrained penalty for any Subterfuge roll. Until she resolves this Condition, she can't heal minor Instabilities, and she can't spend Willpower on actions that would reveal her true feelings.

Possible Sources: Personal trauma; the Frozen Heart Scar

Resolution: Opt to fail a roll to resist Empathy or a supernatural effect that would read your character's emotions or mental state.

Volatile

The equipment the character is using to aid his action is ready to blow at any moment, figuratively or literally. One wrong word, one badly placed rune, and it's time to duck and cover. A plan may be Volatile because it backfires terribly, or because a Storyteller character betrays the group, etc. Any failure achieved while benefiting from the equipment is automatically a dramatic failure. The equipment may continue to exist after this Condition is resolved, but if so, reduce its equipment bonus by two dice. This can create equipment *penalties* if the original bonus was fewer than two dice.

Possible Sources: Achieving a failure on a Build Equipment roll

Resolution: The character suffers a dramatic failure while using the equipment. Plans grant one Beat to each player whose character is involved when this Condition resolves.