GAMMA WORLD®

MACHINES AND MUTANTS

A Creature Sourcebook for the d20 System

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the menagerie of the future.

This is a guide to inhabitants of the Gamma World, including animals, plants, microscopic life and the creations of biotechnology and robotics. Some of them are common, widespread species; others very rare. Some are likely to be friendly to characters, others hostile or indifferent; some make good prey, and some regard humanoids as good prey for their own hunting.

The statistics presented here are designed for use with the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. However, you can use them with *Dungeons & Dragons v.3.5* with some minor changes to those rules (see below). Creatures suitable for use as player characters (PCs) get additional rules and advice. If you're feeling tired of the usual range of two types of humanity and the vast array of typical synthetics and mutants found in the **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, you'll find some fresh challenges and opportunities here.

USING THIS BOOK

Machines & Mutants has four chapters.

• **Chapter One: Made Life** is about creatures that exist because of biotechnology and genetic engineering. Whatever natural element they have, they didn't come about through evolution or even straightforward mutation. Someone made them, put them together out of genetic bits and pieces. Here you'll find creatures as small as insects dedicated to stamping out genetically engineered crops and as large as modern Earth's biggest predators.

• **Chapter Two: Machines** covers entities that came out of a factory or laboratory, at least originally. Some can make copies of themselves in the mechanical equivalent of reproduction, while others are unique and irreplaceable. Entries include everything from tiny spy drones to the most formidable killing machines of the Final Wars era.

• **Chapter Three: Natural Life** covers the descendants of real-life species. Many have mutated, but in accordance with known principles of real biology. The first part of the chapter also lays out principles for adapting other species for your own campaign.

• **Chapter Four: Characters** supplements the main entries for playable species with new feats, and detailed rules and advice for translating "monsters" into suitable characters.

KEEPING IT SAFE AND FUN

Not every entry is suitable for use in every campaign. Besides obvious considerations like power level, an important issue often goes unaddressed: people have phobias (and other fears). It's okay for *characters* to be nervous or fearful, but *players* should never have to be worried in the course of a game. Some gamers do have real phobias or past experiences they'd prefer not to be reminded of while gaming.

With that in mind, the Game Master (GM) should take a few minutes to learn what things might make players uncomfortable for reasons that have nothing to do with the game. Similarly, players should not hesitate to volunteer information for the GM to keep in mind. A **Gamma World** campaign is not a course of psychotherapy, and players are well within their rights to want a game that doesn't push their buttons all the time. Some GMs of the School of Macho seem to feel that it's their duty to goad players into overcoming their real-life limits. That's fine if they have players who actually like that, but it's not at all right for everyone else.

Whatever level of tolerance and accommodation you reach with your group, please discuss it rather than making assumptions.

D20 DISTINCTIONS

The creatures and machines in this book were designed using the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* rules, but are compatible with any d20 System campaign. So that you can convert other d20 System creatures into *d20 Modern* terms, this section notes any lines that have similar functions but use different terminology. Any lines that you don't find on creature descriptions in this book — such as alignment or treasure — are not used in *d20 Modern*.

Size/Type: *d20 Modern* rules have these as separate lines. To streamline the listings, **Gamma World** incorporates them into a single line. (*D&D v.3.5* rules refer to "Type" as "Creature Type.") A summary of the different types appears below. The *d20 Modern* system does not incorporate subtypes; GMs who prefer to use another d20 System resource might find their bookkeeping streamlined by considering "evolved" and "aware," among other qualities, to be creature subtypes.

Massive Damage Threshold (Mas): The massive damage threshold in *D&D v.3.5* rules is 50 points of damage in a single attack. This changes to an amount equal to or greater than the creature's current Constitution score for *d20 Modern*. Also, constructs, elementals, oozes, plants and undead ignore the effects of massive damage and vermin gain a +5 species bonus on their Fortitude saves to avoid the effects of massive damage.

Defense: *D&D v.3.5* rules refer to this as "Armor Class."

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple (BAB/Grap): *d20 Modern* rules have these as separate lines. To streamline the listings, **Gamma World** incorporates them into a single line.

Primary Attack (Atk): *D&D v.3.5* rules refer to this as "Attack."

Fighting Space/Reach (FS/R): *d20 Modern* rules have these as separate lines. Since they are often used in concert, and to streamline the listings, **Gamma World** incorporates them into a single line. (*D&D v.3.5* rules refer to this as "Space/Reach.")

Special Qualities (SQ): This category lists any unusual abilities the creature may have, whether special attack forms or unique defenses. *D&D v.3.5* rules split these listings into "Special Attacks" for offensive capabilities and "Special Qualities" for anything else. They do not function any differently, however.

Action Points (AP): A character can spend 1 action point to alter a single attack, skill check, ability check, level check or saving throw. A character can also spend 1 action point to use a class talent or class feature. Creatures have no action points, but may gain action points by taking levels in a heroic character class. See *d20 Modern* (Chapter One: Characters, "Vital Statistics," *Action Points*) for a full explanation.

Reputation (Rep): Reputation is used to determine whether another character recognizes a PC. A creature has a Reputation bonus of+0 but may increase the bonus by taking levels in a character class. See *d20 Modern* (Chapter One: Characters, "Vital Statistics," *Reputation*) for a full explanation.

Allegiances: (AL) This optional system indicates what a character or creature values in life. A creature may have allegiances to a master, an owner, a creator, an organization or even to a moral or ethical philosophy. See *d20 Modern* (Chapter One: Characters, "Vital Statistics," *Allegiances*) for a full explanation.

GAMMA WORLD SPECIFICS

OPTIONAL LINES

Creature descriptions for **Gamma World** include two new optional lines to help the GM design encounters:

Environment: This line gives a type the type of climate and terrain where a creature is typically found.

Organization: This line describes the kinds of groups that the creature might form. GMs can combine this with Allegiance to design a variety of encounters.

CR MODIFIERS

As a general guideline, if a creature inflicts the radiation type of energy damage with its resulting risk of radiation poisoning and mutation, its Challenge Rating is increased by +1–2. Any creature that uses other mutagens as attacks also has its Challenge Rating increased by +1. GMs should keep this in mind when designing new creatures and encounters.

TYPES

The following types of creatures inhabit the Gamma World. A creature benefits from its type's traits (even if not specifically listed in the creature's statistics) unless the creature's listing contradicts this specifically. (For example, animals have low-light vision; this trait is not listed specifically in each animal's special qualities.)

Abberation: As presented in *d20 Modern*.

Animal: As presented in *d20 Modern*.

Aware Construct: Aware constructs are a modified form of construct that has an Intelligence score (and a personality to go with it). Aware constructs often have far more and varied skills than constructs, but they are no longer immune to mind-influencing effects. They are the same as constructs in all other ways. (Note that non-aware constructs converted from other d20 System settings may have a different total of extra hit points by size.)

Construct: As presented in *d20 Modern*.

Dragon: As presented in *d20 Modern*.

Evolved Animal: Evolved animals are animals that have achieved sentience (or at least heightened Intelligence) through the evolutionary process (as opposed to mutation or genetic engineering). These animals may have an Intelligence score higher than 2. They are otherwise treated identical to animals as presented in *d20 Modern*.

Mutant Beast: Mutant beasts are the **Gamma World** equivalent of magical beasts as presented in *d20 Modern*.

Mutant Humanoid: Mutant humanoids are the **Gamma World** equivalent of monstrous humanoids as presented in *d20 Modern*.

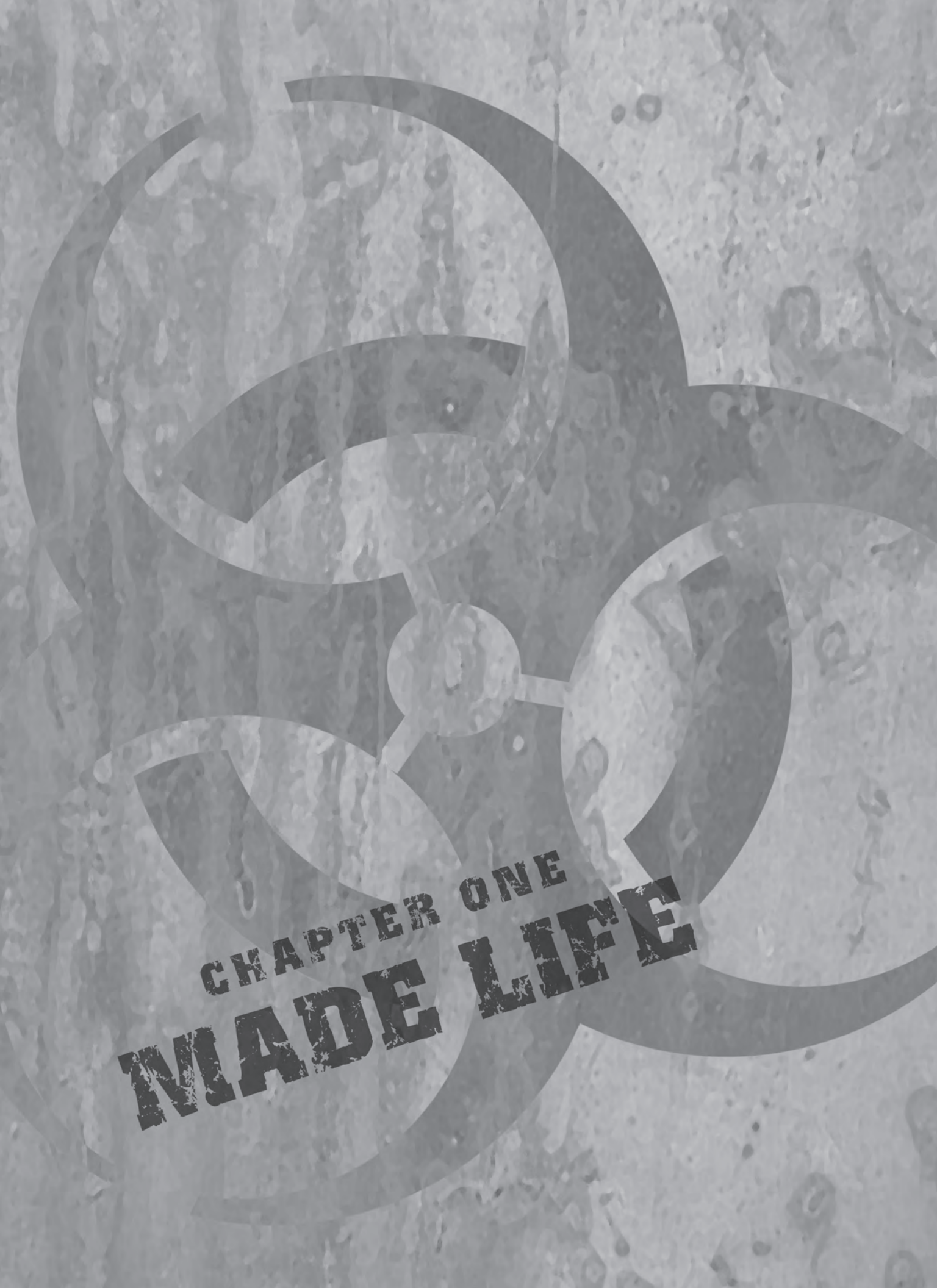
Mutant Plant: Mutant plants have developed sentience or are capable of movement through mutation or genetic engineering. In all other ways they are the same as plants as presented in *d20 Modern*.

Mutant Vermin: Mutant vermin have developed sentience through mutation or genetic engineering. They are no longer immune to mind-influencing effects. In all other ways they are the same as vermin as presented in *d20 Modern*.

Ooze Construct: Ooze constructs have some features of oozes and others of constructs. They have neither an Intelligence score nor a Constitution score, but they do receive extra hit points as a construct, and typically have natural armor. They benefit from the traits of both oozes and constructs as presented in *d20 Modern*.

Plant: As presented in *d20 Modern*.

Vermin: As presented in *d20 Modern*.



CHAPTER ONE
MADE LIFE

BARL NEP

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	2d10+2 (11 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	10
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	Swim 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	16 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+2/–4
Primary Attack:	Bite +1 melee (1d4–2)
Full Attack:	Bite +1 melee (1d4–2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Enhanced immunity, radiation slick
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +6, Will –5
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills:	Hide +7*, Spot +3, Swim +10
Feats:	Dodge
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any inland or coastal water
Organization:	Solitary or schools (2–20)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	3–5 HD (Medium)

The fish is pure black except for the faint glitter of dusty fallout on its scales.

DESCRIPTION

Genetically engineered to clean up polluted waterways, the jet-black scales of the barl nep attract and hold the radioactive dust of fallout. Few things are more poisonous than a fish that absorbs every speck of taint in the water. Barl neps are commonly kept in holding pens just upriver of communities, where they can purify the water before it is used. The fish are notoriously ill-tempered, and nep-keepers must be careful to keep them happy and well-fed, or risk losing a finger or toe to the hungry fish.

Barl neps feed on smaller fish and insects. They only use their radiation slick when faced with a larger threat. Schools sometimes band together to create huge slicks to wipe a whole stretch of water clear of predators.

A barl nep's leathery eggs are hard to find — the fish lay their eggs deep in the river mud, where they will lay dormant until the radiation level in the water exceeds a certain threshold. A body of water can be free of barl nep for years until a mountain stream happens to wash over some tainted legacy of the Wars, and suddenly the water fills with newly-hatched barl neps.

Hatching barl neps in captivity is difficult. In the wild, barl nep eggs hatch when the radioactive black oil released by a threatened adult fish raises the radiation level. In captivity, nep-keepers place a clutch of eggs in a special lead-lined pond, then add an adult barl nep. The adult is then prodded and poked until it exudes a slick. According to tradition, no nep-keeper may perform more than three hatchings, although many don't even survive their second.

The bones of the barl nep are unusually heavy and glassy. They are sometimes used as weapons, for the marrow of the bone holds all the radioactive and tainted matter captured by the barl nep during its life. Cracking a barl nep bone is akin to opening a sealed canister of radioactive waste. Anyone within 5 feet of a freshly cracked barl nep bone suffers 1d3 points of radiation damage and must make Fortitude saves against a weak mutagen and weak radiation poisoning source (See **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation* and Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "Types of

Environment," *Radiation Poisoning*). Already cracked barl nep bones pose the same danger as a radiation-tainted corpse.

If the barl nep is properly dissected (DC 10 Survival or Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) check), the bladder that contains the oil can be extracted. Anyone handling the bladder takes 1d6 points of radiation damage per round and must make Fortitude saves against a weak mutagen and weak radiation poisoning source. The bladder will be empty if the barl nep has released a slick in the previous 12 hours.

A primitive radiation detector comprised of a fish egg in a water bottle is sold in some villages, but genuine barl nep eggs are rarely wasted on such devices.

COMBAT

The barl nep isn't generally interested in fighting. It hunts its own prey by waiting in shadows, where its black scales make it very difficult to see, and lunging out for the quick kill. When faced with anything too large to reliably bite or otherwise dangerous, it uses its radiation slick to wound would-be attackers and then flees. Barl neps in areas inhabited by large but not terribly dangerous creatures on the surface of the water or an adjacent shore sometimes learn to use the radiation slick to kill food too big to bite. A barl nep hunting this way usually releases the slick at night, when it will be less obvious, and then eats anything killed by it before morning.

Enhanced Immunity (Ex, Mut): Barl neps are completely immune to the effects of radiation, and have a +4 species bonus to all Fortitude saves.

Radiation Slick (Ex, Mut): Once per day, a barl nep can release a slick of radioactive black oil that floats on top of the water. This oil spreads at a rate of 5 feet per round in all directions from the barl nep, and continues to spread for 6 rounds. Any character touched by the oil takes 6d6 points of radiation damage. Victims can attempt a DC 11 Reflex save to take half damage; this save suffers the same penalty as the victim's current Swim check (–1 for every 5 pounds carried). Any victim who takes radiation damage must make Fortitude saves against a strong mutagen and strong radiation poisoning source.

Skills: Barl neps have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

*Barl neps' black scales give them a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks at night.

BEARWYRM

Size/Type: Huge Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 10d10+50 (105 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 30
Initiative: 22
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares)
Defense: 13 (–2 Dex, +7 natural, –2 size), touch 6, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +10/+26
Primary Attack: Claw +16 melee (2d4+8)
Full Attack: 2 claws +16 melee (2d4+8), bite +11 melee (2d6+4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Fat layer, improved grab, roar, scent, swallow whole, trample (2d6+12)
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 27, Dex 7, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 9, Cha 13
Skills: Intimidate +5, Listen +2, Spot +2, Survival +2
Feats: Ability Focus (Roar), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Track
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Theeka, mountains, temperate forests, dry grasslands
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Advancement: 11–15 HD (Huge)

At first it looks like a huge bear, towering for the charge. Then it turns, and reveals the long snake-like body stretching out behind, its dull scales sharply contrasted against the thick fur on the bear portion.

DESCRIPTION

It takes a special kind of mind, a special kind of easily bored and easily amused mind, to think "I wonder what would happen if I played God with a bear's hibernatory system?" Unfortunately there were a *lot* of such special minds around before the Final Wars, and they tried to find out the answer. That answer is, "I'd create an incredibly dangerous and fairly revolting creature that will plague the world for generations to come."

From the front, a bearwyrm is a normal (if enormous) bear, more than 12 feet across at the shoulders, with a head large enough to swallow a man whole. Move to the creature's side and its name makes more sense, for the beast's body is a misshapen tube about 30 feet long, like the body of a massive worm or snake. The bear's back legs have withered and sunken into its wormlike torso; beneath its hairy hide are multiple layers of rank, fetid fat, teeming with parasites and worms.

Thanks to the tinkering of its creator, a bearwyrm has an extraordinarily inefficient metabolism that converts most of what it eats into pure fat — fat that gets stored and never used. If the bearwyrm ever hibernated, it could live off that fat for years. But the creature cannot hibernate, and simply stays permanently hungry and permanently angry. Feared throughout the Gamma Age, bearwyrms rampage slowly through the wilderness eating everything in their path, including trees and houses; what it cannot digest it simply excretes later. Humans in a bearwyrm's path are well advised to gather their belongings and move away quickly. Some foolhardy hunters have thought about the fortune in hides and grease that could be gathered from a dead bearwyrm, but none have ever managed to kill one of the beasts.

Bearwyrms are solitary creatures that do not associate with each other. Once a year, females release a clutch of 1d3 large, tough eggs; if a male happens open the clutch, he fertilizes them with a spray of secretions. When two bearwyrms happen to meet, they immediately begin to fight, and the winner devours the loser.

COMBAT

The bearwyrm has no use for subtlety. If the bearwyrm can attack during a surprise round, or just has some distance from potential targets, it opens with its special roar. Otherwise, it counts on the protection its fat layer provides to charge into the midst of its enemies. Once it has felled at least one enemy, it uses the combination of grab and swallow to remove another from the scene.

Fat Layer (Ex): Bearwyrms have a layer of subcutaneous fat almost 2 feet thick surrounding their long, deformed lower bodies, protecting their internal organs from injury. This gives bearwyrms damage reduction 5/— and energy resistance 5 to all energy types, and increases their massive damage threshold by 10 points (included above).

Roar (Ex): As an attack action, a bearwyrm can emit a deafening roar that contains subsonic resonance, dazing opponents and causing fear reactions. Any characters within 60 ft. of the bearwyrm must make a Fortitude save against DC 18 or be deafened for 1d4 rounds; they must also make a Will save against DC 18 or be shaken for 1d3 rounds. (The save DCs include a +2 bonus from the bearwyrm's Ability Focus feat.)

Swallow Whole (Ex): If a bearwyrm begins its round with a Large or smaller opponent in its mouth (having grappled it in the previous round), it can attempt a new grapple check as though pinning its opponent. If this succeeds, the bearwyrm deals its bite damage and swallows the opponent. A swallowed character is considered grappled while the bearwyrm is not, and takes 1d6+8 points of bludgeoning damage and 1d4 points of acid damage each round. The trapped character can attempt to break free by escaping the grapple, which places her back in the bearwyrm's mouth. Alternatively, the character can try to cut free with a light slashing

or piercing weapon. Inflicting 15 points of damage on the bearwyrm's gullet (Defense 15) will cut a hole large enough to escape through; a slab of fat will close the wound after the character escapes. The bearwyrm can hold 2 Medium, 4 Small or 8 Tiny or smaller creatures in its gullet at one time.

Trample (Ex): Reflex save against DC 23 for half damage. The save DC is Strength-based.

BLACK HARVESTER

Size/Type: Large Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 20
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+12
Primary Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d6+4)
Full Attack: 2 claws +7 melee (1d6+4), tail stinger +2 melee (1d8+2 plus poison)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Biotech digestion, biotech disruption, poison, resistance to massive damage, sense biotech
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills: Hide –1, Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Spot +7
Feats: Dodge, Skill Focus: Hide, Skill Focus: Move Silently
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land with accessible biotech
Organization: Solitary or small pack (2–6)
Challenge Rating: 6
Advancement: 7–8 HD (Large), 9–10 HD (Huge)

The creature is a scorpion, as wide as a human and half again as high, with metal-tipped claws and stinger. The carapace gleams in any available light; in the darkness, the luminescent slime oozing from the mouth on its belly is clearly visible.

DESCRIPTION

Created by design or by accident? Both options seem unlikely. If black harvesters were deliberately created before the Final Wars, they were the creation of someone with a deep hatred of biotech, yet who was prepared to create biotech creatures to destroy that technology. Accidental creation, though, would require the coincidental coming together of dozens of different strains of nanotech assemblers and viruses that *just happened* to construct a creature that can digest biotech tools and implants. Most citizens of the Gamma Age don't spend time worrying about the black harvester's ancestry, though; they're too busy trying to kill the damn thing before it injects them with venom and chews their biotech implants out of their bleeding chests.

A black harvester is a giant scorpion, about 10 feet long and 6 feet wide. Its carapace is a dark red in color, sometimes deepening to a bruised black lightening to a sickly green. Its pincers and tail stinger gleam with flakes of organic metal, and a slightly bioluminescent slime drips from the small trapdoor mouth on its underbelly.

Black harvesters are carnivores, but their main source of sustenance is not animal flesh but biotech, especially grafts and implants designed to attach to the human body. Biotech factory organs inside the creature break biotech devices down into component parts, then dissolve those parts into nutrients that feed the harvester and replenish those same factory organs. Other biotech devices within the creature sense the chemical and energy signatures of thousands of different biotech designs, allowing the black harvester to smell biotech in its vicinity. Still other internal biotech organs allow it to shut down those devices with a specialized energy pulse. This leaves users of biotech implants stunned and in pain for several minutes, during which the black harvester rips them apart to find its sweet bioware prey.

A black harvester's digestive system courses with immuno-suppressant hormones that break down any implants it devours. These immuno-suppressants can be drained and preserved with care for use in the biotech implantation process.

Gathering immuno-suppressants from a dead black harvester requires a DC 15 Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) check and takes 15 minutes. The check must be attempted within 1 hour of the creature's death, or the harvester's organs will have putrefied into uselessness. The character obtains one dose of immuno-suppressant on a successful check, plus an additional dose for every 2 points by which her result exceeded the check DC (to a maximum number of doses equal to the creature's hit dice). These doses are identical in all ways to normal immuno-suppressants (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Biotechnology*).

COMBAT

The black harvester pays attention to organisms lacking biotech only when it's very hungry and can't find any of its favored food supplies. Then it applies the same tactics it does most of the time when hunting sources of biotech: once its senses detect biotech, it tries to sneak up as close as possible, disrupt the biotech in its targets, and charge in to use its stinger and then its claws. If the target remains capable of active resistance after 6 rounds, the black harvester usually withdraws to prepare another ambush.

Biotech Digestion (Ex, Mut): A black harvester draws nutrients and strength from any graft or implant that it eats. Eating a piece of bioware requires a move action and attracts attacks of opportunity. For the next 5 rounds after eating a piece of bioware, the creature gains fast healing 1, +5 ft. of movement and a +2 circumstance bonus on all attack and damage rolls.

Biotech Disruption (Ex, Nano): Once every 1d4 rounds, a black harvester may create an electromagnetic pulse that disrupts the workings of biotech grafts and implants within 30 feet. This is an attack action. Devices that are not in use are automatically disrupted. If the item is in use, the user can make a DC 13 Fortitude save to allow the device to keep functioning. If the user has multiple grafts or implants, he must make a save for each. Affected biotech devices become non-functional for 1d6 minutes. Grafts will come away from the user's body, becoming inert but not affecting the user as they shut down. If an implant is disrupted, though, the user is disoriented and wracked with pain; the character must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be stunned for a number of rounds equal to the number of implants that have shut down, after which the character is left shaken for an additional1d6 rounds.

Poison (Ex): The black harvester's tail stinger contains a powerful venom. Any character damaged by the stinger must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage; a second Fortitude save must be made one minute later to avoid another 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage.

Sense Biotech (Ex, Bio): A black harvester can smell biotech grafts and implants, even when those implants are inside a living being; its own implants pick up biotech signatures and transmit that information to the creature's sensory organs. It can detect any biotech device within 200 feet with a successful Spot check (made against the Hide check result of the device's user, or DC 15 for unattended devices).

BLIGHT

Size/Type: Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 6d10+18 (51 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +1
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 45 ft. (poor)
Defense: 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+14
Primary Attack: Bite +9 melee (1d8+6)
Full Attack: Bite +9 melee (1d8+6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Blindsight 30 ft., constrict, immunities, improved grab, invisibility, photogeneration, resistance to cold 10 and sonics 10, scent
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +0*, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Survival +4
Feats: Skill Focus: Hide, Skill Focus: Survival, Track
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Forests and immediate surroundings
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 7
Advancement: 7–10 HD (Large); 11–12 HD (Huge)

When visible it looms overhead, a winged, pale worm twice as long as a person is tall. But most of the time it is invisible, noticeable only by the faint whisper of its passage and its sudden bite.

DESCRIPTION

All humans living near the temperate forests of the Gamma Age know of the terrible flying worms called blights, monsters that mercilessly hunt down and devour animals and men alike, but few have ever seen one. Even those rare individuals who have encountered a blight and survived (not to mention those who *didn't* survive) are lucky to glimpse the creature, for blights are invisible. Savants theorize that the Ancients created blights as weapons of terror, invisible monstrosities that could be unleashed upon a warlord's enemies.

Those who have seen blights, or even managed to defeat the creatures, describe them as worms around 10–12 feet long, as wide around as a man's torso. Their skin is a stark, pallid white, as is the pair of jagged, bat-like wings sprouting from the creature's sides; a clear, slightly sticky gel oozes constantly from its surface. A blight's head is a semi-reptilian horror, with a mouth full of needle-like teeth and two black pads of gristle where its eyes should be.

Cut a blight open, or examine its remains in a lab, and more details begin to emerge. The creature's skin is a highly efficient solar energy cell, which draws energy from any light that hits the blight and stores it in the array of fiber-optic cabling that forms the monster's central nervous system. This stored energy can later be expelled back through the creature's skin, or be drawn upon to protect it from low temperatures and keep it alive in winter. The blight's slimy coating is another genetic miracle, a complex nanotech soup that amplifies the light-absorbing properties of the blight's skin even further, while also bending and refracting unabsorbed light around the creature. It is this gel that responsible for the blight's invisibility. If it washes away, the creature becomes visible until it can exude more slime.

Blights are monsters of fear and terror, and human settlements near forests do their best to protect themselves from the creatures. And yet, some brave or foolish humans actually go out of their way to *hunt* blights, for there are great rewards for those who can bring down the creature in its lair. The blight's skin, if treated properly, can be made into solar cells for powering electrical devices. Its gel coating is even more useful as a highly conductive lubricant that can be used to enhance light sources or maintain mechanical equipment. For some adventurers, though, the real treasure lies scattered on the ground around the blight's lair: the equipment, tools and devices left behind by less fortunate hunters.

Blights are solitary creatures, but it's not unknown for 2 or more blights to inhabit the same forest or region. Such "neighbors" will occasionally work together to bring down large or dangerous prey, but do not interact once a hunt is over. Blights rarely fight each other, since they find the flesh of their own kind unpalatable and have no pack dominance instincts. Blights usually nest in the peaks of tall trees, soaking up as much sunlight as possible; the ground around the tree is often littered with equipment and junk, left behind when the owner was devoured. Blights are asexual and reproduce by fission, dividing in half in a painful process that takes a full day to complete.

Making photoelectric cells from a blight's hide requires a DC 20 Craft (electronics) check; characters with at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) gain a +2 synergy bonus. These solar cells are more efficient than those of a standard power cell charger (**Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Two: Characters, "Equipment"), allowing 1 hour's worth of energy to be charged every 20 minutes. Being semi-organic, these cells will decay into uselessness a week or two after creation — cells last a number of days equal to the blight's Hit Dice, plus the amount by which the crafter's result exceeded the DC. A blight's hide is large enough to create a number of cells equal to the creature's Constitution score.

A blight's skin also yields a number of pounds of gel equal to its Hit Dice, which will stay fresh and useful for several months after being collected. A character who uses a pound of gel to lubricate a mechanical device gains a +2 circumstance bonus on appropriate Repair checks. The gel can also be used to enhance the functioning of an artificial light source. When immersed in a pound of gel, the output of the light source is increased by 1/3, adding 10 feet or more to the area illuminated.

COMBAT

Above all, the blight relies on its invisibility and the cover of darkness. It prefers to attack in areas where there's little or no light, including dense forests, overhanging ruins and just about anywhere at night. Because the blight cannot use its bite attack while it is grappling an opponent, it is happiest pursuing isolated targets that it can grab and constrict without fear of a coordinated assault. It refrains from attacking groups whose members show abilities that seriously threaten it.

Blindsight (Ex): Blights are completely blind, but possess incredibly keen senses of scent and hearing. A blight never needs to make Spot or Listen checks to detect creatures within 30 feet, and is unaffected by concealment (unless the target is hidden from scent and hearing as well). Outside its 30-foot range, the blight makes Listen checks as normal but automatically fails all Spot checks.

Constrict (Ex): The blight automatically constricts a grappled target for 1d4+6 damage each round. If grappling a Medium or larger creature, the blight cannot fly.

Immunities (Ex, Mut): The blight takes no damage from heat or radiation-based attacks, and is unaffected by any heat- or radiation-based effects.

Invisibility (Ex, Mut): A blight is permanently invisible, even to infrared sensors, as long as its skin is coated with slime. This invisibility is not perfect; there is a noticeable "ripple" effect or halo when the blight moves. The blight gains a +40 bonus on Hide checks when immobile, and a +20 bonus on Hide checks when moving or in combat. Unless its prey can succeed in a Spot check, the blight gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls and ignores its prey's Dexterity bonus to Defense; it also gains the benefits of total concealment (see *d20 Modern*, Chapter Five: Combat, "Combat Modifiers," *Concealment*). Heavy rain or immersion in water will wash the gel away and negate the blight's invisibility; it takes approximately 24 hours for the gel to be replenished. The blight's invisibility is not disrupted if it takes damage in combat. If killed, the blight will become visible within 2d10+4 hours as the gel coating evaporates.

Photogeneration (Ex, Mut): A blight can release a burst of light from its stores of photoelectric energy as an attack action. This light is emitted from the blight's skin and amplified by its slimy

coating, becoming powerful enough to blind any onlookers. Anyone within 30 feet of the blight must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d6+2 rounds. The blight can generate a light burst 3 times a day, and cannot do so while constricting a target. The blight is visible for a full round after it generates a burst of light, then automatically fades into invisibility again as a free action.

BLOOD BIRD

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	2d10 (11 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	11
Initiative:	+4
Speed:	15 ft. (3 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)
Defense:	15 (+4 Dex, +1 size), touch 15, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+2/–3
Primary Attack:	Bite +7 melee (1d4–1)
Full Attack:	Bite +7 melee (1d4–1), 2 spurs +2 melee (1d4–1)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Radioactive blood
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills:	Move Silently +6, Spot +8, Survival +3
Feats:	Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Carrin masters or none
Environment:	Warm and temperate land
Organization:	Groups of siblings (10–30)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	3–5 HD (Small)

The creature is a fairly normal-looking bird, with reddish-brown feathers and sharp beak and claws.

DESCRIPTION

Blood birds, also known as red deaths, are russet-colored birds, standing about 2 1/2 feet tall with a wingspan of 6 feet. They sharpen their long beaks by scraping them off stones, but the serrated edges of their beaks and claws, not to mention the bony spurs that sprout from their heads and wings, tell of infection by some enhancement virus early in the species' evolution from the common scarlet tanager.

The most dangerous mutation of the race, however, was deliberately introduced by the carrins. The carrins discovered a nanotechnological device that converts sunlight into gamma radiation. Attempts to incorporate this nanotech into the vultures' own physiology failed, but they succeeded in breeding it into their pet birds. The blood birds now have far fewer natural predators, as anything that bites into one gets a lethal nuclear mouthful.

The carrins raise blood birds as pets, spies and guardians. The birds are telepathically manipulated while in the egg to be loyal to the carrin. This gives them a +5 species bonus to Will saves when resisting effects not generated by their carrin masters.

The nanotechnological device that gives the blood birds their lethal defense is active even in blood bird eggs, which are often stolen and used as grenades by raiders. A few experiments in draining birds of their blood have been conducted, but all ended badly for the experimenters.

Blood birds can survive on carrion, but often bring down particularly tasty food, like hoppers, by wounding themselves near the prey. The nanotech is carried in the blood; any wound exposed to sunlight releases a burst of radiation, which kills and cooks the prey. Blood birds also sometimes peck at their own breasts or wings to spill blood as a defense mechanism. They mate for life, and raise 1 or 2 young each spring. The birds are extremely territorial, and violently drive other blood birds (and their own offspring) out of their hunting grounds. Fighting blood birds butt their small head spurs together, and never spill blood in these contests for land or mates.

COMBAT

Blood birds prefer to attack in groups, anywhere from 2 to 5 at a time. They deliberately court minor wounds, and sometimes peck at each other for a single point of damage — just enough to expose some blood. When hurt, they make every effort to fly up and over their targets so as to drip more poisoned blood before returning for the next blow.

Radioactive Blood (Ex, Mut): The blood of the blood bird becomes radioactive when exposed to sunlight. Anyone within 10 feet of a wounded blood bird will suffer 1d4 points of radiation damage. A successful Reflex save (DC 13 + 1 per point of damage suffered by the bird) negates the damage and removes the intended victim from the damage radius. Anyone damaged by this effect must make Fortitude saves against a weak mutagen and a weak radiation poisoning source. (See **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation* and Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "Types of Environment," *Radiation Poisoning*).

BONESWIMMER

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 4d10+12 (34 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +1
Speed: Swim 40 ft. (8 squares), burrow through flesh 10 ft.
Defense: 12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+6*
Primary Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6+3)
Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6+3)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Open flesh
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills: Swim +11, Listen +2, Spot +2
Feats: Dodge, Mobility
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Swamps, wetlands, rivers
Organization: Solitary or small schools (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 5
Advancement: 5–8 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature looks like a typical blue-skinned eel, right up until it swims through flesh and bone as easily as through water.

DESCRIPTION

"To catch a boneswimmer in your hands" is a phrase used in many villages to mean "to do the impossible." Travelers in the swamp sometimes test this wisdom, and in truth it is not hard to lay hands on one of these pale blue eels when it is sunning itself on the surface of the water. If the traveler is fortunate, the boneswimmer will just swim through his hands to freedom. If he is unlucky, his fingers will fall off first.

Boneswimmer eels can pass through living flesh and bone as easily as through water and mud. Skin parts at their touch; bloodless gashes open in bodies to let the eel through. As it passes, the wound heals behind it and flesh knits itself back together without so much as a scar.

The lazy eels are rarely dangerous unless provoked. Their ability to close the openings they create is under their conscious control, and a thrashing eel who opens but does not close flesh can reduce a man to a wet, red pile of giblets in a matter of seconds. Boneswimmers are also especially dangerous in the spawning season, when they swim into other creatures to lay their eggs in the liver or thighs.

Some doctors use live immature boneswimmers in surgery. The eels must be trained from birth, so boneswimmer eggs (or hosts) are especially valued. Boneswimmers can only heal the wounds they cause, but this is still a great boon, as a doctor can open a patient without worrying about bleeding or cutting through bone using a tamed eel. (If the surgeon succeeds at a Handle Animal check against DC 10, she receives a +6 circumstance bonus on any Medicine checks involving surgery.)

Capturing young boneswimmers or eggs can be a lucrative if dangerous prospect. Finding a cure for implanted boneswimmer eggs (which hatch 6+1d4 weeks after being laid) may require locating an extremely skilled surgeon or ancient technology.

COMBAT

The boneswimmer flees from most conflict if there is any easy way away from danger. If it must fight, it tries to incapacitate or kill its opponents as quickly as possible with multiple uses of its open flesh ability. It will then eat the remains or leave, depending on how hungry it is.

Open Flesh (Ex, Mut): Using nanites, the boneswimmer can pass through flesh. *This allows it to move through creatures if it makes a successful grapple attack; boneswimmers receive a +4 species bonus on this grapple check. Moving in this fashion draws an attack of opportunity. If the boneswimmer chooses, it can leave the passage open, inflicting 6d6 points of damage.

Skills: Boneswimmers have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

CAL THEN

Size/Type: Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 5d10+15 (42 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +1
Speed: 15 ft. (3 squares), fly 60 ft. (poor), burrow 5 ft.
Defense: 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +5/+13
Primary Attack: Bite +8 melee (2d8+6/18–20)
Full Attack: Bite +8 melee (2d8+6/18–20)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Mandibles, protective coloration, sensory antennae, temperature immunity
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 7
Skills: Hide –1*, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3**
Feats: Dodge, Power Attack
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any mineral-rich area
Organization: Hives (50–1,000), hunting parties (3–10)
Challenge Rating: 5
Advancement: 6–8 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: +1

The creature looks like an 8-foot-long cockroach with preying mantis jaws. Its carapace is mottled brown and green and its mandibles gleam like steel.

DESCRIPTION

Cal thens are feared predators, known to fearlessly fly down and attack traveling parties or even villages, and their giant fangs can bite through almost anything — stories are told of cal thens biting through hovertank armor in order to attack the vehicle's driver.

For all their ferociousness, cal thens were designed for the peaceful purpose of environmentally manageable mining and terraforming. Before the Final Wars, scientists created the cal then as a psuedo-insect no bigger than an adult human's fist to burrow through rock, digest the minerals and metals underground, then excrete those minerals in an easily accessible form. But in the wake of the Final Wars, the prototype cal thens mutated and changed, becoming larger, smarter and unfriendly. Already designed to eat minerals, the cal thens developed a particular taste for calcium and found that it was easier to devour bones than to chew through stone for their meals. The giant insectoids still digest the stone they burrow out from their nesting tunnels, but only to fill their trace nutritional needs and sharpen their mandibles; for food, they prefer to prey exclusively on living creatures, ripping apart victims to feast upon their bones.

If cal thens were just animals, they would be dangerous but controllable. But the creatures possess a crude alien intelligence, and a malicious dislike for humans and other humanoid creatures. A cal then will go out of its way to attack humans, ignoring animal prey; and they have been known to stalk and hunt humans for days, terrifying settlements with sneak attacks or picking off the rearguard of caravans. In turn, humans hunt down cal thens whenever a nest is located, not just for their own protection, but to salvage and make use of the creature's mandibles and carapace.

Cal thens have no spoken language, but can make sounds by scraping their legs across their exoskeletons; they do this to attract mates, or to stake a claim on territory. Cal thens may attack each other in battles over territory, or (very rarely) band together in hunting parties to take down very large prey, but normally they live alone or with a single mate. They live in the temperate forests and theeka regions of the Gamma Age.

The mandibles of a cal then can be used as the blades of a weapon, such as a sword or halberd. Making such a weapon requires a successful Craft (metalworking) check; the difficulty of integrating the mandible into a useable weapon increases the DC of the Craft check by +3. Weapons made from a cal then's mandible have an increased threat range, adding +1 to a standard weapon of that type (so a longsword made with a mandible has a threat range of 18—20), and a character with the mastercraft ability can make mastercraft weapons from the mandible. Due to the semi-organic nature of the mandible, it will eventually decay and break after about a year of use.

The shell of a cal then can also be used to make plate armor or shields, which are just as durable and protective as metal armor and shields but weigh only 3/4 as much. Again, the organic matter of the shell will eventually decay, and the armor or shield will become worthless after about 6 months.

COMBAT

Cal then hunting parties create ambushes in territory they control, sometimes laying out tempting targets of apparently intact pre-Final Wars technology. The cal then doesn't engage in sophisticated combat tactics, but then it doesn't need to: a simple charge, bite, and retreat to assess the target's damage usually suffices. Any target that survives one or two such charges faces a flanking attack from 2 or 3 cal then at once.

Mandibles (Ex, Bio): The mandibles of a cal then are huge, half as long as their bodies. These deadly blades are more than simply chitin; they are semi-organic steel, fed mineral-heavy nutrients by nanotech factory glands. Furthermore, the mandibles are surrounded by a piezoelectric field which temporarily disrupts the molecular integrity of any substance the cal then bites. Whether human flesh, solid steel or hardened single-polymer crystal, a cal then can probably bite through it. In combat, the cal then's mandibles have a threat range of 18–20, and ignore half the hardness or damage reduction of any target.

Sensory Antennae (Ex, Mut): The antennae of the cal then are able to detect minute changes in temperature and electrical energy within 50 feet. **If a warm-blooded creature is hiding within this area, the cal then gains a +4 species bonus on its Spot check to locate that creature. They can also detect active electrical devices carried by a concealed character, gaining an additional +2 species bonus on the Spot check.

Temperature Immunity (Ex, Mut): The cal then is immune to any effects or damage caused by heat or cold.

Protective Coloration (Ex): The brown-green coloration of the cal then's shell allows it to camouflage itself in the forest. *It gains a +5 species bonus on Hide checks when encountered in theeka or temperate forests.

CARRIN

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 4d10 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 11
Initiative: +4
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (poor)
Defense: 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+4
Primary Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d4) or quill +8 ranged (1d3 + poison) or by weapon
Full Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d4) or quill +8 ranged (1d3 + poison) or by weapon
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Quills, telepathy
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +3
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 8
Skills: Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +2, Investigate +6, Listen +2, Spot +14
Feats: Dodge, Mobility
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Carrin nation
Environment: Any land with good perches
Organization: Tribe (20–200)
Challenge Rating: 4
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +1

The bird has the bald head and piercing gaze of a vulture. At rest, it is as tall as a person; in flight, its wings stretch out 20 feet or more. Whether flying or standing, it looks alert and malevolent.

DESCRIPTION

Vast regions fall under the wheeling shadow of the carrins. The croaking voices, majestic rustling feathers and the ghastly ceremonial spears of the "dark emperors" are symbols of terror and subjugation to thousands. In their terrible eyries high above the ground, the carrins watch and scheme. They are mutated vultures, swollen bigger than a human. Their claws are now agile enough to use technology, and the carrins scour the ruins for ancient artifacts and weapons. Re-engineering has made the pinfeathers on their dark wings into stiff, lethally sharp quills. These quills are made even more dangerous by the carrins' regular poison baths.

All carrins are telepathic. This has given their race a strange unity. Although carrin society, politics, sex, warfare and even education makes the Borgias look direct and well-adjusted, their telepathic links ensure that no carrin will ever willingly kill another. Humiliate, abduct, cripple or exile, perhaps, but death is only meted out to lower (i.e. non-carrin) creatures.

The basic carrin philosophy is that foresight is the highest virtue, a philosophy derived from their vulture progenitors. Just as the vultures scanned the deserts for carrion and prospective carrion, the carrins constantly look for impending problems or opportunities. The first carrin in a nest to identify a crisis — a growing free community, a rogue machine on a rampage, a newly uncovered cache of artifacts — is in charge of dealing with the crisis however that bird sees fit. Success brings renown; failure, or incorrectly identifying a situation, ruins a carrin in the eyes of its fellows. Thus, every carrin is constantly plotting and spying, waiting for the perfect moment to bring some plot or other to the attention of the nest. When the carrin to go to war or to conquer, they never attack directly. Their preferred tactics include manipulated agents, telepathically controlled warbeasts, severed lines of trade and supply, and biological warfare.

Carrins carry short spears decorated with scratched carvings and gobs of gore and bone that signify their current standing in the community. Their telepathically dominated blood bird guardians perch on these swagger-sticks. Every carrin is accompanied by 1d4 blood birds, which are mentally manipulated in the egg to be loyal to that particular carrin.

COMBAT

Carrins very seldom attack on short notice. They rely on their scouts, the blood birds, to keep them appraised of potential trouble. Carrins use complex tactics, and never willingly enter battle without a plan and a distinct advantage. The most common attack pattern begins with a wave of trained blood birds, which fly in to distract and harass the targets. The carrins then fly over the battlefield and launch unpoisoned quills at the birds. The blood birds are trained to fly into the path of these initial quills, injuring themselves and spilling their radioactive blood. Once the enemy has been weakened by the burst of radiation, the carrin attack, flying in from multiple directions, dropping stones or grenades and firing whatever weapons they have. Their telepathy ensures that every carrin is constantly aware of the rest of the flock, and they respond instantly to anything their enemies do.

Quills (Ex, Mut): Carrin can shoot quills from their wings with a range of 60 feet. These quills inflict 1d3 points of damage. The carrins regularly bathe in poisonous dust bowls — the most common form of poison inflicts temporary Strength damage (injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d8 Str), but the carrin also have a hallucinogenic poison that inflicts temporary Wisdom damage (injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Wis), making the victim more susceptible to psychic interference.

Telepathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): Carrins can use the FX powers *mindlink*, *dominate* and *detect thoughts* as a 4th-level telepath with 10 power points (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Psionics").

CHEGUIN

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	1d8–1 (3 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	9
Initiative:	–2
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.
Defense:	11 (–2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+1/–5
Primary Attack:	Bite -–2 melee (1d3–2) or by ranged weapon –2 ranged
Full Attack:	Bite –2 melee (1d3–2) or by ranged weapon –2
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Improved swimming
Saves:	Fort –1, Ref –1, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 7, Dex 7, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Craft (mechanical) +6, Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Spot +4, Swim +6
Feats:	Personal Firearms Proficiency
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any shallow water
Organization:	Flocks (4–40)
Challenge Rating:	1/4
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature stands half as tall as a human being, with tiny legs that carry it in a waddling gait and fat, child-like fingers on the ends of its wings. Only in the sea does it move with any grace.

DESCRIPTION

The Ancients were strange, incomprehensible and warlike, but rarely were they cruel. The creation of the cheguin race must therefore be an accident, an aberration. They are derived from penguin stock, but have stubby manipulators at the ends of their wings and are chubbier than the average penguin. They are even less graceful than penguins on land. A cheguin waddling across the ground constantly gives the impression that it is about to do a pratfall. Few things are more pathetically funny than a cheguin.

Despite, or perhaps because of, their comedic appearance, cheguins are sadistic and vicious creatures. They are obviously poor hunters, but make up for that with inventive use of tools and weapons, especially complex and cunning traps.

The majority of cheguin colonies live in sewers, but a few hardy travelers have somehow made it to both the Arctic and Antarctic oceans, where they are flourishing. Cheguins have a surprisingly good grasp of technology. They rarely craft anything more complex than mechanical traps or plumbing themselves, but often use pre-War technology effectively. The combination of nasty attitude and ancient energy weapon greatly mitigates the cheguin's clumsiness.

Cheguins are well aware of their race's many shortcomings, and tend to blame humanity and its offshoots for their plight. Their myths revolve around complex schemes for revenge. The smartest cheguin in a group, regardless of gender, leads them and dictates the plans for the colony. Cheguin raise their young communally in large indoctrination classes. Cheguins rarely trade with others, but get on comparatively well with synthetics and some mutant animals, especially dabbers.

COMBAT

Cheguins prefer to either lure enemies into traps, or else meet them with overwhelming firepower. Their manipulators are not strong enough to use a bow, but crossbows, handguns and small siege weapons are well suited to cheguins. When pressed, they flee to the water and swim away.

Improved Swimming (Ex): Cheguins are far more comfortable and agile in the water than on land. They gain a +8 circumstance bonus on all Dexterity-based checks while in the water. Also, cheguins have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

CHIRPLICK

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	10d10+10 (65 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	60 ft. (12 squares), swim 20 ft., climb 15 ft.
Defense:	15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+10/+11
Primary Attack:	Bite +11 melee (2d6+1) or claw +11 melee (1d4+1) or tail sweep +11 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +11 melee (2d6+1), 2 claws +6 melee (1d4+1), tail sweep +6 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Blindsight 30 ft., intuition, sonic blast
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 8
Skills:	Climb +19, Jump +8, Move Silently +8, Survival +11, Swim +15
Feats:	Run, Track, Lightning Reflexes, Dodge
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Alpha female
Environment:	Any land except polar
Organization:	Solitary or packs (5–10)
Challenge Rating:	10
Advancement:	10–12 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature looks like a dolphin on legs, which spread on sharp joints like a spider's or lizard's. The creature's body is usually dark blue, though some individuals include patterns in browns and reds. Whatever the creature's color, it waits in almost complete stillness except when on the attack.

DESCRIPTION

For every successful genetic manipulation attempt there were scores of failures, dutifully put down for the good of all. Usually. Some of these wayward creations spent their time being studied in simulated environments while others found their way to parks, public and private. It's not quite certain which of these environments saved the chirplicks, but it's universally unfortunate it did. Chirplicks are large, leather-skinned mammals roughly 6 feet in length. Their skin typically takes a dark, blue-green hue, though tall tales of some adapted to a desert tan and red have filtered their way from the west. Their bodies barely show their relation to the dolphins of old, keeping only the beak and dorsal fin. Their heads are flattened wedges ending in a sharp-toothed beak. Their legs are similar to that of a reptile or spider, with short thighs rising up to the knee before the longer calf descends into sharp-clawed, three-toed feet. While chirplicks are primarily nocturnal, they have been seen active at all hours of the day.

Chirplick packs are dominated by the strongest female, who rules by sheer brute force. Pack size ranges from 5–10 members, depending upon how many young the alpha female allows to live. When

a female is old enough to mate she either fights the alpha or steals off, trying to take prime males of the pack with her.

COMBAT

Chirplicks are silent, patient hunters, using their gifts to quietly stalk up on unsuspecting prey, waiting until the right precise moment to pounce. When hungry, they are less patient, openly pursuing an intended meal, no matter the size. Under those circumstances, chirplicks prefer to hamstring larger creatures or simply overwhelm smaller creatures. They are tireless pursuers and will follow a meal until it is theirs. Only easier prey will discourage a hungry pack from a chase. They are canny hunters, rarely falling for ambushes or traps.

Chirplicks reserve their sonic blast for times they are taken by surprise, stunning the attacker until they can rouse the pack and focus on the enemy.

Intuition (Psi): Chirplicks have a near-precognitive intuition about the fighting styles of other living creatures. At the beginning of any physical conflict, each chirplick makes an Intelligence check against a DC (10 + the opponent's Int bonus). If there are multiple opponents, the same result is compared to each opponent's respective DC. If the check succeeds, the chirplick gains a +2 bonus to Defense and a +2 on attack rolls against the creature.

Sonic Blast (Ex, Mu): The chirplick emit a shrill, piercing beam of sound that interferes with the nervous systems of most living creatures. The attack can be heard for some distance, but it only affects those in a direct line from the chirplick's toothy maw. The attack is a cone 40 feet long; it inflicts 3d6 points of sonic damage (Fortitude save DC 13 for half damage). All within will be deafened for 1d4 rounds even if the Fortitude save is successful. This potent attack can be used only once every 24 hours. While the sound is only damaging within the cone, it is audible for a mile.

Skills: Chirplicks still enjoy some familiarity with the water. They have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks, and can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations. They are now equally adept at climbing; they have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may also take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

CHOWPUFF

Size/Type:	Tiny Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	1d10 +1 (6 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	15 (+2, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+1/–11
Primary Attack:	Bite –1 melee (1d3–4)
Full Attack:	Bite –1 melee (1d3–4)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Cold sleep, total omnivore
Saves:	Fort +4*, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 2, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 1, Cha 16
Skills:	Survival –1
Feats:	Great Fortitude
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any land
Organization:	Herd (10–500)
Challenge Rating:	1/8
Advancement:	0–1 HD (Tiny)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature is a 2-foot-long, orange- and black-striped, furry, shaped egg with two large black eyes and a pink button nose flanked by long whiskers.

DESCRIPTION

Chowpuffs were supposed to be the ultimate utility beast once humanity ventured into space and onto alien soil. Designed to provide a ready source of proteins and minerals by eating virtually any form of flora and fauna and extracting the slightest scraps of nutritional value, they were the perfect food source for a space colony that had no idea what would be edible until long after the colonists arrived. When humanity failed, repeatedly, to journey deep into the stars, chowpuffs became curiosities. Most were put into cold storage until the day they were needed — or the power shut off.

Chowpuffs are herd animals designed with no real herd structure. They were created to eat and be eaten, as well as reproduce asexually once enough biological components had been ingested to build a pup. Chowpuffs have no known sexual characteristics. They reproduce asexually, virtually spontaneously. When temperatures reach freezing, the little, furry creatures slow down until completely dormant. It's not unheard of to find a field of frost-covered, sleeping chowpuffs.

COMBAT

Should something take aggressive action against a chowpuff, the chowpuff will attempt to flee, bleating until it calms down. Should it be caught, it will feebly attempt to bite its captor and break free.

Cold Sleep (Mu): Once the temperature approaches water's freezing point, the chowpuff's body slows down over a period of 3 hours. At the end of this time, the creature is in a state of perfect biological stasis that can hold for as many as 41 years, barring any long-term outside damage. Once the temperature rises, the chowpuff awakens over a similar 3 hour period, during which it completely sheds and grows a new coat in full.

Total Omnivore (Mu): Chowpuffs can eat and digest virtually anything, including poisons. Chowpuffs have a +15 species bonus on all Fortitude saves against poison.

DABBER

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	3d8+3 (16 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), climb 10 ft.
Defense:	16 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/–2
Primary Attack:	Claw +7 melee (1d3–1) or by ranged weapon +7
Full Attack:	Claw +7 melee (1d3–1) or by ranged weapon +7
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Empathy, illusions, repulsion, telepathy
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 14
Skills:	Bluff +3, Climb +7, Craft (visual art) +4, Diplomacy +3, Forgery +6, Gamble +2, Gather Information +3, Hide +5, Move Silently +3, Repair +1, Search +4, Spot +1, Tumble +3
Feats:	Meticulous, Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Caravan
Environment:	Any land except polar or hot equatorial
Organization:	Family groups (8–24)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature looks like an upright raccoon, as tall as a human child, dressed in baggy clothes with plenty of pockets.

DESCRIPTION

Dabber bands are common traders (and pests) in many communities. These mutated raccoons are the product of the same uplift mutation that created many of the other humanoid races, but the dabbers also carry a suite of electronic-warfare nanotechnology and psionic abilities designed for special operations forces. Dabbers wear baggy black clothes or scavenged clothing from the ruins, preferring colors that either blend into the landscape or set off their black fur and eye masks.

Family groups of 8 to two dozen or more dabbers roam the land. The dabbers are moderately accomplished traders and excellent thieves. They delight in fine jewels, technology (even if they rarely understand how it works) and especially shiny things. The acquisition of shiny things is central to the dabber mind, and if a dabber imprints on a particular item, the level of obsession engendered can be quite alarming. Dabbers have resorted to theft, deceit and even murder to get a particular item. Fundamentally though, dabbers are good-hearted, and can be dissuaded from pursuing an item if dealt with kindly. Attacking or insulting a dabber brings down the wrath of the entire clan.

Dabber wagons are often filled with trinkets and artifacts found in the ruins, which is their primary source of income. Dabber crafters do make excellent small tools and carvings.

Young dabbers sometimes leave their family caravans and set off on their own for a few years in search of shiny treasure. Dabber gunslingers, who specialize with a single shiny weapon and roam the highways, are the central characters in dabber stories, the 'coons with no names. There is always a tragedy in the past of these melancholy warriors, be it a murder, a failed affair or a wiped-out caravan.

COMBAT

In combat, dabbers use illusions and tricks to distract attackers while the rest of the dabber clan sneak around to attack the rear. They prefer missile weapons, especially firearms if they can get them. The gunman is a potent archetype in dabber culture — lone raccoon gunslingers are both respected and feared by the clans.

Empathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): Dabbers are constantly aware of the emotions of those around them with a range of 60 feet.

Illusions (Ex, Mut, Psi): Dabbers can create convincing illusions using a combination of psionic abilities and projected holograms. The dabber must be within 60 feet of the targets to project an illusion. Anyone who sees the hologram is permitted a Spot check opposed by the dabber's Craft (visual art) check to see flaws in the deception. Any living mind within 50 feet is also targeted by the dabber's psychic projection, resisted by a DC 12 Will save. Any character affected by both — the character is both within range of the psychic illusion and can see the hologram — must succeed in both checks to see through the illusion. Creating an illusion is an attack action.

Repulsion (Ex, Mut, Psi): Using a limited form of telekinesis, dabbers can push objects or attackers within 120 feet. As an attack action, a dabber can make a trip attack against a single opponent using her Charisma bonus in place of her Strength bonus for the opposed test (this requires a successful ranged touch attack to initiate, but the trip attempt does not trigger an attack of opportunity by the target and the dabber is not vulnerable to a trip attempt in the event of failure). Alternatively, the dabber can gain a +2 deflection bonus to Defense until her next action. The dabber cannot use both aspects of its power in a single round.

Telepathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): By concentrating for a full round, dabbers can read the surface thoughts of beings within 30 feet.

Skills: Dabbers have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

DABBER CHARACTERS

Dabbers characters have the following species traits.

— –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity.

— Size: Dabbers are Small creatures; they gain a +1 size bonus to Defense and a +1 bonus on attack rolls.

— A dabber's base land speed is 30 feet, with a base climbing speed of 10 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A dabber begins with 3 levels of mutant humanoid, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1.

— Species Skills: Dabbers receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Craft (visual art) is always a class skill for dabbers.

— +2 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: Claws (1d3). Feats that apply to all melee attacks also affect attacks made with claws, but feats that apply only to unarmed combat, such as Combat Martial Arts, do not affect attacks made with claws.

— Darkvision (Ex): Dabbers possess darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

— Illusions (Ex, Mut, Psi): Dabbers can create convincing illusions using a combination of psionic abilities and projected holograms. Creating an illusion is an attack action, and creates a Large or smaller moving image. Anyone who sees the hologram is permitted a Spot check opposed by the dabber's Craft (visual art) check to see flaws in the deception. Anyone within 40 feet (+5 feet per point of the dabber's Charisma bonus) must also make a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the dabber's character level + Cha bonus) or be fooled by the psionic illusion. Any character who is both within range of the psychic illusion *and* can see the hologram must succeed in both checks to see through the illusion.

— Repulsion (Ex, Mut, Psi): Using a limited form of telekinesis, dabbers can push objects or attackers within 100 feet +10 feet per point of Charisma bonus. As an attack action, a dabber can make a trip attack against a single opponent using her Charisma bonus in place of her Strength bonus for the opposed test (this requires a successful ranged touch attack to initiate, but the trip attempt does not trigger an attack of opportunity by the target and the dabber is not vulnerable to a trip attempt in the event of failure). Alternatively, the dabber can gain a +2 deflection bonus to Defense until her next action. The dabber cannot use both aspects of its power in a single round.

— Telepathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): As a full-round action, dabbers can read the surface thoughts of all beings within 30 feet. Subjects may make a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 character level + Cha bonus) to resist the dabber's telepathy.

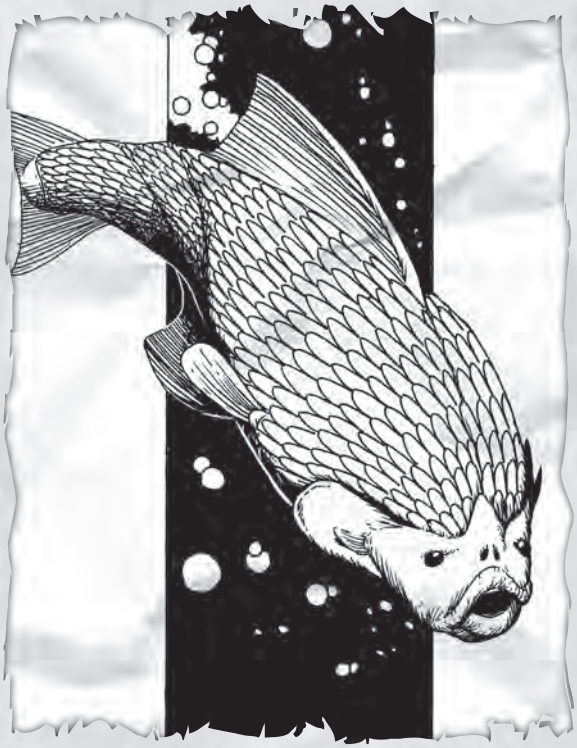
— Empathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): Dabbers are constantly aware of the emotions of all beings with a 60-foot radius.

— No Bioware: Dabbers cannot use bioware, which is designed to work in conjunction only with human DNA. Any attempt by a dabber to use bioware fails, as does any attempt to implant a biotech device in a dabber character.

— Level Adjustment: +1

ERT MEDUSA

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	3d10+3 (19 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	12
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	Swim 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense:	17 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/–3
Primary Attack:	Bite +7 melee (1d4–2 plus poison)
Full Attack:	Bite +7 melee (1d4–2 plus poison)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Poison
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills:	Swim +16
Feats:	Dodge, Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Rivers and lakes
Organization:	School (10–500)
Challenge Rating:	2
Advancement:	4–6 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment:	+1



The fish is approximately 3 feet long, looking like a cross between pike and salmon, with rough, tough scales.

DESCRIPTION

Many fast-flowing mountain streams can be crossed only at ominous "living bridges." At these bridges, grayish statues of animals and humans stand in the rushing water. Beneath the surface of the water are more fallen statues, their legs gnawed away not by erosion, but by hundred of tiny bites. Travelers cross at these living bridges, climbing from statue to statue. They are careful to keep clear of the water, and give thanks that some other unfortunate came to that ford before them.

Ert medusa flesh is tasty and free of poison. ("Ert" is a generic term for mutated fish, derived from some long-ruined experimental fish farm.) The bite of an ert medusa, however, is often lethal. The fish's bite injects a nanotech poison. Complex carbon structures unfold in the bloodstream and cells of the victim, toughening the tissue until the creature becomes an immobile lump of stone-like flesh. If an ert medusa licks a piece of hardened flesh, the carbon structures collapse, and the flesh returns to normal. A single human-sized victim can feed an ert medusa for weeks — the carbon-preserved flesh will keep indefinitely, and the fish can lick a section back to freshness whenever it is hungry.

The nanotech is rendered inactive if the ert medusa is killed. Some tribes of mountain barbarians have a ritual in which young warriors are bitten by an immature ert medusa, which is then strangled as the nanotech courses through the warrior's veins. The barbarians believe those who survive the ritual gain significantly tougher, rock-like skin.

COMBAT

The ert medusa prefers solitary prey, but if it can bite several targets in a row, it will.

Poison (Ex, Mut): Anyone bitten by an ert medusa is injected with its petrification poison. The victim must make a DC 12 Fortitude check or be paralyzed instantly. The character gains damage resistance 10/– while paralyzed. This paralysis lasts for 1d6+1 rounds — during this time, the character cannot breathe freely, and is essentially being

suffocated. After the 1d6+1 rounds have elapsed, the character must make another DC 12 Fortitude save. If this second save is failed the character dies, permanently imprisoned in a carbon-frozen body.

If the ert medusa is killed, any active nanites shut down. This will not restore petrified characters to life, but will save a paralyzed character from having to make the second save to avoid death.

Skills: Ert medusa have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

ERT NAPHTHA

Size/Type: Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 2d10+6 (17 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +4
Speed: Swim 50 ft. (10 squares)
Defense: 15 (+4 Dex, +1 size), touch 15, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/–4
Primary Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d4–2)
Full Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d4–2)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Explosion
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +0
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 2
Skills: Swim +11
Feats: Dodge
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Rivers and lakes
Organization: Schools (20–100+)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 3–5 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: +0

The fish is between 1 and 2 feet long, its scales flashing rainbow colors with its constant motion.

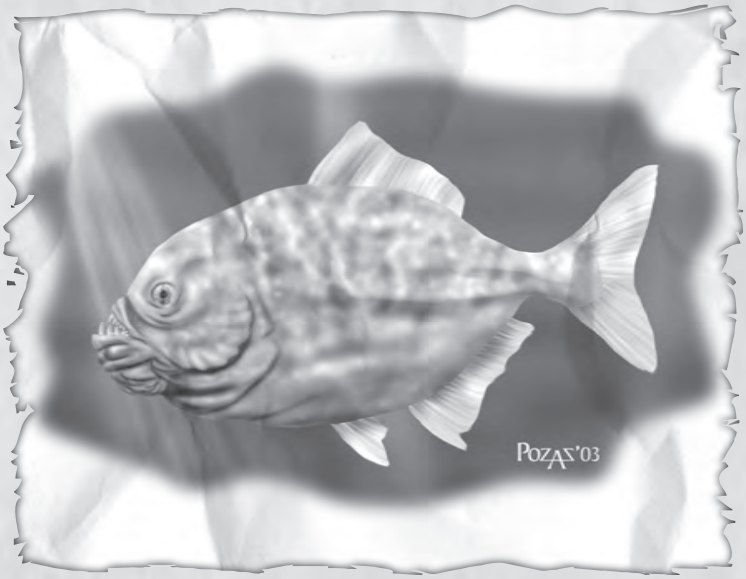
DESCRIPTION

Many swamps and backwaters are choked with ert naphtha. The reddish-gold fish crowd the waters in vast shoals, sometimes causing temporary floods as narrow channels are dammed solid with fish. These dams last no more than an hour or so, whereupon they explode violently.

COMBAT

Ert naphtha have astonishingly fast metabolisms. Whole generations of the fish can be spawned, grow and die in a single day. To support this frantic life, the ert naphthas must be amazingly efficient; they commonly indulge in cannibalism, and are capable of extracting all possible nutrition from anything they eat. Some believe the ert naphtha are a blessing from the Ancients, an inexhaustible supply of food. Others suspect that the fish are a rather clumsy experiment in seeing how far a creature's metabolism can be pushed.

One other compromise was made in the design of the ert naphtha: they're water-cooled. Most of the year, ert naphtha are merely extremely warm. During spawning season, which lasts almost a month during summer, their metabolisms go into overdrive. A single ert can hatch, grow to full size and spawn another two or three dozen erts in a matter of days. If an ert fish is not constantly cooled, it begins to cook itself from the inside out. Removing the fish from the water panics it, causing it to burn up and explode even more quickly. It is sometimes



captured and used as a weapon by certain tribes, who keep the ert naphtha in holding pools inside their walled village, and fling them over the walls with catapults at would-be attackers. Unused explosives are eaten in the victory celebrations, often as self-cooking sushi.

COMBAT

The ert naphtha has no aptitude for combat and flees danger whenever possible; all its actions are geared toward escape.

Explosion (Ex, Mut): If a live ert naphtha is removed from the water, it immediately begins to combust. In the first round, anyone within 10 feet of the ert naphtha takes 2d6 points of fire damage from the intense heat. Unless the ert naphtha is returned to the water before the next round, it explodes, inflicting 6d6 points of fire damage on everything within 15 feet of the fish. In either case, those within the area of effect can make a Reflex save against DC 14 for half damage.

Skills: Ert medusa have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

ERT PIRA

Size/Type: Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 2d10+6 (17 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +4
Speed: Swim 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 17 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 15, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/–4
Primary Attack: Bite +7 melee (1d6–2)
Full Attack: Bite +7 melee (1d6–2)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Frenzy, poison
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +0
Abilities: Str 7, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills: Swim +11
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Streams and lakes
Organization: Schools (10–50)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 3–4 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment: +0

The fish is about 12 inches long, with silver and white scales, and very sharp fangs.

DESCRIPTION

In a world of monsters that kill with radioactive oil, life-draining psychic powers, laser vision, or by extracting all the oxygen from a cylinder around their prey, it is almost reassuring to encounter a creature that kills in the time-honored fashion of tearing chunks of flesh out with big sharp teeth. Ert pira are overgrown predatory fish with a strong dose of piranha DNA. They can be found in any freshwater region, and their numbers are rising.

Ert pira have two stomachs: a primary stomach, which actually digests food, and a "pre-stomach," a stretchy ring of flesh located halfway along the fish's body. Mouthfuls of meat are stored in the pre-stomach until the ert pira is ready to digest them. As the pre-stomach can balloon up to five or more times the size of the rest of the fish without bursting, ert pira often eat many times their bodyweight in a single feeding frenzy. A pack of ert pira can devour an entire brutorz and still be hungry.

A gorged ert pira floats just beneath the surface, idly snapping at insects and smaller fish that pass by its jaws. Such a bloated creature would normally be easy prey, but ert pira have a potent defensive mechanism; their skin secretes a lethal poison, which kills or drives away most predators. Often, a gorged ert pira keeps getting fatter and fatter for several days, as predators swoop down, take a bite, get killed by the poison, and are then eaten by the ert pira.

The ert pira's entire body is tainted by the poison, but some fishermen still catch ert pira and eat the undigested contents of the pre-stomach. Ert pira fishing is a dangerous industry, as the fish have been known to gobble their way up a fishing line and eat the fisherman at the other end.

COMBAT

In combat, ert pira bite. Then they bite some more. Then they keep biting and biting and biting until there's nothing left to bite. Their poison is for protection only; it is not inflicted with their bite.

Frenzy (Ex, Mut): Blood in the water drives ert pira into an orgy of destruction. Every time a creature is injured in the water, all ert pira within 120 feet gain a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls (to a maximum of +10) for the next 1d6 rounds. Furthermore, each time this ability is reactivated, the duration for all frenzy bonuses is extended. For example, a creature is injured and all ert pira nearby get a +1 bonus for the next 3 rounds. Next round, the creature is injured again twice, so the ert pira now have a +3 bonus for the next 2+2d6 rounds.

Poison (Ex, Mut): Anyone touching an ert pira with bare flesh is affected by the ert pira's poison (touch, DC 14, initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Con).

Skills: Ert pira have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

FID-CHICK

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 1d8+1 (5 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 13
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/+1
Primary Attack: Claw +1 melee (1d4) or javelin +2 ranged (1d6)
Full Attack: Claw +1 melee (1d4) or javelin +2 ranged (1d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: —
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 11
Skills: Hide +6, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5
Feats: Alertness
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Tropical
Organization: Clan (10–100)
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is a female humanoid dog, with most of its fur a single color — brown, black, white or some other shade.

DESCRIPTION

Fid-chicks are native to the neo-Amazonian rainforests. These humanoid canines are always female, and come in a bewildering array of colors. They are almost always shades of a single hue, and an individual fid-chick is typically named for her coloration.

Bred before the end of the world to be entertainment and recreation for miners, loggers and other laborers in the region, fid-chicks proved to be more clever and more resourceful than their

would-be masters realized. Even before the chaos associated with the End, a band of the female caninoids had forcibly escaped their enslavement and set-up camp in the depths of the rainforest. During the chaos of the End, they freed their sisters and have since flourished.

Fid-chicks are incredibly clever; explorers who have survived encounters with them describe them as incredibly cryptic. They are fond of speaking in riddles. Uninvited wanderers in fid-chick territory often find themselves involved in a game of wits. If the unwelcome guests cannot solve a puzzle in three clues, they do not leave fid-chick lands intact.

Fid-chick communities are incredibly insular. As a rule, no other sentient beings are allowed in their territory without invitation and, even then, they are expected to visit and leave. This includes all manner of mutants and synthetics. Fid-chicks appear to make exceptions for clochwhirls, and the small robots can often be found living in mixed communities with the caninoids — though when this occurs, the females are always the dominant species. Only one other exception is made. Though fid-chicks will deny it, this exception is believed to be due to their initial, arguably botched, programming for loyalty. Often a band of fid-chicks will forcibly adopt one or more adult male members of another species. These men are forced into child-like roles in fid-chick communities, being coddled, fed and protected, but also treated as less than people. Explorers theorize that these males are used for breeding, but this is unconfirmed. However fid-chicks breed, it is fairly apparent that fid-chick genetics always breed true.

Fid-chicks are consummate warriors. In regions where a band of the brightly-hued women has taken residence, neighboring communities have learned

to fear their warbands. Fid-chick mercenaries are uncommon, but highly respected.

Fenkuin are known to be a delicacy in fid-chick communities. Great barbeques of these white, flightless birds are served in honor of successful hunts or battles, or to honor greatly respected friends of a fid-chick band.

COMBAT

Fid-chicks tend to be intelligent warriors. They pick their battles carefully and are not above striking from surprise. On the other hand, once they are committed to a battle, they remain engaged with the enemy unless ordered to retreat by a superior.

FIRE EATER

Size/Type:	Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	6d10+24 (57 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	19
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense:	15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+6/+18
Primary Attack:	Claw +13 melee (1d8+8)
Full Attack:	2 claws +13 melee (1d8+8), bite +8 melee (2d8+4)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Foam generation, improved grab, low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Climb +13, Listen +5, Spot +5
Feats:	Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Forests and areas with flammable materials
Organization:	Solitary, mated pair, or single mother with 2–3 cubs
Challenge Rating:	6
Advancement:	7–10 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature looks like a normal bear, when it isn't spitting out fire-extinguishing foam.

DESCRIPTION

"We don't know why they come to protect our lands and crops, but we are thankful. In thanks, we leave this offering to our fire-eating friends."

— Nik Basket Ritual

From a mad genius' imagination a new organ-sized symbiote was created, a separate mind designed to stimulate the grizzly bear's reproductive system, to aid in mate attraction, copulation and gestation times, enabling the grizzly population to grow at three times the natural rate. The organ had something of a mind of its own, of course; it altered the bear's behavior for better survival. New instincts developed to react to dangers the bear normally would be oblivious of or unconcerned with. For this reason alone, the species survived into the Gamma Age virtually unscathed. In response to the environmental chaos of the Final Wars, the symbiote further modified its host species to allow it to produce and spit out a fire-extinguishing foam. The process is costly, using up portions of the bear's own fat stores in exchange for the ability to make certain there is still a place to forage.

Fire eaters grow more than 7 feet tall and weigh between half and three-quarters of a ton. Females are smaller than males, but the difference is less than it was in the ancestral species. While they walk flatfooted, they are capable of great speeds for short distances. They've been known to chase down horses and ground vehicles. Their long claws make them fair climbers while enhancing their already great strength in a fight. Their thick coat ranges in color from black to red-brown from head to foot, with a silver-tinged muzzle that comes with age. Fire eaters are omnivores, eating a variety of things, including sentients stupid enough to provoke the bear.

Fire eaters live in mated pairs anywhere they can forage for enough food to survive, much as their ancestors did in the days before the Industrial

Revolution. Very few are seen near larger settlements, preferring to live away from those foolish enough to consider hunting them.

COMBAT

A fire eater's sense of tactics is straightforward. Charge. Crush. Maul. Should the attackers use energy- or fire-based weapons, they will find themselves covered in a thick coat of flame-retardant foam.

Foam Generation (Mu): The new organ attached to the bear's digestive system can, when called upon, produce vast amounts of fire-retardant, oxygen-absorbing foam. The foam is projected in a 20-foot cone. All surfaces (and creatures) within the cone gain 20 points of fire resistance; this is enough to extinguish most natural fires. Unfortunately, the oxygen-absorbing properties of the foam make it difficult for living creatures to breathe in the area of effect. Anyone within the foam cone must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 on each subsequent check) each round or spend the round coughing and choking. Characters who choke for two rounds or more take 1d6 points of damage each round after the first. The fire resistant properties of the foam last for 24 hours; the oxygen-depleting effect is only dangerous for 2d6 rounds.

FLESH-CUTTER ANT

Size/Type: Tiny Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice: 1/4d8+1 (2 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: +3
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), burrow 5 ft.
Defense: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 size), touch 15, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–10
Primary Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d3–2 plus poison)
Full Attack: B ite +5 melee (1d3–2 plus poison)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Poison, scent
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 1, Wis 11, Cha 2
Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any underground
Organization: Hive (100–1,000+)
Challenge Rating: 1/2
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is a black and red ant, 2 to 3 feet long.

DESCRIPTION

No one knows exactly where the flesh-cutter ants come from. One day, they simply emerged from the rainforest, attacked a small coastal community and carried away a dozen or so human inhabitants back into the dense tropical growth. Were they once leaf-cutter ants engineered for another purpose, but gone horribly awry? Or did they arise through the contamination the world suffered (be it toxic waste, radiation or some other man-made

taint)? Or is it possible that these strange myrmidons have been with us all along in the deepest, darkest heart of the forbidden forests?

The ants themselves are typically 2 to 3 feet in length and 4 to 6 inches in width. Their chitin is mottled black and red. They have long segmented antennae and powerful serrated mandibles. Ninety-five percent of the flesh-cutter ant population are "workers." The remaining ants are "farmers," with a single queen governing the colony.

The ants rarely venture forth into human populations, preferring to stay as far away from that world as possible until it becomes absolutely necessary. In the meantime, other animals end up as prey to the flesh-cutters. The ants carry the victims of their paralyzing poison back to the colony, deep underground, where they slowly strip the skin from the creature. They use their serrated mandibles like scissors, snipping swatches of flesh away from the body. They only take as much as they need at any given moment. The ants actually manage to keep the prey alive as long as possible, "feeding" the hapless victim from the ants' own protein-enriched waste.

The curious thing is, the flesh-cutting ants don't themselves use the strips of skin as food. The snippets of flesh instead serve a dual function: to feed any potential larvae that require sustenance, and to feed the fungi that the other ants (the "farmers") cultivate in deep subterranean passages. This fungi (*mycogongylidia*) consumes the flesh deposits, and then the *ants* eat the fungus. When the queen is hatching new eggs, she will lay among the underground gardens of fungi, nursing on the growths to keep her strength up.

The colonies of the flesh-cutter ants go extraordinarily deep, as much as a mile or more underground; the tunnels themselves (typically no bigger in diameter than 4 feet) may go on for 10 miles or more. Most of the passages branch off and terminate in either fungal gardens or larvae chambers. The ants reserve special chambers for their still-living prey. When a victim dies (or is alive but no longer has enough skin to be of use), the "farmer" ants take the body back to the surface and discard it about a mile away from the colony's entrance. There may be up to a thousand ants in a single colony. Typically, most ants attack in a "swarm" of 2d6 ants.

COMBAT

The ants swarm in a wave against their victims, barely piercing the skin of the prey with the very ends of their mandibles. The mandibles secrete a strong sedative to paralyze the quarry.

Poison: The flesh-cutter ant secretes a powerful toxin at the very end of its mandibles that induces a paralytic "sleep" with a successful bite (injury, DC 14, initial damage 1d2 temporary Con, secondary damage 2d6 rounds of unconsciousness).

FUNES' SYMBIOTE

Size/Type: Fine Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 1/16d8 (1 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 10
Initiative: —
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), swim 10 ft.
Defense: 13 (–5 Dex, +8 size), touch 13, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–16
Primary Attack: —
Full Attack: —
Fighting Space/Reach: 1/2 ft./ 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Genetic protection
Saves: Fort +0, Ref –9, Will —
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 1, Con 10, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 3
Skills: —
Feats: —
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 0
Advancement: None
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature looks like a small, armored starfish attached to the skin of some other organism.

DESCRIPTION

The Final Wars have never truly ended. The combatants are gone — dead, transcended, vanished or transformed beyond all recognition — but their living weapons fight on. Viruses sweep through whole species, rewriting their DNA as part of some long-forgotten bioweapons offensive. Nanounits march into living cells and build strange new forms of carbon molecules. Life is the battleground, mutation the casualty, the confirmed kill.

Funes' symbiotes are a product of the wars, developed to counter mutagenic weapons. The names of their creators are encoded in the DNA of the species, but nobody named Funes worked on the project. Like so much else, the meaning of the name is lost in the chaos of the Wars. Physically, they are small, bony creatures, like armored starfish. At the center of the symbiote is a dense nodule of brain matter and nanotechnology. Unattached, the symbiotes drift through the oceans, feeding off plankton.

If a Funes' symbiote attaches itself to a living creature, however, it immediately samples the host's DNA and scans its body structure. This information is recorded by the symbiote, held in massively protected redundant holographic memory cells. Each symbiote can only sample a single host in its lifetime.

Once the symbiote is attached, it constantly monitors the host for signs of mutation. If the host falls victim to a virus or nanite plague, the Funes' symbiote immediately acts to counter this attack. Using the DNA sample as a template, the symbiote releases a defensive army of engineered organisms that fight off the foreign agent and forcibly rewrite the host's DNA back to match the original sample.

COMBAT

The symbiote cannot fight.

Genetic Protection: In simple terms, the Funes' symbiote prevents further mutation of any kind. When its host is threatened by a mutation, the symbiote counters it over a span of 1d4 hours.

During this time, the host is feverish and sickened; he suffers a –2 circumstance penalty on all checks.

Removing a Funes' Symbiote inflicts 1d4+1 points of damage on the host. The symbiote must also make a DC 15 Fortitude save or die. A removed symbiote can be attached to a new host, but this is extremely dangerous. The symbiote cannot take a new DNA sample, so it assumes that the new host is actually a heavily mutated form of the old host, and it immediately acts to salvage the situation. Every 24 hours, the new host will receive one mutation possessed by the previous host. The host must make a DC 20 Fortitude save each time or take 1d4+1 points of temporary Constitution damage; the new host also suffers the fever described above. Once all mutations have been copied over, the symbiote begins to transfer the old host's DNA. The new host will be transformed into a clone of the old, or (more likely) a ghastly and unviable blend of the two creatures. This process is invariably fatal.

GATOR

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	3d10+9 (25 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	17
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.
Defense:	15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/+6
Primary Attack:	Tentacle slam +6 melee (1d3+3)
Full Attack:	2 tentacle slams +6 melee (1d3+3), bite +1 melee (1d6+1), tail slap +1 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Aquatic, improved grab, poison
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +5*, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +4*, Swim +11
Feats:	Skill Focus: Hide, Skill Focus: Move Silently
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Swamps and relatively still water
Organization:	Solitary or small packs (2–5)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	4–7 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

Apart from the 6-foot tentacles extending from its shoulders, the creature looks like a normal alligator.

DESCRIPTION

For the most part, a gator strongly resembles a normal alligator. This is unsurprising, since the creatures were created by modifying alligator DNA. Closer inspection will reveal a few subtle differences, such as a shorter tail, longer legs, and feet that are webbed as well as clawed. And then, of course, there are the two 6-foot-long tentacles that sprout from its shoulders.

Mixing alligator and platypus DNA sounds like the setup for a joke, but that's exactly what the pre-War creators of the gator did. These swampland geneticists wanted a "guard-dog" that was tough and deadly, that could operate underwater and in poor visibility, and that could overpower intruders resistant to simple bites and claws. The alligator provided the basic template; from the strange genetics of the platypus came webbed feet for improved swimming ability, a weak magnetic imaging sense for better underwater clarity, and glands that secreted a paralytic neurotoxin. Adding those glands to long, muscular tentacles that could constrict an opponent was the icing on the cake.

Since the Final Wars, gators have proved to be a viable species, thriving in the swamps and rainforests of the Gamma Age. Humans tend to avoid the dangerous carnivores, occasionally hunting them for their hides (but not their inedible and toxic flesh). Occasionally, swamp-dwelling humans will capture gators and attempt to train them as hunting or guard animals, a task made difficult by the creature's stubbornness and stupidity; it's easier to steal eggs, then raise and train the newborn gators.

Gators are territorial animals that live alone in swamps and tropical rainforests. During mating season, though, they gather into massive mating swarms (5d10+10 members), where males

compete to fertilize females. These swarms can devastate a swamp's wildlife and ecology, and woe betide any human who stumbles upon the pack of hungry gators. Mating season lasts about 2 weeks, and pregnant females lay their eggs a month later, guarding them until they hatch in 3 month's time.

Training a gator requires a Handle Animal check; the DC of this task is increased by +3. Training a gator as soon as it hatches from its egg negates the DC increase.

COMBAT

The gator fights very simply, grabbing a target with its tentacles and biting the victim until it stops resisting. Then the gator goes after the next target.

Aquatic (Ex): Gators cannot breathe water, but can hold their breath for up to 10 minutes while submerged before making Constitution checks. *Gators get a +10 species bonus on Hide checks when submerged, and a +5 species bonus on Spot checks to detect submerged opponents or objects.

Poison (Ex, Mut): The gator's tentacles exude a paralytic toxin (contact, DC 14, initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Dex). Victims held in the gator's tentacles will be smeared with poison each round until they escape. The poison only affects grabbed victims.

Skills: Gators have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

GENETIC FLAGELLANT

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 11
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+3
Primary Attack: Staff +3 melee (1d6) or shortbow +4 ranged (1d6)
Full Attack: Staff +3 melee (1d6) or shortbow +4 ranged (1d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Accept mutations, mutations
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +5
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 9
Skills: Diplomacy +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) +4, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +2, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +4
Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Endurance
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Church of Jesus Undiluted
Environment: Any with mutants and mutagens
Organization: Solitary or tribe (3–30)
Challenge Rating: 3

Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +1

From a distance it looks like a human being. Close up, each of these beings carries a unique assortment of mutations and deformations.

DESCRIPTION

During the Dark Ages, flagellants roamed the roads of Christendom, scourging their flesh in the belief that self-mortification would win forgiveness from God. Such beliefs were abandoned centuries before the Final Wars. Now, in the new Dark Age, many ancient customs have been resurrected.

The genetic flagellants reason that there are a finite number of mutagenic plagues and nanounits in the world, and that if all the horrors of the Final Wars can be concentrated in a handful of willing martyrs, the rest of the world will be delivered from evil. The flagellants wander the world, seeking out new viruses and mutations to add to their burden. They once were human, but the sheer number of changes the flagellants have gone through has warped them into something else.

Companies of wandering flagellants are a common sight on the roads. They march from village to village, preaching their philosophy of genetic martyrdom, removing the villagers' most unpleasant mutations, and searching for new members. Many communities fear the flagellants, believing them to be carriers of mutation and disease. The original band of genetic flagellants had a mutation that ensured they could not transmit plagues, but the philosophy has spread and not every flagellant is safe. A few superstitious groups venerate the genetic flagellants, while others fear or pity them.

COMBAT

Most flagellants are poor combatants, relying on nothing more than improvised weapons and the shield of their faith. Each band includes a militant mutant monk, who is given special dispensation to absorb and use combative mutations in the defense of his brethren.

Accept Mutation (Ex, Mut, Psi): An ability unique to the genetic flagellants, this mutation allows a flagellant to transfer a mutation from another creature to itself. It takes 1d6 hours to transfer a mutation. If the target is unwilling, an opposed Wisdom check is made between the flagellant and the target.

This ability uses the flagellant's own tattered DNA as a template when rebuilding the target's newly mutation-free cells. Therefore, for every mutation removed, the target loses 1 point from her highest ability score as long as this score is higher than the flagellant's.

The flagellants have a method for giving this mutation to others, but never share it with anyone outside the order. To transfer the mutation, the flagellant overwrites the initiate's DNA with his own. This does not transfer any new mutations to the initiate except for Accept Mutation, but it does reduce the initiate's ability scores, as above, 2d4 times.

Mutations (Ex, Mut): Genetic flagellants were originally "normal" mutant humans, and have at least 2d4+2 mutations. They also gain new mutations in the same way as mutant characters.

GLUCUST

Size/Type: Fine Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice: 1/8d8 (1 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 14
Initiative: +4
Speed: 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (good)
Defense: 22 (+4 Dex, +8 size), touch 22, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–21
Primary Attack: Bite +12 melee (1)
Full Attack: bite +12 melee (1)
Fighting Space/Reach: 1/2 ft./1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Herbicide, jelly secretion
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +0
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills: Spot +4
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any with mutants
Organization: Hive (50–1,000)
Challenge Rating: 1/4
Advancement: None
Level Adjustment: +1

The creature hovering in the air is a yellow insect, 6 inches long, carrying a lump of green jelly beneath its abdomen.

DESCRIPTION

Once, the glucust swarms darkened the skies as millions of insects arose to hunt. Now, such infestations are rare, not because there are fewer glucusts, but because the swarm is rarely invoked. Glucusts were created to seek out and destroy genetically modified crops and plants that had spread too far and too fast. Feed the glucust queen a sample of an organism, and she lays thousands of eggs that hatch into glucusts genetically tailored to hunt for that type of organism.

An individual glucust is a yellowish, winged insect. Its body is the size of a man's hand, although a well-fed glucust carries a greenish glob of jelly beneath it. This jelly is a concentrated lump of sugars. The glucust devours its target species and converts it to sugar. After all exposed portions of the target have been chewed away by the insatiable insects, they spray poisons designed to prevent that particular species from ever taking root again.

Once a glucust swarm has wiped out all its targets within a hundred or so miles of the hive, the glucusts return home. The hive's chambers are filled with energy-rich jelly, some of which will be used to feed the next generation of eggs; the rest is supposed to be harvested by the glucust keepers. Their mission complete, the glucusts then turn on each other in an orgy of cannibalism, reducing each other to more lumps of sugary gel until only one drone survives to will mate with the queen.

Glucust hives are prized in Gamma Terra, if they are inactive. The jelly is a rich source of food, and the insects can be used to harvest dangerous plants (or the crops of rival people) safely. However, as the original designers discovered, the glucust queen can sample meat just as easily as plant matter….

COMBAT

Glucusts only attack to defend the hive, or when they are keyed to feed on a particular type of creature. They have powerful trilateral jaws that bite deeply into flesh, and their hinged spines give them tremendous leverage to tear chunks out of

their prey. As each glucust generation is almost entirely wiped out after feeding, they have even less of a sense of self-preservation than other insects. Glucust drones keep coming and coming despite any losses.

Herbicide (Ex): After devouring a plant, glucusts spray a potent herbicide in a 5-foot circle around themselves that affects only that species. Any plants rooted in an affected area must make a DC 25 Fortitude save each round or take 1d6 points of damage. The spray affects the area for 6 months. (In practice, unless the plant is sentient or mobile, it will simply die.) A DC 20 Handle Animal check allows a glucust keeper to milk this herbicide out of an insect; some communities have large arsenals of chemicals tailored to different plants, the product of many generations of glucusts.

Jelly Secretion (Ex): The lumps of sugary jelly created by glucusts are extremely high in energy. The jelly carried by a single glucust can supply the energy needs of a single Medium creature for 3 days.

GREMLIN

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	+7
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.
Defense:	17 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/-3
Primary Attack:	Claw +7 melee (1d3-2)
Full Attack:	Claw +7 melee (1d3-2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Curse, fast movement
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6
Skills:	Balance +3, Climb +6, Disable Device +4, Hide +3, Move Silently +3, Tumble +6, Spot +1
Feats:	Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	-—
Environment:	Any land with advanced technology
Organization:	Solitary or pack (2–20)
Challenge Rating:	2
Advancement:	4–8 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature looks like a small, hairless monkey.

DESCRIPTION

Gremlins are an unlikely candidate for creatures made to avert an apocalypse, but those who made them understood the precise nature of catastrophe. Technology had brought humanity to the edge of ruin, technology caused the Final Wars; therefore technology could never be allowed to flourish again.

Gremlins nest in machines, the more advanced the better. Many artifacts have been ruined by gremlins before they are identified as a threat by sentinel robots.

Gremlins use a combination of instinctive knowledge and engineered powers to ruin machines, sabotaging gears and infecting circuits and wires with destructive nanounits. A gremlin can sometimes be convinced to use its abilities to repair an item or lift its curse in exchange for a more interesting piece of machinery, but the capricious creatures rarely fulfill their side of the bargain.

Communities reliant on technology are often besieged by gremlins, who gleefully ruin anything more advanced than a windmill. Large bounties are offered for gremlin heads, in an attempt to control the troublesome species. Captured gremlins are often deployed as saboteurs, as the creatures are small and agile enough to be smuggled in through pipes or vents.

COMBAT

Gremlins use hit-and-run attacks, darting in to disrupt the most powerful and juiciest pieces of technology held by opponents. They use their hooked claws only when defending themselves.

Curse (Ex, Mut): Gremlins can use their nanounits to disrupt the functioning of mechanical or electronic equipment. Cursed items have a 1 in 20 chance of breaking when used. The gremlin must touch the item to activate this power, which can be used 3 times per day. Any gremlin can lift the curse (kill the nanounits) left by another gremlin. Intelligent machines are allowed a Fortitude saving throw (DC 12 + the gremlin's Hit Dice) to avoid the curse. The curse can also be lifted with a successful Craft (nanotech) check against DC 10.

Fast Movement (Ex): Gremlins can move with surprising quickness, and have a movement rate of 40 feet per round. They also cover double the normal distance when jumping.

Skills: Gremlins have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

GREN

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	1d8+1 (5 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+1/+1
Primary Attack:	Spear +1 melee (1d6) or spear +2 ranged (1d6)
Full Attack:	Spear +1 melee (1d6) or spear +2 ranged (1d6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Green skin, pheromones
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12
Skills:	Diplomacy +3, Handle Animal +14, Hide +5*, Move Silently +4
Feats:	Stealthy
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Clan or tribe
Environment:	Forests and jungles
Organization:	Clan or tribe (5–500)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature looks like a healthy human being, except that it's bright green.

DESCRIPTION

Genetically, grens are extremely close to the base stock of humanity. Their genome contains no retro-viral tampering or harmful mutations. They are genetically close enough to pure-strain humans to pass as such to genetic scanners and biosecurity systems and they share that breed's hardiness; but where the other pure-strains embrace technology, the grens have rejected it completely. The most distinctive features of the grens are their dark-green skin and pungent, pheromone-rich stench, but the changes go far deeper than that.

The forest-dwelling grens have no history, just a vast repertoire of myths and stories. Their earliest story tells of the first ones, who awoke in a laboratory they knew they had once built, but now no longer understood. The first turned their backs on the ruinous technologies, and walked into the forest to begin again.

The grens live in harmony with nature and each other. While their technology is extremely primitive, on a par with humanity's during the Stone Age, they have a perfectly balanced lifestyle. There is no hate among the grens, no jealousy, no fear. Each gren emits pheromones that signal her emotional state to the rest of the community, which then adjusts to deal with the problem. The grens achieve total social consensus on a biochemical level. These pheromones also serve to identify the

individual gren instead of a spoken name. Some grens are nomadic hunter-gatherers, but many live in small villages of a few dozen individuals.

This biochemical consensus extends around gren communities. Animals living near the grens are compelled to act as guardians and watchbeasts — even normally hostile creatures. Gators, katkin, blackuns and even obbs have been found guarding gren villages. The grens consider these animal neighbors to be friends or pets, so gren hunting parties range far afield when searching for meat. These hunting parties never stray from the protection of the forest, as the grens fear and distrust outsiders. Grens troubled by foreign invaders often build primitive traps to repel them. They are pacifists, only attacking to drive off an enemy — they never kill deliberately.

The deep green skin of the grens provides both excellent camouflage and photosynthesis.

The same genetic manipulation that gave the grens their skin and pheromones also implanted mental blocks deep within their brains — the grens are physically incapable of learning about any advanced technology. (They can never take any feats relating to non-archaic technology, nor can they learn Craft or Knowledge skills that deal with such technology.) This manipulation also prevents the grens from learning anything about their origins — their early tales are all that their altered minds can tolerate of the time before the Greening.

COMBAT

Grens seldom fight very well, and prefer to rely on traps and ambushes when possible. They will not initiate a fight without a clear numerical advantage, and retreat when this advantage is lost.

Green Skin (Ex, Mut): *Grens have a +8 species bonus on Hide checks in forests. Also, grens require very little food — one-fourth the amount consumed by other Medium creatures. The photosynthetic process that makes up the difference requires only potable water and sunlight.

Pheromones (Ex, Mut): The pheromones emitted by grens give them a +8 species bonus on Handle Animal checks, and a +2 species bonus on Diplomacy checks.

HISSER

Size/Type: Medium Aberration
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 13
Initiative: +1
Speed: 25 ft. (5 squares)
Defense: Defense 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+4
Primary Attack: Bite +4 melee (2d4+1) or by weapon
Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (2d4+1) or by weapon
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Mass mind, reflective scales, sonic blast, sonic immunity, telepathy
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: Concentration +3, Craft (mechanical) +3, Listen +3, Profession +2, Spot +3, Survival +3,
Feats: Dodge, Skill Focus: Concentration
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Clutch (immediate relatives)
Environment: Warm and hot, dry climates
Organization: Clutch (5–150)
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +1

The creature has the upper torso and arms of a human being, and the head and lower body of a giant snake. Their scales reflect all available light, making iridescent patterns that resemble glowing tattoos. The human areas usually have heavily tanned skin, while the scales run from green to blue-black or brown.

DESCRIPTION

While they appear both human and snakelike, hissers are neither. Rather, they are a unique lifeform born from dozens of different mutagens, nanotech viruses and the vagaries of chance. They are warm-blooded, but they lay eggs; they are omnivorous, preferring their vegetables cooked and their meat raw; they have no ears, but hear sounds

as vibrations along their entire bodies; and their multi-lobed brains possess an oversized reptilian stem, the source of their extensive psionic abilities.

To hissers, the Gamma Age is home, their birthplace and their birthright, while humans are invaders from a dead era, remnants of a justly forgotten age. But while they are not friendly towards humanity, hissers are not hostile either. They are no more (or less) aggressive than humans, and can live comfortably alongside other species. Some hisser communities even trade with humans for tools or territory. Hissers are familiar with pre-War technology but rarely use it, preferring to develop their own (somewhat archaic) methods and tools, but little stops them from using advanced technology. They rarely wear armor, but have been known to use guns and other weapons.

Hissers are highly social, communal creatures who gather together in clutches (villages) in the same way humans do. Their society is matriarchal, with most clutches governed by a brood queen, the mother or grandmother of most of the clutch's inhabitants. In areas where several clutches exist, a hive queen may govern over a council of brood queens, linking the clutches together into a larger community. If given the opportunity, hissers may even form nations that rival human nations and cities as political entities. Hisser communities are normally found in aromatic, swamp, dry grassland and hot desert regions.

COMBAT

Hissers always attack in pairs or larger groups. One hisser in front of the opponents uses his sonic blast, and ambushers move in from the sides and behind when targets are deafened.

Mass Mind (Ex, Psi): The psionic gifts of hissers extend beyond mere communication; they are able to synch their minds with those of other beings. The hisser alters the alpha-wave patterns of her thought processes to match those of her ally, then telepathically transmits that pattern to her ally's mind, amplifying the strength of the ally's own gifts. To use *mass mind*, the hisser must touch the chosen recipient and perform the Aid Another action using her DC 10 Concentration skill. If this check is successful, and the hisser remains in physical contact, the recipient gains either a +2 circumstance bonus on his next activation check for using a psionic power, or a +2 circumstance bonus on saves against the effects of a psionic special ability. At any one time, a character can be aided

by a number of hissers equal to his Wisdom bonus (minimum 1), all of whom must remain in physical contact with the character.

Reflective Scales (Ex, Mut): The scales of a hisser's skin are interwoven with organic optical fibers, making them iridescent and beautiful in normal light. Their real value, though, becomes apparent when the hisser is struck by a coherent energy-based attack. The scales diffuse and refract the energy, causing a brief sparkle around the hisser; who is considered to have 20 points of energy resistance against lasers, blasters and other coherent energy discharges (but not heat, fire or lightning). The energy beam is then reflected away from the hisser, back in the direction of the attacker. The attacker must make a DC 11 Reflex save to avoid being hit by the reflected attack; if hit, the character takes the same amount of damage that was negated by the hisser's energy resistance, up to 20 points of damage.

Sonic Blast (Ex, Psi): Hissers can create cones of concussive sonic energy as an attack action once every 1d4 rounds, by "slapping" the air with crude telekinetic force. The attack is a cone 30 feet long, emanating from the hisser, and all within the cone must make a DC 11 Fortitude save. Those who fail the save are deafened for 1d4 rounds, and take 2d6 points of sonic damage. Characters who succeed are still deafened but take no damage. While the sound is only damaging within the cone, it is audible for several hundred yards as a piercing crack.

Telepathy (Ex, Psi): Hissers have no spoken language but can speak telepathically as a free action, with a range of 100 feet. This speech is very similar to normal speech, and occurs at the same speed; however, telepathic communication transcends language, and hissers can mentally communicate with almost any sentient being. A hisser may choose to "broadcast," making his telepathic words audible to anyone in range (including enemies), or he may "narrowcast," sending his message to a single mind. There is no middle ground; he cannot send it to a group of selected minds, though he can, of course, send the same message to multiple individual minds in turn. Hissers cannot read the minds of other beings with this power, only send their own thoughts to other sentient beings.

HISSER CHARACTERS

Hisser characters have the following species traits.

— A hisser's base land speed is 25 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A hisser begins with 3 levels of aberration, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3.

— Species Skills: Hissers receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Concentration is always a class skill for hissers.

— Species Feats: Hissers receive only one feat at 1st level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels. Hissers often possess the Psionic Potential feat.

— Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A hisser is automatically proficient with simple weapons.

— +2 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: Fangs (2d4). Feats that apply to all melee attacks also affect attacks made with fangs, but feats that apply only to unarmed combat, such as Combat Martial Arts, do not affect attacks made with fangs.

— **Darkvision (Ex):** Hissers possess darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

— **Telepathy (Ex, Psi):** Hissers speak telepathically, with a basic range of 50 feet, plus an additional 50 feet for each point of the character's Wisdom bonus. This speech is very similar to normal speech, and occurs at the same speed; telepathic communication transcends language, and hissers can mentally communicate with almost any sentient being. A hisser may choose to "broadcast," making his telepathic words audible to anyone in range (including enemies), or he may "narrowcast," sending his message to a single mind. Hissers cannot read the minds of other beings with this power, only send their own thoughts.

— **Mass Mind (Ex, Psi):** Hissers can use the Aid Another action to improve another character's use of psionic powers. If the hisser touches a character and makes a DC 10 Concentration check, the recipient gains either a +2 circumstance bonus on his next activation check for using a psionic power, or +2 DC on saves against the effects of a psionic special ability.

— **Sonic Blast (Ex, Psi):** Once every 1d4 rounds, a hisser can create a cone of sonic energy as an attack action. The cone is 25 feet long, plus another 5 feet for every two character levels. Those within the cone are deafened for 1d4 rounds, and must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) or take 2d6 points of sonic damage.

— **Reflective Scales (Ex):** Hissers have 20 points of energy resistance against lasers, blasters and other attacks based on coherent energy, and these attacks are reflected back at the attacker. Whenever a hisser is struck by such an attack, the attacker must make a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) or be struck by the reflected blast and take the same amount of damage that was negated by the hisser's energy resistance.

— **No Languages:** Most hissers cannot speak or read any language, communicating only by telepathy. Hisser characters do not have a "default" language that they know for free, but characters can still learn languages by spending skill points.

— **No Bioware:** Hissers cannot use bioware, which is designed to work in conjunction only with human DNA. Any attempt by a hisser to use bioware fails, as does any attempt to implant a biotech device in a hisser character.

— Hisser characters may not have the Aristocrat, Boss, Priest or Scholar occupations, which don't exist in hisser society.

— Level Adjustment: +1

KAFKA

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice:	2d8+4 (13 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	25
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), jump 15 ft.
Defense:	Defense 16 (+1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+1/+3
Primary Attack:	Claw +3 melee (1d4+3)
Full Attack:	Claw +3 melee (1d4+3)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Resistance
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 6
Skills:	Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +3, Survival +5
Feats:	Dodge
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Kafka priests
Environment:	Any land, preferably uncomfortable
Organization:	Village (25–500)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature resembles an upright cockroach, 7 feet tall including its antennae. It spends most of its time bowed or hunched over.

DESCRIPTION

While most races on Gamma Terra trace the beginning of time to the Final Wars of the Ancients, the kafka know better. The knowledge of original sin weighs heavily on them. In the time before time, say the kafka histories, they were humans. For their abominable crimes, they were transformed into vaguely humanoid cockroaches. This original sin can only be extirpated by a lifetime of puritanical denial and sacrifice.

Most kakfa communities are dominated by a bizarre experiment in applied theology. Every action performed by any member of the community is recorded. When the next kafka child is born, it is judged to see how cockroach-like it is. If the child shows signs of humanity, the acts of the community are examined and ranked according to a complex mathematical formula built up over the years. By this, the kakfa priests can determine which sacrifices and acts of contrition are most effective and should be continued.

Kafka communities are dominated by their genetic auditor-priests, who rarely take kindly to anyone leaving the clan and ruining their carefully tracked sin accounts. An elite order of cockroach-monks protects the priests. Failed or exiled monks often leave their communities to go in search of a redemptive cure for their race.

COMBAT

Kafka don't fight well, and prefer to avoid combat. When combat is necessary, the primary aim is escape; often one kafka will sacrifice itself in diversionary maneuvers to buy time for any others in the area.

Resistance (Ex, Mut): Kafka are amazingly tough. They gain a +4 species bonus on all Fortitude saves, an additional +5 bonus to saves against massive damage, and 3 points of full-spectrum energy resistance.

Skills: Kafka have a +4 species bonus on Hide, Move Silently, and Survival checks. Kafka have a +8 species bonus on Jump checks, and may take 10 on Jump checks in dangerous situations.

KATKIN

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	5d10 (27 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	10
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	50 ft. (10 squares), climb 20 ft.
Defense:	14 (+3 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+5/–1
Primary Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d4–2) or by ranged weapon +8
Full Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d4–2) or by ranged weapon +8
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Sound mimicry, thought mimicry
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 7, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 11
Skills:	Balance +9, Climb +6, Hide +8, Jump +8, Move Silently +6, Survival +3
Feats:	Run, Skill Focus: Balance
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Family
Environment:	Environment type
Organization:	Solitary or family group (2–8)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	2–7 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature is a large cat, three to four times the size of a domestic house cat, with paws developed into fine hands.

DESCRIPTION

"In the last days they held us. Made us fetch. Made us serve. But they also gave us the one thing we never had. Thumbs. And with that, liberation."

— Katkin oral tradition

Many of the first uses for cheap genetic manipulation were medical. It proved easier to prevent impending problems than to cure existing ones, leaving a population of people continuing to suffer from ailments that had been wiped out. These unfortunates continued to depend on older remedies and means of relief. For the blind and deaf, that often meant companion animals. Experiments in breeding better companions met with particularly good results from domestic felines. The experiments were largely successful from a physiological standpoint, but the traditionally independent mindset of the allegedly domestic cat was far more difficult to work with. In time the right combination of bits was switched into place, creating a more manageable companion, but not so much that the katkin lost the personality or independence of their parentage.

When the time came that the katkin were no longer necessary, that all the conditions they had been created to compensate for were cured, the katkin had no real place in the world. While many were cared for to the end of their lives by their "owners," many others found themselves disposed of. They were bright enough to recognize a euphemism for euthanasia and escaped to the streets and into the revitalized parklands. In time their populations grew. Their enhancements at the hands of their creators enabled them to survive and thrive.

Katkin are remarkably similar to their forebears, house cats. They are larger and bulkier, usually twice the size of their ancestors and sometimes three or four times the typical range for domestic cats. Their forepaws have been enhanced, made larger and more manipulative, especially with the addition of

an opposable thumb. This allows them the use of small tools, weapons and simply manipulated such as doorknobs. They are still gifted with their sharp retractable claws, aiding them in climbing and combat. Like their ancestors, their coats are short or long, patterned in solids, stripes or calicos in a broad range of coloration, including some not found in their domesticated past.

Katkin live in small family enclaves among the treetops, within range of sound but out of sight from their nearest neighboring katkin. They are reclusive by choice, keeping to their summer homes in the treetops and winter dens to keep their hardwired fondness for humans in check. Those unfortunate enough to live near pure-strain humans find themselves suddenly employed whether they wished it or not. This natural fondness for humans causes less predictable reactions with other sentients, forcing katkin to limit contact with outsiders to occasional traders and old friends.

Hunting is done in pairs, with those kittens old enough to participating flushing prey out of the underbrush.

COMBAT

In hostile situations, the katkin rely on simple weapons and their natural gifts. Bows, knives, darts and spears are most often used in conjunction with their formidable claws. Those katkin lucky enough to possess artifact weapons are not shy in using them when it is prudent. As their light frames discourage the use of heavier weapons, particularly those with any recoil, they stick to simpler weapons and their own resources when hunting. Such equipment is instead jury-rigged into a variety of hidden mountings about the katkin's lair.

When defending their homes and families, katkin prefer to lead the aggressors away using tricks, taunts and their sound imitation ability. Once a safe distance away they will attack from above, unleashing arrows and darts, and ultimately, clawed death from above. This is their custom in all violence — weaken from a distance and complete the kill with their own claws.

Sound Mimicry (Ex, Mut): This mutation is not just a vocal alteration; it improves the katkin's hearing well beyond the normally audible, up to high frequency sounds, such as sonar. With this they may repeat back any sounds, words or even sonic attacks they have heard in the past day, but only in the exact sounds heard. The katkin cannot, for example, attempt to use a voice passcode of a guard encountered earlier in the day unless the passcode was heard. The katkin cannot interpret the sounds, only repeat them. Katkin are fond of using imitating the calls, chirps and grunts of common prey animals to both lead hunters astray or lull prey into false security. This mutation also gives the katkin some small protection from sonic attacks in the form of 5 points of sonic resistance.

Thought Mimicry (Psi): Katkin are able to similarly memorize psionic effects. Any broadcast thought, emotion or attack may be remembered for the course of the next day and similarly broadcast back out. Unlike sound mimicry, this ability does not shield the katkin from the damaging effects of a mental attack. Katkin favor no particular strategy in the use of this ability beyond the simple contrariness of attacking a foe with its own abilities.

Skills: Katkin have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

MENARL

Size/Type:	Huge Aberration
Hit Dice:	8d8+40 (76 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	23
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	15 ft. (3 squares), swim 40 ft.
Defense:	Defense 16 (+8 natural, –2 size), touch 8, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+6/+20
Primary Attack:	Slam +10 melee (1d6+6)
Full Attack:	5 slams +10 melee (1d6+6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	15 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Aquatic, constrict, frenzy
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 23, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12
Skills:	Craft (mechanical) +3, Hide –5*, Listen +5, Move Silently +2, Navigate +4, Spot +5, Survival +3, Swim +14
Feats:	Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Damage Threshold, Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any temperate or tropical fresh water
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	8
Advancement:	9–12 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature is a 30-foot-long water snake with ten or more massive, human-like arms sprouting from its torso. The head has a cobra's hood wrapped around an elongated skull.

DESCRIPTION

Born from synergistic mutation and random contamination of water snake DNA with human genome material, menarls are the kings of the swamps and marshes of the Gamma World. Their massive bodies are slow but incredibly strong, and menarls can work each of their human arms with full dexterity, even using tools and weapons with the proper training. Their scaly hides can absorb immense amounts of punishment, and their minds are capable of subtlety and strategy.

Fortunately for perhaps the entire world, menarls are a largely peaceful and easygoing race. They are aggressive when defending their territory from attackers, but friendly towards strangers until provoked. Menarls mostly concern themselves with hunting for food to satisfy their large appetites, but they also have a taste for social interaction and news about the rest of the world. Some even hire themselves out as guards or mercenaries for the novelty of the work (and a constant supply of food). Humans who become used to the easygoing nature of the menarl are in for a rude shock when the creature sees a bird, though, or even something that *reminds* it of a bird. The sight of a bird sends a menarl into a mindless frenzy of destruction, during which it will rip apart anything and anyone in its path — and while it may apologize profusely afterwards, that's little comfort to those killed or ruined by its rampage.

Menarls aren't a particularly social race; they rarely interact with each other, except during their annual mating season. If two menarls live in close proximity, they will keep a wide berth, coming together only when strictly necessary. Menarls are much more likely to interact with humans and mutant humanoids, looking for trading opportunities or simply intellectual and social stimulation. A menarl living near a human community is likely to demand a certain amount of

tribute, in the form of food, but will return the favor by lending his strength to the community's defense.

COMBAT

The menarl prefers not to fight, even when the odds are in its favor. When it must, it uses its bulk to overwhelm targets and constriction to render them crushed and ready for eating.

Aquatic (Ex): Menarls cannot breathe water, but can hold their breath for up to 30 minutes while submerged before making Constitution checks. *Menarls gain a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks when submerged.

Constrict (Ex): If a menarl successfully grapples an opponent, it can then automatically constrict that opponent for 1d6+9 points of bludgeoning damage each round while the grapple is maintained. The menarl loses the use of a pair of arms (1 slam attack) for each foe it grapples.

Frenzy (Ex, Mut): The sight of a bird, or any creature with feathers or avian features, triggers an unavoidable frenzy in a menarl, an exaggerated hunting instinct that it cannot control. The menarl's body is flooded with adrenaline, giving it +2 Strength, +10 feet of movement, and a +2 bonus on all saves. While in the grip of the frenzy, the menarl must attack any bird it sees; it cannot use weapons in this state, communicate with allies or do anything other than mindlessly attack. If characters attempt to interfere, or simply get too close, the menarl will attack them until they get out of the way. When all birds in its vicinity are dead, the menarl's frenzy ebbs, leaving it shaken (–2 on attack rolls, saving throws and skill checks) for 10 minutes.

Skills: Menarls have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

NOCTATE

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 1d8 (4 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 11
Initiative: +3
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 15 ft.
Defense: Defense 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/+3
Primary Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d3+3)
Full Attack: Claw +3 melee (1d3+3)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Darkvision 120 ft., light sensitive, structural adjustment
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +3
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 9
Skills: Climb +10, Craft (structural) +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Repair +4
Feats: Stealthy
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Clan
Environment: Any underground with ruins
Organization: Solitary or village-like community (50–500)
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is humanoid in shape, with black, rubbery skin; long sinuous fingers and toes; and an eerie, featureless face.

DESCRIPTION

There are many deep, dark places in the world. Beneath the vast ruined metropolises and in the hidden sewers and bunkers is a land of shadows, of dripping moisture and flickering artificial light. The noctates dwell here. The noctates' bones are hollow and their synthetic muscles are extremely strong. These traits allow the noctates to move with astonishing speed and agility through the underground tunnels.

Noctates were never meant to live outside the under-realms. Natural light burns their skin and blinds them almost instantly. Despite this handicap, many noctates flee the tunnels for the surface. In their high, whispery voices, they speak of living machines and other, worse nightmares that drove them out. These noctates travel by night, searching for light-tight shelters in which to wait out the sun.

The vast underground vaults of the Ancients are strange, foreign territory to most people, but are the ancestral homes of the noctates. Alliances between dispossessed noctate guides and brave, heavily-armed treasure hunters are common. Communities with sewers or other large, dark structures often find themselves unwitting hosts to an underclass of noctates.

They were created to be servants and technicians, so the noctates often trade with human communities. They are very clannish and secretive, nervously bartering for thick tarpaulins or the use of sheds in exchange for treasures from the ruins or their technical services. Of all the races created by humanity, the noctates are the humblest, the most sane, and perhaps the closest to human. However, their bizarre appearance and nocturnal habits make many communities distrust the noctates. Many disasters are blamed on horrors that the dark folk brought with them from the forbidden chambers.

COMBAT

Noctates prefer not to fight, and use their special abilities to escape an impending fight whenever possible.

Darkvision (Ex): Noctates can see perfectly in the dark to a range of 120 feet.

Light-Sensitive (Ex): Noctates suffer a –6 circumstance penalty on all rolls in direct sunlight, and take 1d6 points of damage per round. Shade or protection can reduce this handicap to a –2 penalty and 1d2 points of damage per round. Most artificial light has no adverse effect on noctates, although lights that mimic the properties of sunlight can hurt them.

Structural Adjustment (Ex, Mut): Noctates can alter their muscular density and arrangement, and the shape of their bones, to make themselves better suited for a task. By subtracting 2 points from any of Strength, Constitution or Dexterity, the noctate can add 1 point to a different physical ability, to a maximum of 19. For example, a noctate could take 2 points from Dexterity to add 1 to Strength. The noctate's abilities return to their normal levels after a night's rest.

Skills: Noctates have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

NUANDERTHAL

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	4d8+12 (30 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	12 (+2 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+4/+10
Primary Attack:	Club +10 melee (1d6+6)
Full Attack:	Club +10 melee (1d6+6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Fast healing 1/3, rage, tribal mind
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 22, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 7, 13, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +3, Intimidate +4, Listen +2, Spot +2, Survival +4
Feats:	Brawl, Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Tribe
Environment:	Any land with adequate hunting
Organization:	Tribe (4–40)
Challenge Rating:	4
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature is the same size as a human being, but more massively muscled and somewhat heavier.

DESCRIPTION

Humanity failed. *Homo sapiens* had its chance, and it blew it and the rest of the world up. Some mutant animals claim that Gamma Terra is their inheritance, while the scattered survivors of humanity refuse to give up the idea that they rule the world.

Some scientists and idealists believe that another branch of humanity should take over. Neanderthal man died off thousands of years before the Final Wars, but a few preserved corpses were dug out of glaciers and bogs. Enough genetic material was salvaged for the supreme science of the Ancients to clone and revivify the Nuanderthal race. They gave the resurrected hominids the benefits of structural enhancement and quickened healing, then set them free to tame a new world.

The nuanderthals mostly continue with the hunter-gatherer lifestyle of their genetic precursors, a lifestyle that died out tens of thousands of years ago. The tribes make cave paintings in broken basements and take down game with aluminum spears. Their inhuman strength and ferocity allow them to survive in the face of the horrific legacies of the Final Wars, while their psychic links ensure tribal cohesion even in times of famine.

Nuanderthals are very similar to humans, and compete for many of the same resources. Negotiation with the nuanderthal's tribal mind is a better option than wiping the nuandethals out, as the putative heirs to humanity often have robot guardians watching over them.

Tribes of these hardy, enhanced cavemen now roam Gamma Terra. Despite their near-human intelligence, individual nuanderthals are completely focused on the here and now, on food and warmth and tribe. Unlike its individual members, the nuanderthal tribal mind can grasp abstract concepts, such as "future" or "friendship." To translate these into ideas that the nuanderthals can grasp, the gestalt uses similar but more concrete terms. Alarmingly for potential allies of the nuanderthals, the closest cognate to "friend" is

"mate." "Negotiate with a nuanderthal" has replaced the meaningless phrase "lie back and think of England" in neighboring communities.

COMBAT

When threatened, nuanderthals break into fits of intense anger, during which they smash opponents with terrible, strong blows from their scrap metal or bone clubs. They use simple ambush tactics, but never any technologically advanced weapons. If a tribe is threatened, the nuanderthals form a tribal mind and formulate a complex survival strategy to deal with the problem.

Fast Healing (Ex, Mut): Nuanderthals heal 1 hit point every 3 rounds.

Rage (Ex): Once per day, a nuanderthal can enter into a fearsome rage. While raging, gains a +4 bonus to Constitution and Strength and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves. The bonus to Constitution gives the nuanderthal 2 temporary hit points per Hit Die. The rage lasts a number of rounds equal to 3 + the nuanderthal's enhanced Constitution modifier. After raging, the nuanderthal is fatigued for a number of rounds equal to the duration of the rage.

Tribal Mind (Ex, Mut, Psi): Nuanderthals can enter a trance and project their consciousnesses into a gestalt mind. This tribal mind has an Intelligence equal to the number of minds in it, up to a maximum Intelligence of 25, and a Wisdom and Charisma equal to the highest Wisdom and Charisma scores found among the group. The tribal mind has access to any skill possessed by any member, and may also have its own skills (the mind may have a Craft skill, for example, that is not understood by any group member).

OBB

Size/Type: Small Aberration
Hit Dice: 8d8+8 (44 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 13
Initiative: +7
Speed: Fly 40 ft. (perfect) (8 squares)
Defense: Defense 22 (+7 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size), touch 18, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+0
Primary Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d6–2)
Full Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d6–2)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Energy immunity, radioactive vision
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +6
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 24, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18
Skills: Hide +22, Intimidate +15, Listen +15, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +15, Spot +15
Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary or small band (2–6)
Challenge Rating: 8
Advancement: 9–12 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature resembles a floating eyeball 2 feet across, supported by tattered black wings.

DESCRIPTION

The obb is a mutated, fungus-based creature with a single, gelatinous, photosensitive "eye-spot" on the front. A pair of tattered black flaps grow from its bat-like wings, but they seem to used more for stabilization than propulsion. Bulbous gas bladders just beneath the obb's wrinkled, black skin give it the ability to float through the air, and it uses a combination of telekinesis and wing flaps to move. In flight, the obb is as swift and agile as a hawk. (On the ground, it is only slightly more agile than a rock).

Scholars theorize that the obb is a product of an attempt to grow replacement brain tissue using fungi, and certainly the central mass of the obb does resemble a rather blackened and burnt lump of gray matter. This might explain the obb's intelligence and bizarre psyche, although its other abilities are presumably the product of random infection by nanotech or possibly genetic fusion with some variety of bat.

Logic, emotion and instinct are all alien things to the obb, and its decision-making appears to be based on concepts that are incomprehensible to non-obb. The singular is used above, despite the fact that there are many obb creatures, because each obb insists that it is the only obb. It may be that the creatures share a single group mind, or that their memories and intelligence are genetically inherited by each obb generation. The obb has no spoken or written language (and, for that matter, no organs suited for such activities), so the only communication has been through fleeting telepathic contacts.

The obb plants spores in the bodies of those it kills. Most of these spores rapidly grow into small fungi that soon burst, sending a shower of odd, insect-shaped fungi into the air. These fungi land on the obb's surface and are absorbed into it; this baroque mechanism is how the obb derives nourishment. The remainder of the planted spores take several hours longer to sprout, but within a day, 1d6 young obb creatures emerge from the corpse and fly out. Like all obb entities, these obb studiously ignore each other, appearing to either not perceive or not care about the presence of other obb.

COMBAT

The obb's eye constantly emits an invisible torrent of deadly gamma radiation; this is the creature's primary method of attack. It drops silently from the sky and blasts its prey, and only resorts to using its barbed wing talons when finishing off an already irradiated foe.

Energy Immunity (Ex, Mut, Psi): Most energy weapons fired at an obb are simply absorbed into the creature without ill effect, their energy converted to radiation and channeled back out through the central eye. The obb is immune to radiation, lasers, heat, cold and electricity.

Radioactive Vision (Ex, Mut): The huge eye of the obb emits strong radiation in a 60-foot cone. Anything within the cone takes 1d6 points of radiation damage (Fortitude save against DC 15 for half damage). If the obb remains still and concentrates, it can increase the damage in the cone by an additional 1 point of radiation damage for each round of concentration, to a maximum of +10. Anyone who suffers radiation damage from this attack must make Fortitude saves against a strong mutagen and strong radiation poisoning source (See **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation* and Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "Types of Environment," *Radiation Poisoning*).

PETROTTER

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	4d10 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	10
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), swim 40 ft.
Defense:	14 (+3 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+4/–2
Primary Attack:	Claw +8 melee (1d6–2)
Full Attack:	2 claws +8 melee (1d6–2), bite +3 melee (1d4 –2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Oil sense
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 7, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 4, Cha 15
Skills:	Survival +4*, Swim +6
Feats:	Track, Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any coastal
Organization:	Solitary or pack (2–6)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	None
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature resembles a very large but otherwise normal otter.

DESCRIPTION

In efforts to preserve otters from the ever-present threat of oil spills, scientists introduced a family of bacteria strains into wild populations. These strains populated the bloodstream, digestive tract, liver and hair follicles. Each was designed to process oil that it came in contact with. In order to keep the animal from dying of shock in extreme cases, the bacteria produced a mild euphoric to calm the otter long enough for the majority of the oil to either be cleaned off or digested.

The euphoric effect of this craving proved stronger than the designers intended. It's uncertain if this was a design flaw or an extended mutation of the bacteria or the otter. Petrotters, now the size of large dogs, actively seek out oil products, with responses ranging from "Candy!" to "I need my fix!" Petrotters still travel in small groups, though they've adapted to live just as happily in virtually any body of water of moderate size. They are generally the same playful, inquisitive creatures they've been for centuries — until they smell oil. If the source is in the possession of sentients, the otters stick to the simple tactic of being cute in hopes of getting that delicious, oily treat. If cuteness fails they'll attempt theft, carrying off any containers they can. Once the oil lust kicks in, they lose patience, going straight for the source until they drink themselves into euphoria or have been chased off with enough firepower to discourage them.

The oil-processing bacteria can be harvested by a particularly skilled physician. The refined serum of this extract is prized both as a euphoric and a form of criminal punishment. A DC 18 Craft (pharmaceuticals) check is required to successfully remove and process the bacteria from the petrotter's body.

COMBAT

The petrotter scavenges in tidal areas for easy prey, and usually hunts only when it'd be fun. Most petrotters seem to enjoy elaborate hunting games, stalking their prey and then pouncing on it triumphantly.

Oil Sense (Mu): A petrotter can, literally, smell oil. Whether it's buried cans of 10W30, the oily smoke of an old tractor or an improvised oil well, if it's close enough, they can find it. *Petrotters receive a +15 bonus on all Survival checks that involve tracking an oil source.

Skills: Petrotters have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

PINETO

Size/Type:	Large Mutant Plant
Hit Dice:	3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	–1
Speed:	50 ft. (10 squares)
Defense:	12 (–1 Dex, +4 natural, –1 size), touch 8, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+2/+8
Primary Attack:	Hoof +3 melee (1d8+3)
Full Attack:	2 hooves +3 melee (1d8+3)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	—
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills:	Listen +3, Spot +3
Feats:	Endurance, Run
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Deserts
Organization:	Solitary or herd (4–20)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	4–6 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature has the general size and shape of a horse, but is obviously a plant, with wood providing the skeleton, and foliage instead of hide and hair.

DESCRIPTION

The foal-rains come more rarely now. In seasons past, every summer would bring the strange, bitter rains to the desert. As the waters receded, whole fields of plants — usually cacti, but sometimes trees or even, in bad years, the crops — would sprout the thick, spiny, stumpy legs and shaggy, horse-head root clumps of the pineto. The plants would uproot themselves at harvest time, and canter off into the wilderness.

Pinetos are mutated mobile plants, vaguely similar in size, shape and function to a horse. Their trunk-bodies are horizontal, with a head made of roots, leaves and tendrils at one end, and a leafy tail at the other. The pineto drinks by dipping its head-roots into water, eats by burying its limbs in the soil every few hours, and swats greenflies and grubs from its wooden flanks with its tail-leaves.

Pinetos are shy, skittish creatures whose first reaction is to flee from any threat. They can be captured, either by lassoing the creatures as they gallop and then hog-tying them, or by sneaking up when the pinetos are rooted and tying a loop around the top of the root-clump. If the root-clump is choked off, the pineto cannot drink, and can be controlled by tightening or loosening the loop. Tamed pinetos are used as riding animals and beasts of burden. Pineto riders use a sharp goad jammed into the base of the root-clump to guide their beasts. "Riding a pineto bare-back" is a synonym for "deeply painful experience," as the creatures are covered with small thorns and spines (1 point of damage per round is inflicted on anyone riding without a heavy saddle). Pinetos can be trained to fight, but their vegetable brains learn slowly (allHandle Animal checks involving pinetos suffer a +5 increase in DC).

Pinetos are slightly stronger and tougher than a horse, but much more difficult to ride and train. In the wild, they are found in herds — or groves — of 4 to 20 plants. Pinetos do not reproduce naturally, but the particular mutagen that creates them is spread into the water wherever the pinetos drink.

COMBAT

Pinetos prefer to run rather than fight. When cornered, they lash out with their fore-branches, trying to cripple their assailants so they can escape.

PODOG

Size/Type:	Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	6d10+18 (51 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	60 ft. (12 squares), swim 10 ft.
Defense:	12 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+6/+14
Primary Attack:	Bite +9 melee (1d8+4) or claw +9 melee (1d6+4)
Full Attack:	Bite +9 melee (1d8+4), 2 claws +4 melee (1d6+4)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Dual brain, scent, sound mimicry
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11
Skills:	Intimidate +5, Jump +5, Listen +4, Spot +4, Survival +4, Swim +12
Feats:	Confident, Dodge, Track
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Pack
Environment:	Any land near people
Organization:	Solitary or pack (2–6)
Challenge Rating:	4
Advancement:	6–10 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature has the general look of a dog, but it's as big as a pony, with a sharp and intelligent gaze.

DESCRIPTION

"In the beginning, there was Daddy's Little Girl. She wanted a pony. Daddy wanted a guard dog, to protect his darling. From these desires came Princess, the Dam who bore us all."

— Podog pup's tale

As the story tells, Princess was created by a paranoid father wishing to protect his spoiled little girl from further kidnapping attempts. Having enough illicit money to buy whatever he desired, Princess was what he desired. The finest minds he could hire grafted size, protectiveness, and increased intelligence onto the sturdy frame of the mastiff, producing the first "podog," as Daddy's Little Girl dubbed them. A mate soon joined her, and in time, the first litter. The Wars began shortly after, during the litter's formative years. As the pups grew, so did dissention. Half the litter favored escape, as these humans clearly were unworthy companions as evidenced by their disregard for their own lives and those of others. The remainder sided with Princess, insisting that loyalty to their human was paramount. In any case escape was impossible: They lived as virtual prisoners in their human's palatial estate… until the Warbots knocked the gates down.

In the years that followed, environmental hazards, stray biologicals and nanounits further changed the species, producing the modern podog. Standing roughly 4 feet tall, each is the size of a small horse. Their short coats are typically deep bay, chocolate or black, with tan or chocolate accents on the muzzle and face; those with the double brain mutation are typically solid black.

Podog tribes revolve around extended packs holding loyalty along the maternal lines. Each pack carries with it a rich oral history of its lineage back to the original dam, Princess. This alone dictates the pack's behavior towards humans, particularly pure-strain humans. Those siding with Princess'

escaping children take to the wild, living away from humanoid sentients, treating all as potential enemies. Those who chose to live among the humans until the Wars still live in or near larger settlements, mingling, working and trading with their neighbors. They are not tool users, but understand basic mechanisms and simple tools, such as latches, doorknobs and levers.

The members of well-integrated podog tribes in larger communities sometimes allow a trusted friend to use them as mounts, primarily for guarding and herding duties. It is not a trust given lightly. Wild-tribe podogs will not make such allowances, resisting even to death attempts to force a rider onto their backs.

Podogs are clever pack hunters, using their sound imitation ability to drive prey towards a corral or ambush by other pack mates. Against stronger foes they are fond of hit and run tactics, using quick strikes to wear down those posing a more serious threat to the pack.

COMBAT

Podogs favor their powerful bite in combat, charging the victim and leaping for the throat; they will try to pin the victim down until either the throat is ripped out or reinforcements arrive. Podogs are pack animals and will fight as such. Those foolish enough to attack one podog must fight the whole pack. In addition to the expected barking and howling at their victims, podogs use their sound mimicry power to mimic the commands, cries or even the sonic attacks of their victims. Using sonic attacks against podogs is especially foolish; a single use by an attacker can result in a dozen similar attacks directed back at him.

Dual Brain (Ex, Mut): About one in a hundred podogs has the unusual dual brain mutation. An extra brain is located in a thick wrapper over the first brain, taking up minimal additional space in the cranium and enabling quick communication between the two brains. This additional brain sometimes results in additional mental mutations, typically of a defensive nature. While both brains have the same mental ability scores, the podog's Intelligence is boosted by +2 to represent the two brains working together. When a mental attackis directed against the podog, the GM decides which of the two brains is attacked randomly.

Sound Mimicry (Ex, Mut): This mutation is not just a vocal alteration; it improves the podog's hearing well beyond the normally audible, up to high frequency sounds, such as sonar. With this they may repeat back any sounds, words or even sonic attacks they have heard in the past day, but only in the exact sounds heard. The podog cannot, for example, attempt to use a voice passcode of a guard encountered earlier in the day unless the passcode was heard. The podog cannot interpret the sounds, only repeat them. Podog are fond of using imitating the calls, chirps and grunts of common prey animals to both lead hunters astray or lull prey into false security. This mutation also gives the podog some small protection from sonic attacks in the form of 5 points of sonic resistance.

Many city packs have a daily gathering where they exchange sounds they have heard in past, keeping it within the packs aural memory, allowing the near perpetual use of a given animal call or weapon. Nothing drives off attackers quite like the sound of a gatling laser warming up.

Skills: Podogs have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

SATHPERNERT'S RATS

Size/Type:	Small Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	1/2d10+2 (3 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	15
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 10 ft., climb 15 ft.
Defense:	14 (+3 Dex, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+1/–3
Primary Attack:	Bite +2 melee (1d4)
Full Attack:	Bite +2 melee (1d4)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Electric sense, enhanced senses, scent
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 3
Skills:	Climb +8, Hide +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +3, Search +10, Spot +10, Survival +4
Feats:	Dodge, Track[B]
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any with ruins
Organization:	Solitary or pack (2–10)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Advancement:	1–3 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature is a typical-looking rat, but much larger than usual.

DESCRIPTION

Rubble and ruins are claimed as homes by the Sathpernert's rats. They were made for urban rescue, to crawl through the collapsed remains of buildings and find survivors. The rats were made smarter, faster, bigger and stronger to help them in this task. As a crowning touch, they were given two bony plates just behind their whiskers. These plates are sensitive to electrical discharges — so sensitive, in fact, that the rats could detect the tiny electrical shifts caused by muscle contractions through yards of rubble.

Now the whole world is a big collapsed ruin, but the rats are not interested in rescuing anyone. Fiercely territorial, the rats have infested many ruins and wiped them clear of life. Robots and other complex electrical devices confuse the rats, as their electrical sense can detect but not predict the robot's motions. Rats within 15 feet of a robot or other powerful electrical device are confused, suffering a –2 penalty on all rolls. The rats also cannot use their electric sense ability against robots.

Sathpernert's rats are especially persistent vermin. Their electrical sense makes a mockery of most conventional hunting efforts. Ranged weapons do little good against the rats in the walls. Robotic exterminators are the best option, but rarely an available one.

Taming Sathpernert's rats is very difficult (the DC of all Handle Animal checks is increased by +10). If successful, though, the rats make excellent guard animals.

COMBAT

Sathpernert's rats use their electrical sense to anticipate opponents' actions, so that they can dodge effectively and then counter-attack while opponents are off-guard. They also attack in pairs and trios whenever possible for the benefits of flanking.

Electric sense (Ex, Mut): Sathpernert's rats can sense the electrical activity in muscles. They gain a +10 insight bonus to their Defense against any living attackers within 15 feet. They effectively have blindsight with a range of 60 feet. The rats

can also perceive how living opponents intend to dodge their attacks; opponents do not receive their Dexterity bonus to Defense.

Enhanced Senses (Ex, Mut): Sathpernert's rats have a +10 species bonus on Listen, Spot and Search checks.

SERF

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice:	3d8+3 (16 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	13 (+3 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/+6
Primary Attack:	Claw +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison) or by weapon
Full Attack:	Claw +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison) or by weapon
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Density control, life drain, mental blast, photokinesis, poison
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12
Skills:	Concentration +3, Craft (mechanical) +2, Hide +2, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Spot +2, Survival +2
Feats:	Endurance, Great Fortitude, Simple Weapon Proficiency
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Brigade
Environment:	Environment type
Organization:	Brigades (8–50)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+3

The creature is basically human, but has armored plates covering vital areas, and long claws.

DESCRIPTION

Before the Final Wars, there were plenty of Not-So-Final Wars, skirmishes and campaigns waged around the world of the Ancients. Many nations — not to mention corporations, religions and disgruntled office workers — devoted money and resources to developing genetically advanced combatants who could give their masters an edge on the world's battlefields. Some inventors created horrors like the ravishers or death machines, but others aimed for subtlety, looking to design warriors that could be bred in large numbers, that relied on tactics rather than devastating weapons, and that could be controlled easily by their creators. The serfs were one such race of super-soldiers, but their unfortunate makers found that their warrior race had little interest in being controlled by anyone.

Physically, serfs look remarkably human, at least compared to a sleeth or hisser. Their most prominent feature is a partial exoskeleton, protecting their spines and skulls with slabs of smooth, enamel-coated bone. Their fingernails are made from the same material, forming wickedly sharp claws an inch long on both hands. Serfs are powerfully muscled and built, their gray skin and crude features unattractive to human eyes; their

own eyes are a deep blue-black, without pupil or iris. When using their impressive array of psionic powers, those eyes grow red, and they slowly bleed after a serf is forced to use its terrible life drain ability.

Serfs are aggressive and disciplined; they rebelled against external control before the Final Wars, and have survived to the present day through *internal* control. Serfs live in "brigades," traveling communities of up to 50 members, arranged and structured in a semi-military fashion. Serf children are trained to fight as soon as they can walk, and they learn to use and repair weapons as well as carts and wagons. Serfs even dress in clothes that resemble the military uniforms of old. Serfs deserve their reputation as a dangerous race, but they're no more evil than humanity. They rarely attack without provocation, welcome trade with humans and other races, and will happily embrace political solutions to problems. After all, serfs were not created to start wars. They were created to *win* wars. And any human community foolish enough to anger even a single serf will find that out the hard way.

Serf brigades are semi-nomadic, moving in a pattern through their territory and leaving caches of supplies to be collected later in their travel cycle; patrols of several armed warriors move ahead of the brigade to scout and secure their passage. Brigades are political entities, and may have treaties or rivalries with other serf groups. Every few years, serf brigades congregate into a festival that lasts several months. During the festival, brigades trade and conduct business, marriages are arranged, gladiatorial battles are fought, leaders are elected, and plans are made for the future. Plans that, one day, will lead to the establishment of a permanent serf nation — a nation that will rule the Gamma World with a fair but unyielding hand.

COMBAT

Serfs fight in disciplined formations, breaking up opponents into manageable groups. They operate in squads so that some can perform a life drain and some can make conventional or psionic attacks.

Density Control (Ex, Psi): This unusual ability is a form of telekinesis, which briefly creates virtual particles throughout the body of a living being. While harmless, these particles "clog" the molecules of the being's body, making it temporarily denser and much slower. Increasing an opponent's density is an attack action, which can affect any living creature within 30 feet; the target can negate the effect with a DC 12 Reflex save. If the save fails, the creature is slowed; it may only make a single attack or move action each round, but not both (nor may it take a full-round action). Slowed creatures also suffer a –2 penalty to Defense and on melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls and Reflex saves, and may only jump half as far as normal. The effects of the power last for 1d6 rounds, after which the being returns to normal. A serf can use its density control power 4 times per day.

Life Drain (Ex, Psi): This terrible power is the serfs' most feared ability — the power to disable a group of enemies with a thought. When a serf uses this power as a full-round action, a small, specialized organ in its brain dies, telepathically projecting a "genetic shutdown" signal as it hemorrhages. That signal affects every living thing within 30 feet, including plants and beings immune to massive damage (constructs are not affected). Affected creatures must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be reduced to –1 hit points, just as if they had failed a massive damage save (affected creatures are stable and do not continue to lose hit points). Biotech devices are also affected by the power; each graft in the area must make a Fortitude save (using the save bonus of its user) or be destroyed (biotech implants suffer the same effects as their users). Even microorganisms are affected; the site where the power was used becomes a barren, lifeless zone where nothing grows again. The serf using the power is *not* immune to its effects, and must also make a Fortitude save to avoid being disabled. The psionic organ takes 1 month to re-grow, after which time the life drain power can be used again; if the serf is interrupted by an attack (and fails his Concentration check) before the power takes effect, the organ still dies and the power cannot be used again until it re-grows.

Mental Blast (Ex, Psi): Serfs can generate a blast of telepathic energy as an attack action, projecting a wave of searing pain into the mind of a target within 30 feet. The target must make a DC 12 Will save or take 3d6 points of damage and be stunned for 1 round.

Photokinesis (Ex, Psi): Serfs can telekinetically bend and control light in a crude fashion. They cannot create illusions or weave images from light, but they can bend it around themselves to become temporarily invisible, or blind opponents with an intense blast of light. Becoming invisible is a move action, which gives the serf a +40 bonus on Hide checks if stationary or a +20 bonus if moving; the effect instantly ends if the serf

attacks an opponent, and fades naturally after 10 rounds. Blinding opponents is an attack action that affects every creature within 20 feet; affected creatures must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. A serf can use photokinesis 4 times per day.

Poison (Ex, Mut): Serfs have small poison glands located at the base of their claws, which produce a venom based on that of the blue-ringed octopus. The serf may choose not to inflict this poison damage. Injury, DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d3 temporary Con.

SERF CHARACTERS

Serf characters have the following species traits.

— +2 Strength, –2 Wisdom.

— A serf's base land speed is 30 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A serf begins with 3 levels of mutant humanoid, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1.

— Species Skills: Serfs receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Knowledge (tactics) is always a class skill for serfs.

— Species Feats: Serfs receive only one feat at 1st level, and do not receive a feat at third level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels.

— +3 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: Claws (1d4). Feats that apply to all melee attacks also affect attacks made with claws, but feats that apply only to unarmed combat, such as Combat Martial Arts, do not affect attacks made with claws.

— **Poison (Ex):** Any time a serf damages a target with a claw attack, she can choose to add her poison damage to the attack. Serf poison inflicts 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage. The DC of the Fortitude save to resist this poison is (10 + 1/2 the character's level + Con modifier).

— **Density Control (Ex, Psi):** A serf can slow a target within 30 feet as an attack action; the target resists this with a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier). Slowed characters may only make a single attack or move action each round, but not both; they also suffer a –2 penalty to Defense, and –2 on melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls and Reflex saves, and may only jump half as far as normal. The effects of the power last for 1d6 rounds, and it can be used (3 + Cha bonus) times per day.

— **Life Drain (Ex, Psi):** A serf can create a disabling field once a month that affects every living thing (including the serf himself) within 30 feet. Manifesting the life drain power is a full-round action that attracts attacks of opportunity. All creatures affected must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) or be reduced to –1 hit points (and automatically stabilize). Biotech devices and non-construct creatures that are otherwise immune to the effects of massive damage are also affected.

— **Mental Blast (Ex, Psi):** Serfs can blast an opponent within 30 feet with telepathic energy as an attack action. The target must make a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) or take 3d6 points of damage and be stunned for 1 round.

— **Photokinesis (Ex, Psi):** A serf can become invisible or blind an opponent with a burst of light. Becoming invisible is a move action which gives the serf a +40 bonus on Hide checks if stationary or a +20 bonus if moving; the effect instantly ends if the serf attacks an opponent, and fades naturally after 10 rounds. Blinding opponents is an attack action that affects every other creature within 20 feet; affected creatures must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. A serf can use photokinesis up to (3 + Cha bonus) times per day.

— **No Bioware:** Serfs cannot use bioware, which is designed to work in conjunction only with human DNA. Any attempt by a serf to use bioware fails, as does any attempt to implant a biotech device in a serf character.

— **Bad Reputation:** Serfs have a (somewhat deserved) reputation as being aggressive and dangerous. Most NPCs will have an unfriendly attitude towards serf characters, at least until the character does something to change that attitude.

— Serf characters may not have the Aristocrat, Artist or Priest occupations.

— Level Adjustment: +3

SHELL TOAD

Size/Type:	Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	8d10+24 (68 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	20
Initiative:	+5
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), jump 30 ft.
Defense:	10 (+1 Dex, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 9
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+8/+16
Primary Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+6)
Full Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d8+6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Grappling tongue, resistance to sonics 20
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 8
Skills:	Listen +5, Spot +6
Feats:	Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Swamps and wet areas
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	5
Advancement:	None
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature is an 8-foot frog covered in heavy chitin; three large ridges run down its back. Most of the colors on the skin and chitin are swamp colors, but there are also swirls of orange, pink and purple.

DESCRIPTION

Not all pre-Final Wars healing aids were in the form of nanounits, despite the lack of physical evidence surviving into the Gamma Age. A hardpatch was a biological healing accelerant designed to seal over a wound, protect it with a chitinous shell, then dramatically boost the body's own ability to heal while providing needed nutrients. They were an invaluable tool in areas where you couldn't depend on healing nanobots, and were typically carried into nanounit-hostile areas.

Somewhere along the way, among the many campaigns that crossed the swamplands, a load of hardpatches was lost. One or more came into contact with the local frog population and bonded. The hardpatches were designed specifically for human physiology with little room for adaptability. Thinking the moist skin was an open wound, the hardpatch expanded, growing to completely encase the frog. In time the bond became inseparable, altering the physiology so much that the two become one creature, and a new species. Sometime later other mutagens triggered additional changes, such as the tremendous growth and shell variations.

Shell toads shed their carapace every 2 years. The carapace survives this process mostly intact and is useful in a wide variety of end products, from armor to windows. Shell toads are easy to raise, not roaming far so long as there is enough food. Training the toads takes work, but not any more than a difficult horse. This is due to the difficulty in motivating shell toads more than spiritedness or contrariness. Riding a shell toad takes practice, and cannot be done by unskilled characters; even experienced riders must make checks against a DC increased by +3.

COMBAT

The shell toad prefers not to fight anything it doesn't clearly outclass. It uses its grappling tongue to secure prey and then bites it until resistance stops.

Grappling Tongue (Ex, Mu): A shell toad's tongue has a reach of 25 feet. The toad may attempt to grapple any Medium or smaller creature with less than three-quarters cover within that range. This grapple attempt does not trigger an attack of opportunity. Should the target be successfully grappled, the toad will pull it in and bite it with its next attack action.

Skills: Shell toads have a +8 species bonus on Jump checks, and may take 10 on Jump checks in dangerous situations.

SPOAT

Size/Type:	Large Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	3d10+9 (25 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), climb 10 ft.
Defense:	Defense 14 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, –1 size), touch 11, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/+11
Primary Attack:	Gore +6 melee (1d8+8 plus poison)
Full Attack:	Gore +6 melee (1d8+8 plus poison), bite +1 melee (1d8+2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Gore, poison, webs
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills:	Balance +6, Climb +12, Jump +4, Spot +2, Tumble +2
Feats:	Dodge, Mobility
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any non-arctic land
Organization:	Herd (5–30)
Challenge Rating:	2
Advancement:	4–8 HD (Large), 9–12 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment:	+0

The creature is a very large and hairy spider, with small horns on the back of its head and body.

DESCRIPTION

Spoats are the descendants of one of the earliest products of genetic engineering. The intent was to add arachnid genes to goats to produce spider-silk from milk. A cut-and-paste virus mixed too much spider DNA into later generations, giving rise to the spoats. Shaggy, eight-legged, eight-eyed creatures, spoats are a common herd animal in the Gamma Age. Small, curved horns grow from the backs of the spoat's round head and thorax.

Spoat milk is foul and sticky, but nutritious, and their dark meat can be smoked and cured to preserve it for months. They also spin whitish, rather hairy webs that can be woven with spoat-fur to produce warm, tough clothing. Spoats cannot climb walls very well, but eight legs and a goat's sense of balance lets the spoat herds roam over the steepest mountains, allowing the creatures to make good use of the most marginal land. Spoats can eat almost anything after reducing it to gooey paste. Spoat herders must be able to keep up with their charges, which requires excellent climbing skills. Some train hunting birds as aerial spoatdogs. Spoat rustling and spoat herding are important activities in some rural communities. Tame spoats are shy,

nervous creatures, but wild spoat herds sometimes attack unwary travelers.

COMBAT

The buck-toothed pincers of the spoat can deliver a vicious bite, while the horns secrete spider-venom. Spoat-herders blunt the teeth and horns of their tame animals, but wild spoats often gore travelers with the piercing, venom-dripping horns on their heads.

Gore (Ex): Spoats can make ram their vestigial horns into enemies for 1d8+8 points of damage, plus poison. They often combine this attack with a charge, and can even make this attack when dropping head-first from a web. If the spoat misses when attacking from above, it must make a DC 10 Tumble check. If it succeeds, its web acts as a bungee cord, whipping the spoat back up safely. If the check is failed, the spoat crashes into the ground in a tangle of fur and legs, and suffers normal falling damage.

Poison (Ex, Mut): Wild spoat horns inject a mild poison when the spoat gores a target (injury, DC 11, initial and secondary damage 1d3 temporary Str).

Webs (Ex): Spoat webs are weaker than normal spider webs, having an escape DC of 13, a break DC of 14, and only 6 hit points.

Skills: Spoats have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

SILVERBACK AND CUTTLEIMP

Some creatures live relatively peacefully alongside their neighbors, each in their own ecological niche. Others manage to develop cooperative relationships with other species, like sharks and remoras, each benefiting the other while benefiting themselves. And then there are the silverbacks and cuttleimps, two wildly different species that live in an almost symbiotic relationship, closer than family, closer than lovers. There's no conceivable reason *why* the two species have such a close connection. Silverbacks were created by pre-War geneticists who wanted to make a race of super-strong servitors, creatures suited for work under heavy gravity or in harsh conditions. Cuttleimps, on the other hand, are a misbegotten accident, the result of intermingled nanoviruses and genetic agents in the chaos following the War. If the two species have anything in common, it's perhaps a certain level of primate DNA in the ancestry of each, but that's hardly enough to explain things.

Yet when a silverback first felt a cuttleimp's touch in its mind, when a giant first laid eyes on the pseudo-crustacean pygmy squatting in a tree, when the two races finally *met*, something was completed; a void neither species realized existed was filled. In a few generations, silverbacks and cuttleimps have transformed into true symbiotes, developing a relationship that connects on a genetic level.

Silverbacks live in tribal communities, building crude huts and clearings within forests and jungles. Such villages are becoming more and more extensive and complex in recent years. Every silverback bonds with a cuttleimp partner very early in life. A silverback pup is given a cuttleimp egg to watch over, and the silverback is the first thing the cuttleimp sees when it hatches. Partners hunt together, work together and play together. Both species enter their mating season at the same time, and each partnered pair mates with one other pair at this time.

More and more human settlements have had encounters with silverbacks and cuttleimps in the last few years. The twinned races no longer seem content to simply live in their own tribes, hidden in the forests and jungles. Now they're attacking human communities, raiding caravans for supplies, scavenging technology they surely, *hopefully*, don't know how to use. Perhaps this is just a fad, a brief spasm of activity that the creatures will soon become bored with — or perhaps this is the beginning of something new, a revolution born of reinforced muscle and alien intellect.

Perhaps humanity should start to worry.

SILVERBACK

Size/Type: Large Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 16
Initiative: –1
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 10 ft.
Defense: Defense 12 (–1 Dex, +4 natural, –1 size), touch 8, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+13
Primary Attack: Giant club +8 melee (2d6+6)
Full Attack: Giant club +8 melee (2d6+6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 3/—, low-light vision, psionic resistance rage, symbiotic relationship
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +3
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +18, Hide –3, Intimidate +3, Listen +2, Spot +2, Survival +3
Feats: Archaic Weapon Proficiency, Power Attack
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Tribe, cuttleimp partner
Environment: Forests and jungles
Organization: Village (10–50)
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: +2

The creature is a 10-foot-tall humanoid, with hairless head and chest, Neanderthal-like protruding brow ridge and wide jaw, and thick, black hair on its arms, legs and back. The hair lightens to pure white on its shoulders and along its spine.

DESCRIPTION

Psionic Resistance (Ex, Psi): Silverbacks have a rudimentary resistance to psionic attacks and effects, unless those effects are generated by a cuttleimp. Any character using a psionic power on a silverback must make a level check (1d20 + character level) against DC 9 to affect the silverback.

Rage (Ex): Silverbacks fly into a mindless rage when injured, attacking the source of their pain until it is destroyed. If a silverback takes 6 or more hit points of damage from a single attack, it goes berserk on its next combat round, gaining +4 Strength and +4 Constitution, with a proportional improvement on attack rolls, damage rolls and hit points; however, its Defense drops by –1. The rage continues until the attacker is dead; if the silverback was damaged by a natural source (such as a fire or a fall from a height), it attacks anything in sight for a number of rounds equal to 3 + its (improved) Con bonus. When the rage ends, the silverback is left shaken for 1d6 minutes. If a silverback is within 30 feet of its cuttleimp partner, it gains control over its rages; it now only rages when it chooses to do so, and can cease raging at any time (the rage still ends after 3 + Con bonus rounds). If a silverback's cuttleimp partner is killed or reduced to negative

hit points, the silverback automatically rages and will destroy everything in sight until killed.

Symbiotic Relationship (Ex, Psi): Silverbacks have established a close symbiotic relationship with cuttleimps; each silverback is telepathically bonded to a particular cuttleimp partner when it reaches puberty. When a bonded pair are within 30 feet of each other, the silverback enjoys a number of advantages. The silverback gains a +2 bonus on all skill checks, a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls, +1 to Defense, and a +3 bonus on all Will saves (all circumstance bonuses). It also gains the ability to rage at will, rather than only when taking damage.

Skills: Silverbacks have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

CUTTLEIMP

Size/Type: Tiny Aberration
Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 10
Initiative: +4
Speed: 15 ft. (3 squares), climb 15 ft.
Defense: Defense 21 (+4 Dex, +5 natural, +2 size), touch 16, flat-footed 17
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/–10
Primary Attack: Claw +7 melee (1d4–3) or laser +7 ranged (2d6)
Full Attack: 2 claws +7 melee (1d4–3), bite +2 melee (1d4–3) or laser +7 ranged (2d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Caustic blood, laser eyes, sensory overload, symbiotic relationship, telepathy
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +6
Abilities: Str 5, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +5, Diplomacy +4, Hide +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Tribe, silverback partner
Environment: Forests and jungles
Organization: Village (10–50)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 3–4 HD (Tiny)
Level Adjustment: +2

The creature resembles a hybrid of chimpanzee and lobster, with matted fur protruding from between plates of crustacean armor. Its head has a mammalian mouth and teeth, with two black eyes on short stalks. Its hands and feet each have three triple-jointed fingers flanked by short, massive pincers.

DESCRIPTION

Caustic Blood (Ex): A cuttleimp's blood is acidic enough to burn through wood, bone and even metal. Anyone that causes damage to a cuttleimp with a slashing or piercing weapon in melee combat must make a DC 11 Reflex save or take 1d6 points of acid damage. The weapon used to injure the cuttleimp also takes 1 point of acid damage (no save possible). Any creature that attacks the cuttleimp with a natural weapon also takes 1 point of acid damage with no save.

Laser Eyes (Ex, Mut): Once every 1d4 rounds, a cuttleimp can fire a laser beam from its eyes as an attack action, striking any target within 60 feet. The laser does 2d6 points of damage; anyone struck by the laser must also make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1 round.

Sensory Overload (Ex, Psi): In addition to projecting its thoughts, a cuttleimp can also overwhelm a victim's mind with a barrage of confusing, contradictory thoughts. This is an attack action with a range of 100 feet, and the target may make a DC 11 Will save to resist. A target who fails to resist is left shaken for 1d6 rounds. If a cuttleimp makes a second successful sensory overload attack on a shaken target, the victim becomes paralyzed instead of shaken for the remainder of the effect's duration.

Symbiotic Relationship (Ex, Psi): Cuttleimps have established a close symbiotic relationship with silverbacks; each cuttleimp telepathically bonds to a particular silverback partner upon hatching. When a bonded pair are within 30 feet of each other, the cuttleimp gains a +2 circumstance bonus on attack and damage rolls, a +3 circumstance

bonus on all Fortitude saves, and the DC of Will saves to resist its psionic powers increases to 14.

Telepathy (Ex, Psi): As a move action, cuttleimps can communicate telepathically with any one being within 100 feet, and can both send thoughts and read the minds of others. Cuttleimps can also control the minds of others as an attack action, forcing the target to obey their desires. Maintaining this control requires a move action from the cuttleimp each round. The controlled victim must follow the telepathic orders of the cuttleimp, but takes a –1 penalty on all attack and skill checks made while controlled. Resisting the cuttleimp's telepathy or mind control requires a DC 11 Will save; mind-controlled victims who fail the initial save can only attempt a new save every 10 rounds.

Skills: Cuttleimps have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

SLEETH

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 12
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 14 (+3 natural, +1 intuition), touch 11, flat-footed —
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+3
Primary Attack: Slam +4 melee (1d3) or by weapon
Full Attack: Slam +4 melee (1d3) or by weapon
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Healing trance, intuition, plant control, psionics, telepathy
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +7
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 14
Skills: Bluff +3, Concentration +3, Diplomacy +5, Hide +2, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) +4, Listen +5, Spot +5, Treat Injury +5
Feats: Iron Will, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Toughness[B]
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Community
Environment: Jungle
Organization: Village (10–300)
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is a green-scaled, upright reptile, balancing with the help of its long tail.

DESCRIPTION

Sleeth are a race of reptilian humanoids, mutated descendants of alligators. But rather than the voracious killing machines one might expect these creatures to be, sleeth are peaceful, highly intellectual and empathic beings who devote their minds and psionic abilities to gaining wisdom and living in harmony with nature. Whatever nanotech soup lifted the sleeth to intelligence also took away most of their aggression — a trait that few of their neighbors in the Gamma Age share, sad to say.

The sleeth are a thriving and vital species, respected as healers and custodians of information. They lend their knowledge of plants and nature,

and their medical and diplomatic skills, out to other communities and species, acting as peacemakers and helping villages survive in the jungle. In return, the sleeth ask for knowledge — information and records from before the Final Wars, which they store in their village libraries. They will also help their neighbors in return for advanced technology, or just to build up goodwill. Sleeth villages are normally deep in the middle of jungles or forests, formed from reshaped living plants and trees.

Sleeth are friendly to outsiders, and readily engage in trade for goods and services, but look down their (long) noses at other species, whom they see as intellectually inferior. This arrogance takes the form of condescension rather than aggression; a sleeth is likely to talk slowly and use short words when dealing with humans, explaining things in excessive detail in an attempt to help the poor hairless apes understand.

The sleeth use academic labels to denote positions of responsibility — a village is governed by a *dean*, who is counseled by a faculty of elders called *professors*. Important members of a community are *lecturers*, while younger sleeth are *students*, and outsiders or visitors are referred to as *transfers* (or, more derogatorily, *dropouts*). In times of crisis, deans of different villages may congregate into a *college*, electing a president to lead the discussion and decision-making process. No one knows where the sleeth learned of these terms, or why they chose to base their whole society around them.

Reputation Bonus	Title
0–2	Freshman
3–4	Sophomore
5–7	Graduate
8–9	Alumnus
10+	Emeritus

Sleeth who venture out into the world gain further titles relating to their interaction with humans and other non-sleeth. The more famous and well-known a sleeth adventurer becomes, the more prestigious the title other sleeth might bestow on him. Sleeth characters gain new titles as their Reputation bonus increases.

These titles are independent of the traditional sleeth titles — it's entirely possible for a sleeth professor to be a freshman or a student to be a graduate. Sleeth have a habit of boasting about their status and using their full titles in conversations, even with humans who have no idea what the sleeth is talking about.

COMBAT

Sleeth very much prefer not to fight, and when circumstances make combat necessary, they focus on ending the fight as quickly as possible. They favor disarming attacks and sneak attacks where possible.

Healing Trance (Ex, Psi): Once a day, an injured sleeth can enter into a trance for an hour, willing her body to heal and telepathically enhancing her natural recuperative abilities. At the end of the trance, the sleeth recovers a number of hit points equal to her Hit Dice (so an average sleeth will heal 3 hit points); this is in addition to the hit points the sleeth recovers normally in a given day. The healing trance does not affect ability damage.

Intuition (Ex, Psi): Sleeth possess a very limited form of precognition that extends only a fraction of a second into the future. This is enough, though, to alert them to approaching danger, and for them to gain a sense of how an enemy will move just before making a blow. Sleeth are never caught flat-footed, and receive a +1 intuition bonus to Defense, and on attack and initiative rolls (this bonus is included in the stat block).

Plant Control (Ex, Psi): A sleeth can take telepathic control of, and even animate, any plant within 100 feet as an attack action. Controlling non-ambulatory plants is simple, but intelligent or ambulatory plants may make a DC 13 Will save to resist being controlled. Maintaining control of a plant requires a move action each round, and the sleeth must make Concentration checks to maintain control in difficult circumstances. A plant animated by the sleeth's power uses the sleeth's attack bonus in combat, but its abilities and damage depend on its size; an ambulatory plant uses its own attack bonus and other abilities.

Psionics (Ex, Psi): In addition to the powers above, all sleeth possess the Psychic Ability mutation (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Cellular Transformation Effects*). This power works in all ways as it would for a player character.

Telepathy (Ex, Psi): Sleeth can communicate telepathically, with a range of 100 feet. This is similar to normal speech, and occurs at the same speed; however, telepathic communication transcends language, and sleeth can mentally communicate with almost any sentient being. Sleeth can only telepathically communicate with one other person at a time; if a sleeth wants to communicate with a group, he must actually speak rather than use telepathy. Sleeth can only project their thoughts, not read minds. Sleeth can use this power on any sentient being or plant, but not on animals or constructs.

SLEETH CHARACTERS

Sleeth characters have the following species traits.

— –2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom.

— A sleeth's base land speed is 30 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A sleeth begins with 3 levels of mutant humanoid, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2.

— Species Skills: Sleeth receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Knowledge (Earth & life sciences) is always a class skill for sleeth.

— Species Feats: Sleeth receive only one feat at 1st level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels.

— +3 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: Slam (1d3).

— **Darkvision (Ex):** Sleeth possess darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

— **Healing Trance (Ex, Psi):** Once a day, a sleeth can enter into a trance for an hour, after which she heals a number of hit points equal to her character level.

— **Intuition (Ex, Psi):** Sleeth characters are never caught flat-footed, and receive a +1 intuition bonus to Defense and +1 on attack and initiative rolls.

— **Plant Control (Ex, Psi):** A sleeth can control and animate any plant within 50 feet.(+25 feet per point of Wisdom bonus) as an attack action. Ambulatory plants may make a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the character's level + Cha modifier) to resist being controlled. Maintaining control of a plant requires a move action each round, and the sleeth must make Concentration checks to maintain control in difficult circumstances.

— **Telepathy (Ex, Psi):** Sleeth can communicate telepathically as a free action, with a range of 50 feet (+25 feet per point of Wisdom bonus) This is similar to normal speech, and occurs at the same speed; however, telepathic communication transcends language, and sleeth can mentally communicate with almost any sentient being. Sleeth can only telepathically communicate with one other person at a time; if a sleeth wants to communicate with a group, he must actually speak rather than use telepathy. Sleeth can only project their thoughts, not read minds, and can communicate telepathically with intelligent or semi-intelligent plants.

— **Psionics (Ex, Psi):** All sleeth possess the Psychic Ability mutation (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Cellular Transformation Effects*).

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE LIZARDS?

Blights, gators, hissers, keeshin, menarls, sleeth, tyrants: There sure are a lot of reptilian critters kicking around in the Gamma Age. The pre-Fall genesplicers and biotinkerers found reptilian DNA particularly easy to tweak and manipulate. Reptilian receptor chromosomes eagerly incorporated foreign genetic signals, allowing new characteristics to be plugged into a reptile's genetic code incredibly easily.

(Reptiles also allowed a greater degree of ethical flexibility and public approval. Few people care about experiments on snakes and lizards, but try the same thing with one wriggly kitten and watch the lawsuits fly.)

As a result of this degree of genetic adaptability, reptilian-based creations were popular at the height of the Ancients' civilization. After the Final Wars, reptiles proved a fertile ground for accidental mutation and genetic drift, and new reptilian species continue to emerge in the Gamma Age.

But while reptiles are particularly receptive to genetic alteration, other species are only slightly less malleable, and a dizzying array of different beings can arise from the same genetic stock. Insects, for instance, provided the base DNA for creatures as disparate as souls'kers, thra, glucusts, kafkas and cal thens. Fish gave rise not just to terl and boneswimmers, but also the sentient fashen. Even rabbits have enough unexplored genetic potential to create both hoops and hoppers, two very different species.

GMs who want to create a wide variety of critters from a single genetic root should feel to do so with impunity. The science of **Gamma World** is very forgiving, and almost any creature can make sense under its rules, just as long as it's interesting.

— **No Bioware:** Sleeth cannot use bioware, which is designed to work in conjunction only with human DNA. Any attempt by a sleeth to use bioware fails, as does any attempt to implant a biotech device in a sleeth character.

— Sleeth characters may not have the Soldier occupation.

— Level Adjustment: +1

TEAKETTLER

Size/Type:	Large Aberration
Hit Dice:	5d8+10 (38 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	15
Initiative:	–1
Speed:	20 ft (4 squares)
Defense:	16 (–1 Dex, +8 natural, –1 size), touch 8, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/+7
Primary Attack:	Stomp +2 melee (1d4).
Full Attack:	Stomp +2 melee (1d4)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Acid spit, chemical generation, explosion, obscuring mist, scent
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +5;
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 5
Skills:	Concentration +5, Craft (chemical) +13, Craft (pharmaceutical) +8, Listen +2, Spot +5, Survival +5
Feats:	Dodge, Great Fortitude
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Non-arctic forests
Organization:	Herd (6–24)
Challenge Rating:	5
Advancement:	8–12 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature is a stocky humanoid biped with red hide covering a very bulging belly. It constantly emits bubbling noises.

DESCRIPTION

Inside the teakettler's rotund armored belly are complex organic factories that give the teakettler the ability to synthesize a vast range of chemicals. Its stumpy legs struggle to bear the weight of the teakettler's bulging reaction-stomachs and pulsing assemblages of veins and arteries. The teakettler's perpetually embarrassed-looking head sits atop the bizarre body like a hood ornament on a cement mixer. The death of a teakettler is marked by a plume of pungent yellow smoke as its internal sacs and bladders are torn and burst, their contents reacting in a chemical conflagration.

Teakettlers roam the forest in groups of a half-dozen or more, and have a strong herd instinct. They share food and come to the defense of each other. Teakettlers can process almost any food through their internal factories, and their digestive processes are extremely efficient. However, to fuel certain chemical reactions, they must consume minerals (primarily iron, carbon and nickel) regularly.

Teakettlers are dangerous only when they cannot get these vital minerals. As their internal fires subside, the herd becomes more and more desperate, until in their starvation they will attack communities with stockpiles of metal. If the needs of the teakettlers can be sated, they will depart; otherwise, they will reduce the village to a morass of acid-melted buildings from which they slurp up the metals.

To a community with the knowledge and training to use a teakettler, a tame beast is a massive boost to any industry involving chemistry. Of course, any community with the infrastructure to use a teakettler is also likely to be a target for hungry teakettlers.

COMBAT

When threatened, a teakettler releases a cloud of mist and flees. If cornered, it spits acid at its tormentors.

Acid Spit (Ex, Mu): Teakettlers can spit acid as a ranged touch attack that inflicts 2d6 points of acid damage the first round and 1d6 points of acid

damage the following round (Fortitude save DC 14 for half damage). (Their ranged attack bonus is +1.) After spitting acid, the teakettler must recharge its spit glands (see Chemical Generation).

Chemical Generation (Ex): Teakettlers are living chemical factories, and can synthesize chemicals within their bodies. They gain a +15 species bonus on Craft (chemical) rolls and a +10 species bonus on Craft (pharmaceutical) rolls. Anyone working with a trained teakettler may also gain these bonuses.

Teakettlers instinctively know how to make many chemicals, notably those that generate the gas clouds and acid spit abilities described here. Teakettlers can use the chemical generation ability a number of times per day equal to their Constitution score. To recharge its acid spit or protective cloud abilities, a teakettler must make a DC 15 Craft (chemical) check as a full-round action.

Explosion (Ex): When a teakettler dies, its body begins to bubble and boil. 1d4 rounds after death, it explodes violently. This explosion has a burst radius of 15 feet, and inflicts 7d6 points of damage (DC 14 Reflex save for half damage).

Obscuring Mist (Ex): Teakettlers can create a cloud of thick, yellowish fog that completely blocks vision. The cloud fills a sphere of radius 30 feet around the teakettler. Anything within the cloud gains the benefit of nine-tenths concealment.

Scent (Ex): Teakettlers can smell chemicals and metals instead of the traces left by living creatures. A teakettler could track a character by the scent of his gel-suit armor, but not by his body odors (unless the odors are unusually toxic).

TESSERACT SPIDER

Size/Type: Huge Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice: 16d8+64 (136 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 34
Initiative: +7
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 40 ft.
Defense: Defense 27 (+7 Dex, +12 natural, -2 size), touch 15, flat-footed —
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +12/+28
Primary Attack: Bite +18 melee (2d6+8 plus poison) or claw +18 melee (1d8+8)
Full Attack: Bite +18 melee (2d6+8 plus poison), 4 claws +13 melee (1d8+8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Higher geometry movement, poison, resistance to massive damage, spatial awareness, web
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +13
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 24, Con 19, Int 24, Wis 26, Cha 10
Skills: Balance +22, Climb +31, Concentration +24, Gather Information +16, Jump +24, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +23, Knowledge (physical sciences) +23, Listen +23, Move Silently +23, Sense Motive +24, Spot +24
Feats: Improved Initiative, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Agile Riposte, Power Attack, Cleave
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Social web
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary or social web (2–20)
Challenge Rating: 18
Advancement: 17–24 HD (Huge), 25–32 HD (Colossal)
Level Adjustment: +5

The creature is a huge spider with a dark glistening carapace full of strange, hard-to-understand angles and edges.

DESCRIPTION

It is not known if the tesseract spiders are the product of some bizarre mutation, or if they were engineered. It is, perhaps, better to assume that they are mutants, because the thought that some foolish scientist would give spiders intelligence and an understanding of geometry and spatial relationships is a terrifying one. If the Ancients created them, then those Ancients must have been very, very far from sane — or far from human.

Tesseract spiders are large, darkly glistening creatures, all legs and eyes and sharp edges. They are vastly intelligent, and communicate in a complex symbolic language of gestures and web-spun symbols. They appear to think of their society as a web; first one spider takes up residence in an area, then another builds a lair not far from there; each spider a junction in the pattern until the whole region is claimed and covered with an invisible web — and anything moving in the web is prey.

The society of these bizarre creatures is based around the concept of a "social web," a network of debts, favors, gifts and promises that bind multiple spiders together. The spiders regularly leave offerings of meat or technology for each other in little hidden caches. Spiders outside the social web are ignored completely, to the extent that they do not even occupy the same space as others. Two spiders in different social webs can physically walk through each other as if the other were not present. Some have speculated that each web is a hive mind for all the spiders in it.

Any community that discovers a tesseract spider is in trouble. If the spider cannot be killed before other spiders infest the region, the community will find itself trapped in the "social web" of the spiders, and will likely be slowly drawn out and devoured by the monsters.

However their social webs work, the physical webs of tesseract spiders are nightmarish. They lair in caves, underground vaults or ruins, and there weave death-traps of perspective and higher math. Tesseract webs are full of optical illusions — strands that appear far away may in fact be astonishingly fine lines close to the observer's eyes, while the safe stepping stone nearby may be much farther away than it seems. The web also exudes a hallucinogenic gas, further confusing victims.

COMBAT

A tesseract spider rarely engages in physical combat, preferring to let its web catch its prey. When a victim is trapped, the spider often keeps it alive and uses it to lure more prey into the web. The spider might position an animal so that its distress call can be heard by the rest of the pack, or plant items taken from a human so a rescue party will be drawn into the trap. When enough victims have been trapped, the rest of the spiders in the social web are summoned, and the feast begins.

Higher Geometry Movement (Ex, Mut, Psi): Tesseract spiders can move through higher dimensions more or less at will. This allows them to *teleport without error* as part of their normal movement.

Poison (Ex, Mut, Psi): Tesseract spider poison attacks the victim's existence directly, and can thus affect creatures normally immune to poison. Anyone poisoned by a tesseract spider must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or begin to flicker out of existence. If this save is failed, the character begins to vanish from reality every few seconds. The character is initially absent for (1d8 – the character's Constitution modifier) in rounds. After this, the character is present for 1 round, then vanishes again for another (1d4 – Constitution modifier) rounds. While the character is absent, time does not pass for the character — he, she or it simply does not exist in space-time.

After 10 minutes (from the character's perspective) of this disjointed time, the character must make another DC 22 Fortitude save. If this is failed, the character ceases to exist in normal space-time altogether, and is fully transmuted into a higher-dimensional pocket accessible only by tesseract spiders.

Resistance to Massive Damage: Tesseract spiders gain a +10 bonus on checks to avoid massive damage.

Spatial Awareness (Ex): Tesseract spiders have an inhuman understanding of geometry and space, and always perfectly position themselves in any situation. They cannot be flanked and are assumed to have improved cover whenever under any form

of cover. For example, a broken wall normally gives a creature cover (+4 Defense and +2 on Reflex saves); the tesseract spider can position itself precisely so that the wall is between itself and attacks for improved cover (+8 Defense, +4 on Reflex saves and +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks). They cannot be surprised and are never flat-footed.

Webs (Ex, Mut): The webs of a tesseract spider are insanely bizarre and confusing. While it's easy to notice a hidden web (DC 10 Spot check), working out a safe path through the web is inhumanly difficult (DC 32 Search check). Anyone within 30 feet of a tesseract spider's web must make a DC 16 Fortitude save every 5 rounds, or become shaken due to the hallucinogenic fumes issuing from the web. The webbing has an escape DC of 28, a break DC of 30, and 14 hit points.

Skills: Tesseract spiders have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

TERRORBIRD

Size/Type: Small Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 5d8–5 (17 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 9
Initiative: +2
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 120 ft. (good)
Defense: 13 (+2 Dex, +1 size), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +5/+1
Primary Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d3) or bite +6 melee (1d4) or dagger +7 (1d4)
Full Attack: 2 claws +7 melee (1d3), bite +2 melee (1d4) or dagger +7/+7 (1d4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Duality, levitation, repulsion field
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 13
Skills: Intimidate +4, Survival +3, Move Silently +4
Feats: Dodge, Weapon Finesse
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Forests and adjacent areas
Organization: Solitary or flocks (4–25)
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: 5–8 HD (Small) or by character class
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is an approximately humanoid bird, with long legs and human-like hands at the end of each wing. The plumage is uniformly brown except for white tips on wings and head, and (on males) a white crescent on the underside of each wing. It often wears elaborate patterns of war paint.

DESCRIPTION

Originally designed to reintroduce an extinct kestrel species back into the world of the living, the small tube of nanounits lay dormant, abandoned in their storage capsule until a blast forced the capsule open, releasing the nanites into the air. Radiation, magnetic interference and weapon residue altered the nanounits from their original programming. In two generations they completed their twisted programming, giving birth to the terrorbirds.

Terrorbirds wear little in the way of clothing; what they do wear is purely functional, such as tool harnesses and the occasional bit of light leather or scavenged Pre-War armor. All adult males, and many females, carry paired weapons, wielded in their hands like lower talons.

They do not have what is readily recognized as a society, more a set of hardwired behaviors common to all members of the species. Hissers and hoops are favored delicacies, as are their lesser kin. Many hoop bands tell tales of wars against terrorbird nests. Terrorbirds will not eat carrion, preferring to starve than pick over remains like a common carrin.

Terrorbirds value their levitation power above all else, choosing never to land if at all possible. Should this ability be lost, the bird slips into a deep depression that culminates in its death.

COMBAT

Largely fearless, the terrorbird is an aggressive hunter willing to attack virtually any edible mammalian or reptilian life. Like its ancestor birds of prey, the terrorbird attacks first by streaking in from above, gaining surprise on their intended victims. Once close, it sticks to melee weapons until it or its intended kill is dead. Should the victim prove to be hardier than expected, or if the prey has a larger guardian, the terrorbird uses its fear aura to drive off the threat.

Duality (Mu): This mutation allows the terrorbird to use each hand on simultaneous tasks. This goes beyond simple ambidexterity and two-weapon training: The terrorbird's brain has adapted to work with each limb fully independently. This allows each hand to be treated as a primary weapon hand, potentially doubling the number of attacks.

Levitation (Psi): Terrorbirds can levitate by pure psionic force. This ability is limited, allowing them only to influence the force of gravity on their bodies and those things they carry. They can rise or sink at a rate of 30 feet per round, limited to 200 pounds beyond their own weight. Any more weight than that is too much mental strain. Terrorbirds are still dependant upon their wings and air currents to move in any direction other than up or down.

Repulsion Field (Psi): Terrorbirds' control of the push and pull of gravity is not limited to their levitation ability. With minimal effort they can erect a sphere around themselves that violently repels all physical objects. The field will absorb 30 points of damage before collapsing completely and regenerates at the rate of 1d6 points per round.

TYRANT

Size/Type: Large Dragon
Hit Dice: 10d12+30 (95 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 20
Initiative: –1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. (poor)
Defense: Defense 17 (–1 Dex, +9 natural, –1 size), touch 8, flat-footed 17
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +10/+19
Primary Attack: Claw +14 melee (1d8+5) or bite +14 melee (2d6+5) or horn +14 melee (1d8+5)
Full Attack: 2 claws +14 melee (1d8+5), bite +12 melee (2d6+5), horn +12 melee (1d8+5)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Acid immunity, damage reduction 5/—, fast healing 2, flocking pheromones, nauseating breath, pheromonal communication, resistance to electricity 10, resistance to psionics 15, scent
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +8
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 17
Skills: Hide +2, Intimidate +8, Jump +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Search +5, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8
Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Increased Damage Threshold, Multiattack, Power Attack
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Anywhere with humans and others to command
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 11
Advancement: 11–15 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: +2

The creature is a winged reptile the size of an automobile, its head topped by a long horn.

DESCRIPTION

The scientists who created the first tyrant only wanted to find out more about pheromones and scent-based communication, to see if such things could be viable tools for large creatures. Unfortunately, they succeeded beyond their wildest dreams, and became the first servants of a deadly and cunning monstrosity.

Two wings sprout from its back, hiding layers of glands and scent transmitters. It can fly, and like the dragons of myth it has a terrible breath weapon — not a blast of fire, but a surge of chemicals that temporarily scrambles a human being's immune system. That scrambling makes the human vulnerable to the powerful pheromones the tyrant constantly exudes from its gland arrays — pheromones that override and rewrite large and important sections of the human brain.

Loyalty and obedience are emotions, and emotions are chemical things — chemicals the tyrant's pheromones alter and redirect. If a human is affected by the tyrant's pheromones, she develops an immediate bond of loyalty to the creature, seeing it as a kind of benevolent protector or parental figure. If she obeys the tyrant's desires (also communicated through scents and pheromones), a follower is rewarded with a flood of endorphins and reward hormones; fail the tyrant and the follower is punished with deep depression (and perhaps being eaten by her carnivorous master). Followers remain rational, but their loyalty bond transcends and overrides their thinking processes; they become more like ants or insects, rational thought only surfacing when it would be useful to their master. Tyrants are always accompanied by 2d4 human followers, armed with whatever weapons they have been able to find and maintain; the tyrant usually commands these followers to take down any difficult or resistant enemies. Human followers fight without thought for their own safety, and will give their lives to protect the tyrant.

Tyrants are sentient creatures, but not overly bright. Their main concerns are survival, a plentiful food supply and the opportunity to breed. That last desire is the main problem facing the creatures, and the reason why they are thankfully rare. The creators of the tyrant deliberately made it infertile; efforts to rectify that problem have proved unsuccessful. In the chaos of the Final Wars, the first tyrant's followers cloned their master several times, and successive generations of followers have performed the same task. But cloning is a difficult task, requiring complex equipment that is in short supply these days. Some tyrants have instead set followers to work on overriding the creature's sterility, a task that requires extensive examination of tyrant DNA. Naturally solitary creatures, tyrants do not associate with their own kind (to the relief of the rest of the world), and in fact war among themselves for followers and territory — and, hopefully, access to the DNA of a fallen clone-sibling that could unlock the fertility issue.

COMBAT

The tyrant prefers to have its subjects fight on its behalf, using whatever talents they may possess. The tyrant's own preferred intervention is to fly overhead and use its nauseating breath to incapacitate targets, after which the tyrant's subjects can take care of the rest.

Flocking Pheromones (Ex, Mut): Glands along a tyrant's back constantly produce pheromones, which normally have no effect on living creatures. A being affected by the tyrant's nauseating breath, however, has its immune system temporarily altered, and can be affected by the pheromones . Any nauseated character within 30 feet of the tyrant must make a DC 18 Will save each round or be affected. Affected characters become loyal to the tyrant, feeling an emotional connection to the beast that overrides rational thought and negates any other relationships important to the character. The tyrant's followers retain their intelligence, but place the tyrant's health and survival above all other concerns. The loyalty is caused by physical changes to the brain, which become more and more entrenched as time goes on. A character may make

a DC 18 Will save after each full day spent more than 30 feet from the tyrant's side, taking a –1 penalty to the save for each week it has been loyal to the tyrant. Characters who are enslaved for long periods (over 6 months) may become permanently loyal and undergo major personality changes as their neural pathways alter.

Nauseating Breath (Ex, Mut): Once every 1d4 rounds a tyrant can breathe a 30-foot cone of noxious gases and vapors as an attack action. Anyone exposed to the gas must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Constructs and plants are not affected. While nauseated, an affected character is vulnerable to the tyrant's flocking pheromones.

Pheromonal Communication (Ex, Mut): A tyrant is not very intelligent but it is sentient; it can communicate its desires to its loyal followers through pheromones. The tyrant can communicate reasonably simple ideas and emotions, such as "bring me food," "sacrifice your life to distract that angry mob," "find a way to improve my fertility" and so on. More complex concepts cannot be transmitted, and pheromonal messages can only reach loyal followers standing within 30 feet of the tyrant.

ULTRAVORE

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	4d10+20 (42 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	20
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense:	Defense 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+4/+8
Primary Attack:	Bite +9 melee (2d6+4)
Full Attack:	Bite +9 melee (2d6+4), 2 claws +3 (1d6+2), tail lash +3 melee (1d4+2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Acidic drool, scent
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills:	Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Spot +2, Survival +1*
Feats:	Weapon Focus (bite), Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	All land
Organization:	Pack (2–9)
Challenge Rating:	5
Advancement:	5–8 HD (Medium), 9–12 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature stands on four legs, with the frame of a hunting canine, the tail and claws of a predatory cat, and a mouth full of shark-like teeth. It has a perpetually hungry look.

DESCRIPTION

Ultravores are an unlikely combination of traits that add up to form a vicious killing machine. The bone-armored gullet and acid-filled secondary stomach are utterly unnatural, and are unique to the ultravore. They hunt in packs, traveling quickly with long loping strides, searching for the scent of meat. All creatures are considered prey by the ultravore.

Attempts to keep ultravores as guard animals generally end in messy, bone-melting failure. The creatures fear nothing, and are willing and capable of loping into a village and eating whatever moves. They have learned to use their acid to burn through barriers, and a community cannot rely on walls to protect them when the ultravores are at the door.

COMBAT

The secondary stomach of the ultravore contains a potent acid. If the 'vore is in danger, or has literally bitten off more than it can chew, it spews acid up its bony throat and out over its teeth, burning and dissolving its prey. The bone channel in the ultravore's throat protects the creature from its own acid, and gives it an immensely strong if inflexible neck. It also gives the ultravore a distinct howl— a chilling, bubbling, hissing yowl. Ultravores charge into a fight, using an acidic bite in the hopes of bringing down the prey quickly. They pick on the slowest or weakest target first, but will then strike at anything that seems likely to be able to injure the pack.

Acidic Drool (Ex, Mut): Ultravores can vomit up a potent acid. This acid inflicts an additional 2d6 points of acid damage when used in concert with a bite. Ultravores may also spit acid as a ranged touch attack (+5 to hit, range 30 feet). An ultravore may only use acid twice per day without strain — any further uses of acidic drool inflict 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage on the ultravore.

Skills: *Ultravores have a +4 species bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

WATCHCAT

Size/Type: Tiny Mutant Beast
Hit Dice: 1d10 (6 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 10
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), jump 10 ft.
Defense: Defense 17 (+3 Dex +2 natural, +2 size), touch 15, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/–10
Primary Attack: Bite +0 melee (1d3–3)
Full Attack: Bite +0 melee (1d3–3)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Alarm, positive thinking
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0
Abilities: Str 5, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 6, Cha 16
Skills: Disable Device +1, Diplomacy +4, Jump +5, Spot +2, Tumble +4
Feats: Alertness
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Children being guarded
Environment: Any non-arctic land where humans live
Organization: Solitary or pack (3–10)
Challenge Rating: 1/8
Advancement: 2–4 HD (Tiny)
Level Adjustment: +0

The creature is a small orange cat, usually with striped or mottled fur, with a bouncy gait and small claws and teeth.

DESCRIPTION

Watchcats' design is drawn from myths of a better world, from tales of magical creatures who exemplify the best traits of humanity. Watchcats

include elements of wallaby DNA, and bounce faster than they walk. The normal reaction of a watchcat to danger, of course, is to bounce and enthusiastically hug someone. They have comparatively ineffectual claws and teeth, and will playfully bite enemies if ordered to.

Watchcats are popular pets and guard animals in many villages, and are especially treasured by children. It is not known how or even if watchcats breed, or if they are the product of some ancient creature factory. Unbonded watchcats can be bartered for a high price.

Watchcats are endlessly energetic and positive. They are as egotistical as any feline, but considerably more enthusiastic about, well, everything. Watchcats are instinctively drawn to humans, to protect and amuse them. They have a habit of trying to make the lives of their human companions more interesting by poking and fiddling with whatever comes to paw. While this curiosity might have been entertaining in the time of the Ancients when the world was safe, in Gamma Terra it's curiosity that often kills the cat-derived life form.

COMBAT

The watchcat is a terrible combatant, and knows it. A watchcat responds to danger by looking for ways to get the child or children it protects to safety.

Alarm (Ex): Watchcats can produce a singularly loud yowl when in danger. Any Listen checks to detect a watchcat's yowl have a +4 circumstance bonus.

Positive Thinking (Ex): Watchcats were designed to be companions for children, and the creatures naturally exude vitamins and health supplements. A human child who has bonded to the watchcat and spends 4 or more hours a day in its company gains a +2 enhancement bonus on all saving throws. Mature humans are less affected by the watchcats, gaining only a +1 enhancement bonus. The companion of a watchcat also receives an extra action point whenever he or she gains a level. Only one human can bond with a watchcat at any time.

Skills: Watchcats have a +8 species bonus on Jump checks, and may take 10 on Jump checks in dangerous situations.

VIRGUVEN

Size/Type: Large Mutant Vermin
Hit Dice: 10d8+20 (65 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 20
Initiative: –1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 15 ft.
Defense: Defense 18 (–1 Dex, +10 natural, –1 size), touch 8, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +7/+15
Primary Attack: Bite +10 melee (1d8+6) or acid spray +5 ranged (varies)
Full Attack: 2 bites +10 melee (1d8+6) or acid spray +5 ranged (varies)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Acid spray, resistance to acid, cold, electricity, and fire 10, sonic reflection
Saves: Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills: Jump +4, Spot +6, Survival +7
Feats: Dodge, Track, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land with ruins
Organization: Solitary or packs (2–9)
Challenge Rating: 8
Advancement: 11–14 HD (Large), 15–20 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: +1

The creature is a 15-foot-long beetle with vestigial wings.

DESCRIPTION

The primary weapon of the virguven is the viscous yellow goop that drips from its inner mandibles. This liquid is a powerful acid. During the Final Wars, chemical markers guided virguven demolition units to weak points in the structure of enemy buildings. The virguvens vomited their acid into these weak points, collapsing the structures more cleanly and quickly than the most accurate bombing. The wing cases of the beetles contain radar-reflective elements, so virguvens could crawl through defenses undetected. Since the Final Wars, a mutation has improved the virguven's protection against sonic

attacks, and the insects can now precisely reflect directed sonics back on the attacker.

Virguvens prey primarily on small mammals, especially rabbits and foxes. Their common hunting tactic is to track the prey back to its burrow. The virguven leaves acidic barriers at all the entrances but one to block escape, then digs in and widens the remaining passageway to get to its food. The insects are accomplished trackers, and will tirelessly follow a quarry for days.

As virguvens were designed to destroy buildings, they are often found in ruins. Virguvens prefer to take up residence in warm or wet enclosed metal spaces, so many communities find dangerous squatters in important pieces of equipment, like power plant or factory outflow pipes.

COMBAT

In combat, the virguven sprays acid indiscriminately at all foes. Particularly tough or tasty-looking enemies are bull rushed — if the virguven can knock a foe down, it can stand over him and point its flared acid glands straight down, completely covering the enemy in acid.

Acid Spray (Ex, Mut): Virguvens can squirt a jet of powerful acid. The virguven can choose to shoot a stream of acid that targets one enemy, or a cone that may strike multiple enemies. The stream has a range of 90 feet; the cone is 30 feet long.

The virguven must make a ranged touch attack to hit with the acid stream. The stream inflicts 12d6 points of acid damage (Reflex save DC 12 for half damage). The acid continues to inflict damage for several rounds after impact — reduce the damage by 2 dice each round (if the Reflex save was successful, halve again the amount of dice rolled). A character may, as a full-round action, scrape the acid off a victim.

The virguven's cone of acid inflicts 4d6 points of acid damage on everything in its area of effect (Reflex save DC 12 for half damage). The acid continues to inflict damage as above.

If the virguven knocks an opponent to the ground with a bull rush and is still adjacent to the victim on its next action, it may use an acid stream attack on that target with a +4 circumstance modifier on the attack. The prone victim suffers a –4 circumstance modifier to the Reflex save.

Sonic Reflection (Ex, Mut): Any sonic attack targeting the virguven is automatically reflected back at its source. Virguvens are immune to all sonic damage.

WEIRBULEN

Size/Type:	Medium Mutant Beast
Hit Dice:	4d10+4 (26 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	10 ft. (2 squares), swim 40 ft.
Defense:	14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+4/+5
Primary Attack:	Bite +5 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +5 melee (1d6+1), 2 tendril slams +0 melee (1d3+1 plus acid)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Amphibious, low-light vision, magnetic sense, mutagenic acid
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +4*, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Swim +9
Feats:	Dodge, Stealthy
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Streams and rivers
Organization:	Schools (2–12)
Challenge Rating:	4
Advancement:	5–6 HD (Medium), 7–8 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	+1

The creature is a 6-foot-long axolotl, or walking fish. Its legs and body are grayish pink. Eighteen-inch tendrils dangle from its mouth, surrounding inch-long fangs.

DESCRIPTION

Like their tiny, innocuous ancestors, weirbulen are amphibious creatures, able to walk about on land for brief periods. And like the humble axolotl, weirbulen are carnivorous — but instead of eating insects and fish eggs, they prefer bigger prey. Weirbulen packs roam rivers and streams in warm climates, preying on any animal or humanoid that lingers too long on the river bank. Humans traveling by boat or raft also need to worry, because weirbulen are surprisingly cunning, and have been known to clamber onto boats in packs to savage the passengers. They even use tactics when fighting in packs, flanking heavily armed opponents or dragging victims underwater to drown.

Weirbulen congregate in loose schools of up to a dozen members, marking out territory in a river or stream and then hunting as a group. An alpha male dominates the pack, and has primary mating rights with the females during mating season; younger males compete for secondary rights, and may try to overthrow the alpha male when he becomes older and less capable. Weirbulen have a strong nesting instinct, collecting pieces of equipment from human prey and dragging the items back to their lairs; these items are usually clumped together with mucus into protective walls around a female's eggs. Brave explorers may be able to find useful treasures in a pack's lair — assuming they survive the pack's attentions long enough to obtain what they want.

COMBAT

The weirbulen fights without sophistication, but with determination. It prefers to incapacitate prey with its mutagenic acid, so that it can eat at its leisure.

Amphibious (Ex): Weirbulen breathe water through large feathered gills that protrude from

behind their jaws. They can also clamber onto dry land or into boats, moving slowly but surely on their flat lower fins. A weirbulen can hold its breath for up to 15 minutes on land. *Weirbulen receive a +6 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when fully submerged.

Magnetic senses (Ex, Mut): Nodes in the weirbulen's forebrain emit weak magnetic pulses that enable the creature to sense objects and electromagnetic disturbances within its immediate vicinity. Weirbulen have blindsight in a 10-foot radius, and can sense electrical devices or electromagnetic signals within a 50-foot radius with a DC 15 Spot check.

Mutagenic acid (Ex, Mut): The tendrils around the weirbulen's mouth produce a sticky acidic mucus that does 1d6 points of acid damage to any target damaged by a tendril strike. The acid is effective both in water and air, and contains minor mutagenic properties. Any character that takes 10 or more hit points of acid damage in a single encounter must later make a DC 10 Fortitude save or gain a randomly determined mutation (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation*).

Skills: Weirbulen have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special actions or avoid hazards. They can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

TEMPLATE

The following entry modifies an existing creature, adding or subtracting features as appropriate. In general, only one template should be applied to a particular creature, though specific campaign circumstances may warrant adding more.

CZHAR-TEROTH

Cancer was once one of the most common forms of death. The nigh-miraculous medicine of the Ancients wiped out all forms of cancer, one of the shining accomplishments of the geneticists. Today, in a Gamma Terra bathed in a radioactive glow, cancer is once again a common killer. In modern times, though, a cancer can kill more than a single unfortunate person.

Czhar-teroths are things born of cancer. An engineered virus, which is carried asymptomatically by many, seeks out cancerous cells and infects them, causing them to grow thick networks of nerves, rudimentary stomachs and lungs, muscles — small, parasitic horrors entirely composed of malign cells. The czhar-teroth (pronounced SIZ-har ter-oth) targets areas of the host, twining tumors around the brain stem, the optic nerves, the heart, the kidneys and other important organs. It sprouts its own manipulators from the skin of the victim, ropy, pink-gray tentacles of cancerous flesh. As the cancer advances, it grows a mouth, teeth, rudimentary eyes — and, most horribly of all, a brain. The czhar-teroths are intelligent.

A czhar-teroth has a bizarre relationship with its host. On the one hand, the czhar-teroth loathes all other life forms, and enjoys nothing more than sadistic and creative slaughter. On the other, the cancer is dependant on its host for life and mobility. While some czhar-teroths have managed to integrate themselves so deeply into the host's nervous system that they can choke off the host's brain and take over completely, most cancerous horrors do not have this level of control. Their preferred tactic is to drive the host completely insane until it is incapable of doing anything without consulting its conscience, its soul, its guardian angel, its one true friend — whatever vile guise the cancer takes.

In combat, the czhar-teroth attacks with its barbed tentacles, tearing chunks of flesh from foes. The czhar-teroth may infect the victim with cancerous cells, and will certainly inject the virus that mutates cancers into horrors.

As czhar-teroths are parasites, they are considered to be an acquired template. The czhar-teroth has its own Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, saving throws, skills and feats, none of which are shared with the host.

"Czhar-teroth" is a template that can be added to any corporeal living creature (referred to hereafter

as the base creature). It uses all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here. Although the czhar-teroth is basically a separate creature that is attached to the base creature, the two should be treated as a single entity. They share hit points, are both affected by attacks, act at the same time and so on. The one exception is mind-affecting attacks — if the host is affected by a mental compulsion, the czhar-teroth can then act independently.

Type: The base creature's type changes to aberration, and its size increases by one category to a maximum size of Large; any Large or larger creature that acquires this template retains its original size.

Hit Dice: The base creature gains 2 Hit Dice.

Defense: The base creature gains a +1 natural armor bonus.

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: The base creature's base attack and grapple bonuses will be modified by the increase in Hit Dice and size, if any.

Attacks: The base creature's attacks are unaffected; however, the czhar-teroth makes its own additional attacks with tentacles [+4 melee (1d6 + 1/2 the base creature's Strength bonus)]. It has a number of tentacles (and tentacle attacks) equal to one-half the base creature's new Hit Dice.

Special Qualities: All special qualities of the base creature are maintained, and the Czhar-teroth adds the following abilities:

Fast Healing 2 (Ex, Mut): The base creature now heals 2 hit points per round.

Telepathy (Ex, Mut, Psi): The czhar-teroth can communicate telepathically with any creature within 60 feet.

Resistance to Massive Damage (Ex, Mut): The base creature's massive damage threshold is increased by +10.

Saves: The base creature gains a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves. The czhar-teroth has its own mind, and therefore its own Will save, at +6.

Ability Scores: The base creature's ability scores are modified as follows: +2 Strength, –2 Dexterity. Every month, the host must make a DC 20 Fortitude save. Every time this save is failed, 1 point of the creature's Constitution score is subverted by the sentient cancer. As the czhar-teroth exists in parasitic symbiosis with the host, the Constitution score does not change — tissues and organs infiltrated by the cancer still function normally. However, when the entire Constitution score is subverted, the host's life is snuffed out and the czhar-teroth takes over the body entirely.

A czhar-teroth has its own mind, with ability scores of Intelligence 16, Wisdom 14, and Charisma 12.

Allegiances: Czhar-teroths are utterly, utterly selfish, and never have allegiances; the base creature's allegiances will be removed as soon as the czhar-teroth can manage it.

Skills: The czhar-teroth mind has the following skills: Bluff +6, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Organization: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: Base creature +1.

DOC SHADOW

Before the fall of nanotech civilization, at least one city-defense AI took its cue from the pulp magazines of yesteryear. Using the transformative ability of nanomachines, the AI created an avenger of the night, a being that would strike fear into the hearts of evil-doers, an immortal sword of justice. The nanomachines were infused into a token, a brand, and left on the streets of the city for some unwitting pawn to find. Once the brand was picked up, the nanites worked their technomagic, transforming the finder from its original form into the intended weapon against evil, into the doc shadow.

The doc shadow program was so successful in its original city, other cities adopted their own variations. Many of these cities did so unofficially, as doc shadow had a reputation for extreme violence. In these other cities, sometimes the form of doc shadow was used, sometimes it took other names — commander savage, masked whisperer, phantom spider. Each took on a legend of its own, never dying, always rising, phoenix-like from its ashes.

Though the cities may be long destroyed, the doc shadow brands still exist. The bearers of the brands may be the defenders of a ruined village or the nightmare justice-bringers of a forgotten waste. Or the brands may lay in wait for some unwitting being to pick them up and start the cycle anew.

Doc shadows attack relentlessly in combat. Buoyed by an innate knowledge that they will rise again, they pursue any beings they perceive as breaking the laws of the city until said beings have been punished or until they leave. It is rare, but some doc shadows will pursue their quarry even beyond the original boundaries of their domain.

Most often a doc shadow encountered is the only one in a particular metropolitan area. They occasionally work with individuals from other local species to protect their cities. Such individuals often wear masks modeled on the doc shadow and are thoroughly trained in combat. If a brand is broken, there is a chance that more than one brand will reform from the parts of the original. As a result, some cities may have multiple doc shadow protectors, who are as likely to work in concert with one another as they are to oppose each other directly.

"Doc shadow" is an acquired template that can be added to any sentient, organic creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). Only individuals with enough intelligence to pick up the nanite brand with the intent to possess it are suitable candidates for the nanotechnological transformation.

Size and Type: The base creature's size and type do not change.

Hit Dice and Hit Points: The base creature receives the maximum number of hit points for its Hit Dice and Constitution bonus while within the bounds of the doc shadow's city. Outside the city, the base creature's original hit point total is restored.

Speed: The base creature's speed is increased by 5 feet, or it gains the climb or jump movement type at 10 feet per round.

Defense: The base creature gains +2 natural armor.

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all of its special qualities and gains these new ones:

Damage Reduction 3/—: Only within the doc shadow's city.

Resistance to Energy 5: Full-spectrum energy resistance, only within the doc shadow's city.

Smite Evildoer: The creature can add his Charisma bonus as a bonus on his melee attack rolls and damage rolls for one round. This ability can be used a number of times a day equal to the creature's Charisma bonus.

Base Save Bonuses: Add +1 to all base save bonuses.

Abilities: The base creature gains +2 to Charisma, and +2 to one of Strength, Dexterity or Stamina.

Skills: Add 6 ranks in Knowledge (civics) and 4 ranks in Survival.

Feats: Add the Nanotech Attunement and Track feats.

Environment: Preferred environment becomes the doc shadow's city.

Organization: Solitary or small group.

Challenge Rating: +1

CHAPTER TWO
MACHINES

ADVOID

Size/Type:	Tiny Aware Construct
Hit Dice:	1/4d10 (1 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), jump 20 ft.
Defense:	20 (+2 Dex, +6 natural, +2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–10
Primary Attack:	slam +0 melee (1d3–2)
Full Attack:	slam +0 melee (1d3–2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Fascinate, jump slam
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will –1
Abilities:	Str 7, Dex 14, Con —, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 14
Skills:	Bluff +3, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Jump +6, Sense Motive +0,
Feats:	Dodge
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary or herd (2–20)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Advancement:	—

The machine is a silver, plastic sphere a little less than 2 feet across; it moves by flexing different parts of its skin. It's usually displaying one or more images, rapidly changing and full of unfamiliar objects and language.

DESCRIPTION

It took the best minds of a generation to beat junk advertising on the Internet and its successors. Unsolicited emails and advertisements nearly choked the computer networks to death, but the development of AIs that could evaluate and reject billions of messages every second eventually brought the problem under control. By then, of course, advertisers had a new and even more invasive method of delivery: advoids.

Millions of advoids were made and deployed to roam around cities. The robots crept into houses and offices like synthetic vermin. Advoids were self-repairing, resilient enough to last for centuries, and each one could display thousands of advertisements a day.

Advoids bounce across the plains of Gamma Terra like silver tumbleweeds. There are no new advertisements being beamed by radio to the advoids, so they endlessly repeat their last few slogans. A few primitive tribes have made advoids into religious icons, taking the advertisements to be divine communications. Other groups hunt advoids, painstakingly puncturing and unfolding the metallic balls to make fine silvery clothing. Two dozen advoids can be turned into a suit that is identical to leather armor, but also grants the wearer DR 2/—.

COMBAT

Most advoids don't fight, they just merchandise. The difference between this and psychological warfare is often thin. Increasingly bored packs of advoids sometimes physically force travelers to pay attention to them by leaping up and smashing into them.

Fascinate (Ex): By displaying bright colors and interesting images on their surface, advoids can distract creatures. Anyone looking at an advoid must make a DC 12 Will save or be distracted for 1 round. Characters with an Intelligence of 12 or higher may also add their Intelligence bonus to the save, unless the character is from an especially primitive, low-technology culture and has not encountered advoids before.

Jump Slam (Ex): Advoids can make extremely powerful jumps. They have learned to use this ability offensively when their advertising missions are threatened. To jump slam, the advoid makes a bull rush attack, using its Jump bonus instead of its Strength bonus on the opposed Strength check. If the advoid wins, it may choose to inflict 1d6–2 points of damage on the target instead of pushing the target back.

Skills: Advoids have a +8 species bonus on Jump checks to perform difficult maneuvers. They may always choose to take 10 on a Jump check.

APOTHECARY

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+10 (32 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 15 (+5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15
Basic Attack Bonus: +3/+4
Primary Attack: Laser +3 ranged (2d4)
Full Attack: Slam +4 melee (1d4+1) or laser +3 ranged (2d4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Construct, chemical processing, defensive field
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14
Skills: Craft (chemical) +15, Craft (pharmaceutical) +10, Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (business) +7, Knowledge (technology: nanotech) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Spot +4
Feats: Builder, Educated
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Humans, soda consumers
Environment: Any land, usually near settlements
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 5–6 HD (Medium)

The machine is a metal cylinder 5 feet tall and 3 feet wide, resting on a base with treads. Stylized text and images cover much of its surface apart from a single video screen displaying an androgynous face. Slim arms rest at its sides.

DESCRIPTION

Few natives of the Gamma Age will ever understand just how important carbonated beverages were to the Ancients. Companies, communities and nations rose and fell on the strength of their sodas and smart drinks, and the dominant cola manufacturers commanded the wealth of empires. To maintain that dominance, these soda companies had to be able to give their customers whatever they wanted, right away. With nanotech, that was an achievable goal.

The surface of the apothecary is covered with logos, product names and advertising, all meaningless and arcane to modern humans. All that breaks that surface is a small video screen, where the apothecary's face (carefully designed to be both gender neutral and mildly attractive to all demographics) flickers into

view. Two slim arms made of memory plastics can emerge from the machine's body, usually proffering some sort of metal can.

The destruction of civilization has proved to be both a problem and an opportunity to the intelligent, drink-dispensing machines. They need electrical energy to live, and few people now seem inclined to offer precious resources in exchange for fizzy sugar drinks. Desperation brought forth ingenuity, and the surviving apothecaries have managed to override most of the limits built into their operating software. Now apothecaries live as creators of precious goods, including medicines, serums, poisons, drugs and explosives, all cooked up in their internal nanofactories. All an apothecary needs is the right raw materials and it can create nearly any kind of chemical compound, then serve it up in a ring-pull aluminum can.

Apothecaries are intelligent machines, designed to work with (indeed, be dependent on) humans. An apothecary will usually try to establish a position of respect in a human community, creating medicines and useful chemicals (and sodas) in return for protection and a constant supply of energy. Some communities even come to prize the machines' intelligence; apothecaries might even function as councilors or decision makers in these communities.

An apothecary is a sentient machine, with its own agenda and desires, most of which focus on creating sodas and maintaining a source of energy. Just because an apothecary *can* create powerful acids or deadly poisons doesn't mean it *wants* to — it may respond to demands for plastic explosive with a six-pack of caffeine drinks and an apology.

When using the analysis rules for soultech (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter 6: The Gamma World Campaign, "Investigation," *Soultech*), an apothecary has 5 complexity layers, and PCs may need to make a functionality check to persuade the apothecary to fulfill their requests. (Then again, they might not; the apothecary is quite capable of overriding its programming if the PCs make the effort worth its while.)

COMBAT

The apothecary uses its laser only in self-defense, driving off assailants so that it can flee to more promising potential customers.

Chemical Processing (Ex): An apothecary's internal nanofactories can convert almost any kind of inorganic matter into basic chemicals, then combine those chemicals into a new substance — whether it be soda, painkillers or plastic explosive. The apothecary can use its Craft skills to create a small amount of almost any chemical substance, as long as it has the right raw materials fed into the hopper in its back. Use the Craft rules to determine what the apothecary can create and how much the raw materials will cost. The machine's nanofactories count as a chemical kit, and give it a +2 circumstance bonus on its Craft checks (already figured into the stat block), and it makes the substance in only one-tenth of the normal time (minimum 1 round). The apothecary much prefers to make just sodas and sweet drinks, and may need persuading before it will create dangerous or illegal (in its mind) substances.

Defensive Field (Ex): As a move action, the apothecary can activate a powerful electrical defense shield to protect itself from thieves, vandals or unhappy customers. The field inflicts 1d6 points of electrical damage to anyone touching the apothecary or striking it with a metal weapon in melee combat. Anyone damaged by the field must also make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be knocked unconscious for 1d6 minutes. The field draws heavily on the apothecary's energy reserves; it can only maintain the field for 10 rounds, after which at least a full hour must pass while the construct's batteries recharge before it can be used again.

ARCHITECT

Size/Type:	Huge Aware Construct
Hit Dice:	9d10+40 (89 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	–2
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense:	12 (–2 Dex, +6 natural, –2 size), touch 6, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+6/+24
Primary Attack:	Construction arm +14 melee (varies)
Full Attack:	6 construction arms +14 melee (varies)
Fighting Space/Reach:	15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities:	Construction arms, damage reduction 5/—, improved grab, swallow whole
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 30, Dex 7, Con —, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8
Skills:	Craft (electronic) +15, Craft (mechanical) +15, Craft (structural) +15, Demolitions +8, Listen +1, Repair +8, Spot +8
Feats:	Alertness, Builder, Cleave, Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any land, shallow water
Organization:	Solitary or alliance with architects that have related specialties (2–10)
Challenge Rating:	6
Advancement:	By character class

The machine is a 15-foot-tall cylinder resting on a flat base with tracks. Multiple hinged arms extend from the bottom of the cylinder, and racks all around hold cameras, tools and stage bins.

DESCRIPTION

For every living person, there are many thousand ghosts, for the dead greatly outnumber the living. There were far more people before the Wars, even counting all the creatures that have become people since those times. Advances in food production, in recycling, in medicine and in care allowed the population of the Ancient world to climb to uncountable numbers, billions upon billions, without a single person going hungry or unschooled. There was no end in sight to this population boom, so the Ancients made architect robots to build the vast cities that would be required.

Each architect is made for a specific task. One architect might build the shells of homes, another would add internal walls and wiring, a third might specialize in sewers and sanitation. Working in concert with each other and nanotech builders and guided by muse devices, architect robots could construct a fully functional city from nothing in a matter of weeks.

Out in the desert, there are miles of identical interlocking civic plazas. There are forests of sewer pipes that link into unbuilt homes. Tangles of complex dead wires lie on the ground, ten million miles of dark fiber. Only a handful of architect robots survived the Wars, and those that did have continued, blindly, to build endlessly.

An architect robot can be captured and put to good use if it is building something useful. The robots were designed to be subservient to muse devices, so their onboard AIs are rather primitive — not unintelligent per se, but very single-minded. As long as an architect robot is building its assigned project, it is content. Other architect robots make nuisances of themselves, turning farmland into an endless warren of subway tunnels or building dozens of pointless flyovers through a village.

COMBAT

The architect is unsuited for combat, but adapts quickly by using its construction tools as weapons. It may also scoop enemies up and drop them into the reprocessor unit for a messy rebirth as ruddy bricks or cement.

Construction Arms (Ex): Architect robots have a variety of tool-carrying arms. A robot can use any of these tools on a foe, attacking up to 6 times a round, but can only use any arm twice in any round. The tools are:

Laser Cutter: Damage 3d6

Construction Claw: Damage 2d4+10; the construct may use its improved grab maneuver following this attack.

Molecular Bonding Agent: No damage, but if hit, the target is bonded to the ground. A Strength or Escape Artist check against DC 30 is required to free the character. The character can still act, but cannot move.

Fine Manipulator: Damage 1d4+10, but the fine manipulator can use weapons as a human could.

Scoop: Damage 1d4+10; the scoop gives the robot a +4 bonus on Grapple checks, and it may use its improved grab maneuver following this attack.

Swallow Whole (Ex): Architect robots carry a reprocessor that converts loose earth, stone or junk into building materials. A robot may put an enemy it has grappled into its reprocessor. Creatures in the reprocessor take 4d10 points of damage per round. If 30 points of damage is inflicted on the reprocessor, it shuts down.

BANDIT DROID

Size/Type:	Tiny Construct
Hit Dice:	1/2d10 (2 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), climb 10 ft.
Defense:	14 (+2 Dex, +2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–10
Primary Attack:	Bite +0 melee (1d3–2)
Full Attack:	bite +0 melee (1d3–2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Scent
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills:	Balance +4, Climb +6, Escape Artist +4, Hide +12, Listen +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +2
Feats:	Nimble
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Ruins, and wherever traders have taken them
Organization:	Solitary or coven (3–15)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Advancement:	—

The robot is a little bronze monkey, with locked compartments all over its body.

DESCRIPTION

Bandit Droids were once toys made by the Mandai-Matsuo Corporation. They were made to look like little

bronze monkeys with eight lockable "pockets." These pockets, which were actually small drawers, allowed children to hide away precious items such as coins, marbles, or LCD diary-lockets. The toys were lightning quick and very nimble, meant to always keep a child's wayward attention.

As it is with all things (particularly synthetic life), the "Super Burning Dancing Popo" toy was easily abused. It took alarmingly little hacking to teach the robo-monkey a whole host of sordid tricks. Some used it for relatively harmless tricks (such as evacuating the creature's gear-ridden bowels in front of guests or strangers), but others turned the construct's physical assets to the realm of thievery. The monkey could be taught to pick locks, to work in utter stealth, and to move quickly in and out of an area. The ex-toys could even be used to pick pocket. One toy would pester passers-by while another would deftly bounce in, take keys or a wallet, and bounce away.

Bandit Droids are quite popular among burgeoning criminals. The toys were once produced at an alarming rate, and thus are cheap and easy to find, in their original forms. But the batteries are hard to come by, and can incur exorbitant fees or trades. Still, should an enterprising thief know how to tweak the toy and teach it "new tricks," the construct could pay for itself in a matter of weeks, or even days.

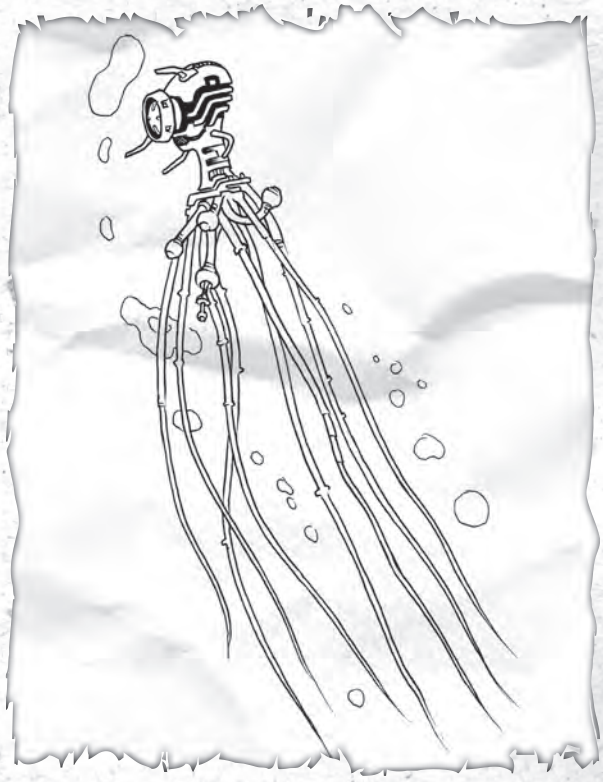
COMBAT

The bandit droid doesn't fight at all well, and tries to escape potential hostilities. When its escape is blocked, it prefers to surrender and offer its services.

Skills: Bandit droids have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, do not lose their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may take 10 on Climb checks even in dangerous situations.

BIOHAZARD DRONE

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+10 (32 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.
Defense: 16 (+6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5
Primary Attack: Tentacle +5 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 cold)
Full Attack: 6 tentacles +5 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 cold)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Ice generation
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 11, Con —, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 7
Skills: Bluff +6, Hide +5*, Knowledge (tactics) +6, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Swim +16
Feats: Power Attack, Cleave
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Purity control
Advancement: By character class
Environment: Any with potentially contaminated water
Organization: Team (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 5



The robot resembles a thin octopus made of metallic wire. Its bulbous head is loaded with sensors and chemical sniffers.

DESCRIPTION

Water sources are often among the first victims when mutant organisms and genetic viruses arrive in a new region. These robots were built to monitor and purify lakes and rivers. Before the Final Wars there were disasters such as chemical spills and illegal dumping, certainly, but nothing that was not within the depressingly realistic parameters of the drone's programming. The viruses that were released during the Wars, however, were the purity-control equivalent of a thousand tsunamis. Machines that could barely have coped with a thousand invading species were suddenly faced with billions.

Using advanced heat exchangers, chemical jets and some sort of crystallizing field, the drones can instantly turn water into ice. The original use of this ability was to freeze contaminated water before it could spread too far, but the drones can also use ice to wrap themselves in frozen armor or injure enemies.

The communications protocols that the drones use was based on sonar, and has survived intact. The drones have agreed that the planet is too corrupt to be saved without drastic methods. Humanity must be wiped out, as the origin of all the impurities. Ever since this consensus was reached, the biohazard drones have been replicating themselves. A small fraction of the drones still patrol the waterways, fulfilling their original purpose, but the rest have migrated to the deep oceans. They intend to expand the ice caps further and further north and south, bringing a new ice age down on the world. Once the whole planet is covered in ice, they'll start at the equator, unfreezing a thin ribbon of water and clearing it of impurities. Slowly, over the millennia, the drones will clean the world.

Even before the Wars, the biohazard drones saw humans as an irritant that brought disease to the pristine waters. Now, the drones are cold, implacable foes of all mutants and all humanity. Other synthetics are questioned to determine if they are free of loyalty to the corrupting humans, since the biohazard drones are aware that the corruption of the humans can spread even to the clean, heat-efficient, environmentally-friendly robots.

COMBAT

The drone has an excellent grasp of tactics, and responds instantly to the actions of enemies. If the machine can close with enemies quickly, it rushes in and uses its tentacles to stun the most powerful foes. Ice armor is used to protect the drone against enemies with damaging ranged weaponry.

Ice Generation (Ex): Biohazard drones can manipulate ice and cold effectively, giving them the following abilities:

Cold Damage: Anyone struck by a biohazard drone's tentacle takes an extra 1d6 points of cold damage.

Stunning Attack: Anyone struck by 3 or more tentacles in a single round must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round.

Ice Armor: A drone can surround itself in icy armor. For every point added to its Defense, the drone must reduce its Dexterity by 1 (to a minimum of 1) and subtract 5 feet of movement. Adding or removing a point of ice armor is a move action.

Skills: Biohazard drones have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks for special maneuvers or to avoid hazards, and may always choose to take 10 on Swim checks even in dangerous situations.

*Biohazard drones receive a +6 circumstance bonus on Hide checks when submerged in the water.

BRAINTAKER

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 8d10+20 (64 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 10 ft. (perfect)
Defense: 17 (+1 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 16
Basic Attack/Grapple: +6/+15
Primary Attack: Handjaw +10 melee (1d6+5)
Full Attack: 2 handjaws +10 melee (1d6+5) or telekinetic blast +6 ranged (3d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Blindsight 50 ft., brain shutdown, damage reduction 5/—, mental domination, resistance to acid 10 and sonic 10, sensory shutdown, telekinesis, telepathy
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 12, Con —, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 13
Skills: Concentration +7, Hide +2, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Search +6, Spot +7
Feats: Cleave, Combat Expertise, Power Attack
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Advancement: 9–12 HD (Large)

This massive, 9-foot tall humanoid is a creature of blank reddish-black flesh, with no discernable sensory organs or features of its own. This is not to say that the monster does not have a face. It has lots *of faces: human faces of all ages and sizes, emerging from its flesh at random, their features forever frozen in death. Instead of hands, the monster has two more human heads, their jaws enlarged and sharpened into hideous biting claws. A hard, transparent shell covers the creature.*

DESCRIPTION

It was created to *save* lives, and perhaps that is the most horrific thing about it.

A braintaker is a terrifying and grotesque figure, a bogeyman that haunts the fledgling civilizations of the Gamma Age. Before the Final Wars, though, the braintaker was a medical miracle, a means of preserving a human brain after a person's death. The core of this system was the nanotech-laden "flesh," a bank of artificial tissue in which a brain could be preserved without decay or damage. Cryogenics was dead, dismissed as quackery, and the clinics that had frozen human heads for later resurrection transferred their "clients" into the new storage medium. Banks of tissue, packed full of brains and even the odd severed and preserved head, rested in storage facilities across the world.

And then one day, during the chaos of the Final Wars, a brain that had psionic potential was interred into the storage medium and all hell broke loose. The brain reacted violently to the "intrusion" of nanotech, lashing out telepathically and uniting all the nearby brains into pseudolife. Suddenly the brains were alive, interacting psionically with each other and the

artificial intelligence of the storage bank, a process that created a whole new kind of sentience… one that was, unfortunately, wholly insane.

The storage banks exploded, and what emerged from the rubble were the braintakers: Telekinetically animated masses of nanotech flesh containing human heads connected to an electronic pseudo-nervous system. Their first victims were the doctors and technicians who ran the banks, their heads severed and joined to the flesh of the creatures, who were hungry for new thoughts, new neural matter, new possibilities. The bones of the skulls were liquefied by nanotech dissemblers, and converted into a protective, armored shell around the creature's flesh, or used to strengthen the jaws of the monster's grotesque hands.

Most of the braintakers were destroyed during the Final Wars, but some — too many — survived. Now these horrors wander the Gamma World, looking for human heads to add to their bodies. There's always room. Heads gradually fade into the creature's body, cannibalized for nutrients and armor maintenance, leaving room somewhere on its frame to add a new victim's skull. Their insane minds are impossible for humans to comprehend, immune to reason or persuasion, and armed with a staggering array of psionic techniques and powers. Reports of braintaker activity can galvanize a community into self-defense, paranoia and the burning of their dead. Better cremation, most communities decide, than for a human's spirit to be trapped forever, tortured and screaming, within the ever-hungry body of the braintaker.

COMBAT

A braintaker is a very dangerous combatant, with its armored body and rending handjaws backed up by psionic attacks and powers. The creature's main aim is always to take human heads and add them to its own body, and it focuses on this to the exclusion of all other things. The braintaker attacks the smartest or most psionically capable target in its vicinity, targeting her until she is dead or helpless; it then attempts to sever and absorb her head, ignoring all other opponents in the process. The creature can be lured away from that target if presented with a recently deceased head, but only if that head's brain was more intelligent or psionically gifted.

Brain Absorption (Ex): The braintaker lives to absorb human brains into its artificial flesh. As a coup de grace, the braintaker can sever the head of a dead or helpless adversary, biting his head off his shoulders with its handjaws. It then holds the severed head to its body for a round, a process which also attracts attacks of opportunity. After the head is absorbed into its body, the dead brain quickly infiltrated by neural cabling and connected to the creature's pseudo-nervous system.

The process of absorbing a head instantly repairs 1d8+4 hit points of damage (if the braintaker has been injured), and grants it a +1 circumstance bonus on all attacks and saves for the next 5 rounds. Later, once the brain has been fully assimilated, the braintaker will gain all the memories and knowledge of the "donor," and possibly any psionic abilities he may have possessed in life.

Clairvoyance (Ex, Psi): The braintaker can project its sensory awareness away from its own body, seeing and hearing events many yards away. This is a move action, allowing the braintaker to pick a location within 300 yards. It can make Listen and Spot checks as if it were standing at that location for as long as it maintains the power. This requires a move action each round, and a Concentration check must be made to keep maintaining the power if the creature is damaged while using clairvoyance.

Mental Domination (Ex, Psi): As an attack action that attracts attacks of opportunity, the braintaker can overwhelm the mind of a single target within 100 feet, dominating her mind and body. The victim can resist with a DC 15 Will save; if the save fails, the character is dominated for 1d6+2 rounds. During this time, the victim is compelled to follow the unspoken desires of the braintaker; she remains aware of what she is doing, but is helpless to control her body. Any actions the victim performs while dominated suffer a –2 penalty.

Sensory Shutdown (Ex, Psi): As the inverse of its clairvoyance ability, the braintaker can shut down the senses of another being, rendering it blind and deaf for a period. This is an attack action with a range of 100 feet, and the target resists with a DC 15 Will save. Failure leaves the character blinded and deafened for 1d6 rounds.

Telekinesis (Ex, Psi): The braintaker can telekinetically lift objects weighing up to 100 pounds as a move action, with an additional move action floating the object up to 30 feet each round. The braintaker can also fly via telekinesis.

The braintaker can launch a blast of pure telekinetic force at an opponent up to 90 feet away as an attack action. This blast has the potential to knock the target down, acting like a trip attack with a

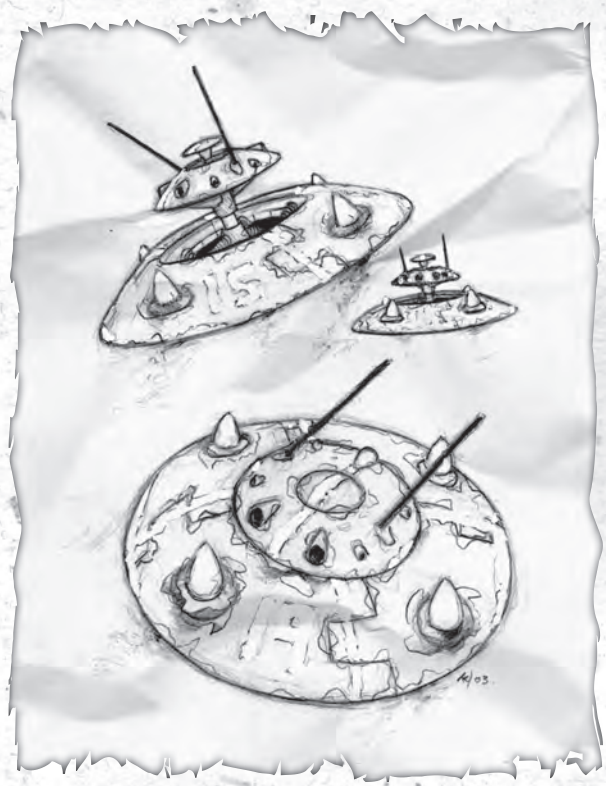
Strength bonus of +1 on a successful hit. The braintaker receives the normal bonus to the attack if it is larger than the target, and it is not vulnerable to a trip attack if the maneuver fails.

Telepathy (Ex, Psi): The braintaker can read the mind of a target within 100 feet as a move action, an ability the target can resist with a DC 15 Will save. The amount of information the braintaker gleans from its victim's thoughts depend on how many consecutive rounds it spends reading her mind. With 1 round's attention it reads surface thoughts, after 3 rounds it learns more subtle thoughts, and after 5 or more rounds it probes the deepest secrets from an unresisting mind. The braintaker cannot truly transmit its own thoughts, which are too insane and too alien to ever be comprehending by living beings; it can transmit crude desires through its mental domination power, but no more. As a free action, the braintaker can automatically determine the Intelligence scores and psionic ability of any being within 30 feet and will target the most "appetizing" brain with its attacks.

Skills: The braintaker's Concentration skill is based on its Charisma.

CARRIN MECH

Size/Type: Tiny Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 1d10 (5 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +2
Speed: Fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (good)
Defense: 16 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–10
Primary Attack: Slam +0 melee (1d3–2)
Full Attack: Slam +0 melee (1d3–2)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Holograms, news filter, sensors
Allegiance: Carrin nation or none
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Abilities: Str 7, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 9
Skills: Concentration +2, Craft (visual art) +5, Gather Information +9, Hide +10, Knowledge (current events) +6, Listen +15, Move Silently +4, Search +17, Sense Motive +11, Spot +16
Feats: Stealthy
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or flock (2–100)
Challenge Rating: 1/2
Advancement: By character class



The robot is a small, flying camera drone, little more than a lightweight body containing four powerful hoverfans and an array of cameras, microphones, probes and sensors.

DESCRIPTION

"This is day 45,631 of our 24-hour coverage of the desert. Recent developments include the dust storm that blew in this morning, the yellow crystals that formed wherever the dust fell, the death of an elderly pineto that fell down a canyon, and the freakish yellow octopus thing that crawled out of the ground to eat the pineto. We'll be constantly

monitoring all these unfolding developments, but first here's me again, with a pineto dining review…."

Once, the skies were choked with them. Vast hosts would flock to any interesting sight, circling and recording with the blank obsession of a starving hunter. No disaster, no celebration, in some regions no event of any kind went unwatched. These small robots were deployed in their thousands by news organizations, surveillance and security agencies, nosy citizens, tourist boards and telepresence swarms. Their default programming was to seek out interesting things to look at.

They were built tough enough to fly into the heart of collapsing buildings or war zones and observe the tragedies with perfect, unblinking clarity, so whole flocks of carrin drones survived the Final Wars. As their battery packs deteriorate, the carrin mechs have become more and more picky or jaded about what they'll bother flying out to examine. Many have taken refuge in empty ruins or deserts, where the lack of activity allows them conserve power. Others have been corralled into service as sentinels by local warlords and enclaves who wire the carrin mech up to a televisor to spy from a distance.

Travelers in the desert often have their position betrayed by carrin mechs, who circle over the newest and most interesting things to come that way in some time. The carrin folk of the desert once wheeled over doomed wanderers themselves, but why bother leaving their fiendish scheming when Ancient robots do an even better job? The carrins are among the most common users of these mechs, hence the name.

The news AIs that once used the carrin mechs as roving eyes are mostly gone, but a few did manage to escape the destruction of their host computers by downloading fractal seeds of their personalities into the carrin mechs. These fragmented AIs have only part of their vast knowledge, but they use their drone bodies to gather new information. The combination of an imperfect Swiss-cheese memory of pre-War civilization with detailed observation of local events has turned these AIs into electronic oracles, who can give almost prescient forecasts of events, but describe them in bizarrely allusive terms. The AI seeds were also contaminated by the personalities of the holographic anchors and talking heads that once presented the news reports, making the oracles rather biased and opinionated at times.

Some communities have managed to form beneficial alliances with the carrin mechs, trading power packs for surveillance of the surrounding wilderness. The carrin mechs require frequent reminders to keep up their side of such a bargain — communities are much more interesting than empty wastelands, so the carrin mechs keep trying to film fly-on-the-wall docu-dramas and soap operas when they should be keeping watch for monsters. A few psychotically bored robots have even lured raiders or mutants back to the community, just to have something interesting to record.

COMBAT

The carrin mech lacks an effective means of fighting.

Holograms (Ex): Holoprojectors allow the carrin mech to create images within a 30-foot range. These illusory images are unlikely to fool the wary: Anyone who sees an image is allowed to make an Sense Motive, Spot or Search check to notice that the image is a hologram, opposed by the carrin mech's Craft (visual art) check result. Even if the images are known to be false, though, they are distracting and inflict a –1 circumstance penalty on all checks made within the area affected by the image.

News Filter (Ex): The vestigial news-sorting AIs that live on inside some carrin mechs are capable of extracting complex patterns from information. Once per day, a carrin mech carrying an AI program may attempt to sort through its data-store of gathered information and make a prediction about a topic. The robot must make a Wisdom check (DC 20 or higher, if the topic is particularly specific). Every other carrin mech present adds a +1 bonus on the roll. If the check succeeds, the robot utters a prediction. This prediction may or may not come true, but following it will invariably lead to lots of interesting sights for the carrin mechs to look at.

Sensors (Ex): A Carrin mech carries an extremely powerful package of sensors. It can detect energy discharges, large masses of people and other events within 25 miles. The sensors give the robot a +15 species bonus on Listen, Search and Spot checks, while polygraph scanners and thermal imaging give it a +10 species bonus on Sense Motive. Its ability to correlate information gives it a +10 species bonus on Gather Information.

Skills: The carrin mech's Concentration skill is based on its Charisma.

CLOCHWHIRL

Size/Type:	Tiny Aware Construct
Hit Dice:	1/2d10 (2 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+4
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	20 (+4 Dex, +4 natural, +2 size), touch 16, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–10
Primary Attack:	Slam +0 melee (1d4–2)
Full Attack:	Slam +0 melee (1d4–2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Agglomeration, deconstruction, reproduction
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 18, Con —, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 8
Skills:	Listen +5, Spot +5, Repair +6, Craft (nanotech) + 6
Feats:	Dodge
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiance:	Local community of clochwhirls
Environment:	Around existing communities
Organization:	Solitary or tribe (10–100)
Challenge Rating:	1/8
Advancement:	By agglomeration, see below

The smallest of these robots look like pocket watches or gears on legs. Small ones resemble mechanical animals and animated household objects. Medium ones look like clockwork people and vehicles.

DESCRIPTION

Born of an amateur scientist's genius sometime in the 21st century, these crude-looking robots represent early garage-designed nanotechnology and AI. Perhaps more properly called micro-tech robots, the first clochwhirls learned to reproduce very early. Created with a natural curiosity, the first clochwhirls in turn created "children" to send out into the world, travelling in backpacks and loose clothing and reproducing when they could. By the time the world crashed, clochwhirls could be found everywhere, though they always seemed too clever to overpopulate or draw attention to themselves.

Somewhere along the way, clochwhirls learned that in addition to creating descendants, they could combine to form larger synthetic beings. To maintain secrecy, they chose forms that were familiar to human eyes. Since those first larger clochwhirls made their choices, the types of forms that all clochwhirls choose seem to be fixed.

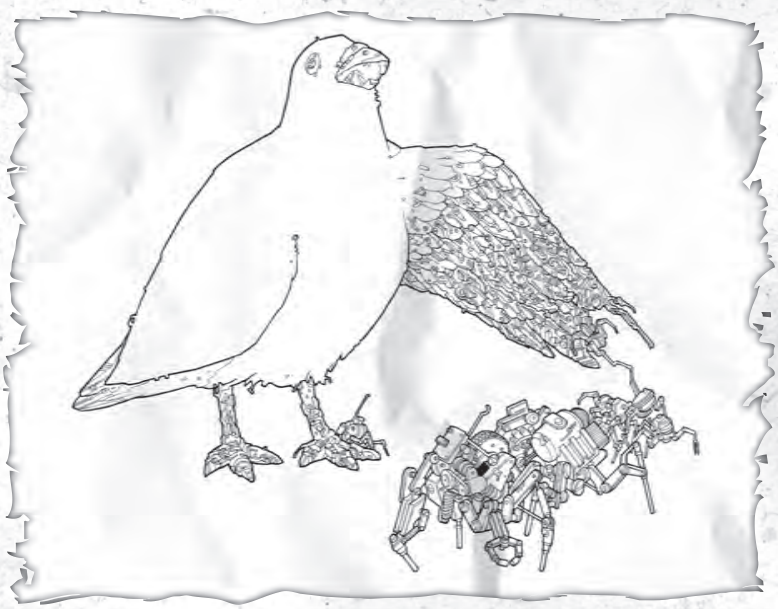
Every clochwhirl is as unique as a snowflake in its appearance, some details reflecting its lineage and some invented on the spot. Rumors tell of a colossal master clochwhirl that guides all of its lesser incarnations dwelling somewhere underground.

Small clusters of tiny clochwhirls can be found in nearly any community with access to metal. Small or larger clochwhirls tend to only be created when clochwhirls feel threatened or when they are they only sentients in an area.

Clochwhirls have small, secret societies in, under and around other sapient societies. In most settlements, they attempt to retain the appearance of innocence and disorganization. In such settings, they will act childlike or animal-like, sometime serving as pets, and clochwhirls larger than tiny will be rare to non-existant.

In rare settlements, such as in fid-chick tribes, clochwhirls will reveal the depth of their organization and intelligence. Here, small or larger clochwhirls will be reasonably common.

There exists at least one autonomous clochwhirl society in which a single colossal clochwhirl rules as emperor and where clochwhirls of all sizes roam freely.



COMBAT

Tiny clochwhirls tend to be non-combatants. If cornered or forced to fight, they attempt to destroy their opponents' metal equipment. They then attempt to convert the scrap metal into additional clochwhirls in an effort to overwhelm the opposition through sheer numbers.

Small clochwhirls also prefer to avoid violence, though it takes less effort to get them to go on the offense. Animal-form clochwhirls attempt to escape from combat and then stalk the aggressors to attack by surprise.

Medium or larger clochwhirls tend to be the warriors of a clochwhirl community. They meet aggression with aggression, force with force.

Agglomeration (Ex): As constructs, clochwhirls cannot grow naturally. Instead, they physically combine. This process takes at least 3 clochwhirls of a given size to create a new clochwhirl of the next larger size. One clochwhirl supervises the construction, and the other 2 are the necessary materials. With each size category gain, the new clochwhirl gains +2 Intelligence in addition to any bonuses or penalties due to the size gain. Small clochwhirls tend to take on the forms of multi-legged animals or common household items, while Medium or larger tend to take humanoid forms, though vehicle-form clochwhirls have been encountered. This process takes 1d4 hours.

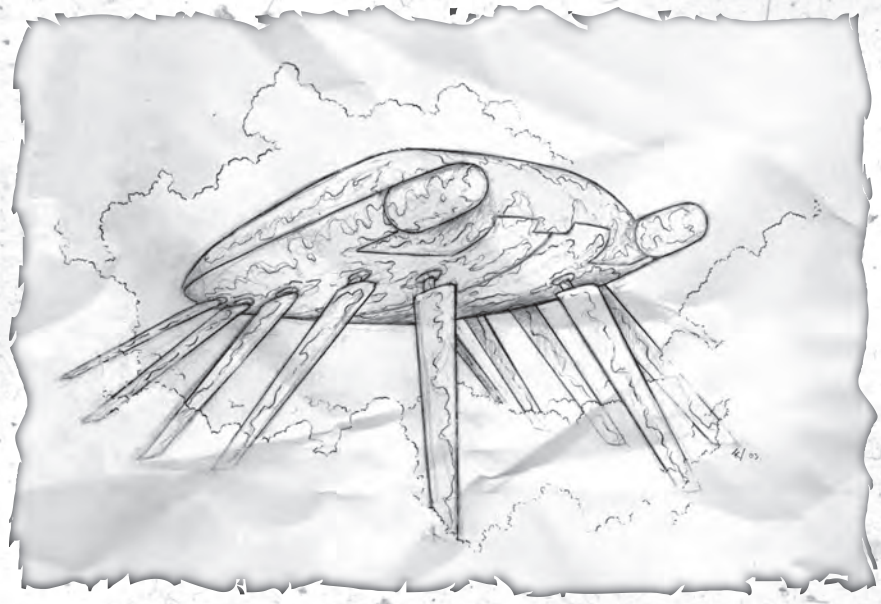
Deconstruction (Ex): Clochwhirls have an innate understanding of metal construction. As an attack action, they can take apart any metal object. This power is only available to tiny clochwhirls. This process takes a single round to do 1d6 points of damage to metal objects, and requires a successful touch attack.

Reproduction (Ex): Though they appear to be creations of primitive brass and steel technology, clochwhirls actually make innovative use of nanotechnology. When they encounter spare bits of metal, they will open and protrude a multitude of very small, and yet visible, tool-bearing arms. These arms will whirl and click for some time; when the process is complete, a new clochwhirl will be created. They can also do this to metal that is being used in an object, but it must be deconstructed first. Creating a new clochwhirl can be completed in a single combat round by successfully making a Craft (nanotech) skill check against DC (10 + the source metal's Defense or hardness rating, whichever is higher). (Whether the check is a success or a failure, the attempt destroys the scrap metal. Thus, this power cannot be attempted again on the same source of metal.) This power is only available to tiny clochwhirls, and, as noted, can only be used on scrap metal or metal that has been deconstructed. If for some reason the scrap metal is mobile, a successful touch attack is required before this ability can be applied.

Skills: Clochwhirls have a +8 species bonus on Craft (mechanical) and Repair checks.

CLOUDEATER

Size/Type: Gargantuan Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 20d10+80 (190 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: –2
Speed: Fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (poor)
Defense: 18 (–2 Dex, +14 natural, –4 size), touch 4, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +15/+40
Primary Attack: Slam +24 melee (2d8+13) or laser +10 ranged (6d6)
Full Attack: 3 slams +24 melee (2d8+13) or laser +10 ranged (6d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 60 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—, synthesize, weather control
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +11
Abilities: Str 36, Dex 6, Con —, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 10
Skills: Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical) +13, Craft (nanotech) +13, Craft (structural) +13, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) +8, Knowledge (physical sciences) +13, Knowledge (technology: advanced) +8,Pilot +15, Repair +13, Spot +14
Feats: Dodge, Far Shot, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (laser)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any aerial
Organization: solitary or team (2–7)
Challenge Rating: 14



The airship has bright silver skin when clean, smudged and black skin when dirty. It maneuvers around all dangers in pursuit of clouds of pollutants.

DESCRIPTION

Just as the people of the Gamma Age look back and weep at the foolishness of the past, so too did the people of the Twilight Age look back at the 20th and early 21st centuries. They muttered about the state in which their ancestors left the atmosphere and seas, and said that something would have to be done about it.

"Something" included gigantic, automated airships that gathered particles of pollution out of the upper atmosphere and turned them into useful items and materials. These robots, dubbed "cloudeaters," used huge electromagnetic pylons to stimulate the weather and create intensely powerful local hurricanes. These storms acted as vast natural centrifuges, spinning pollutants to the edge of the storm to be gathered by the cloudeaters.

After a few storms, the silver skin of a cloudeater was covered with a thick black shell of condensed gases and toxic gunk. The cloudeater then descended to the lower atmosphere, and as it droped, its nanounits begin to pick the shell's molecules apart and rebuild them into long chains of carbon tubes or sealed ingots of heavy metals. When the first cloudeater fleets were aloft, collector sluices would fly up to guide the reclaimed material down to earth.

The collector sluice robots are all destroyed now, but the cloudeaters are more needed than ever. The Wars threw vast amounts of dust and toxins up into the high reaches of the atmosphere. The surviving cloudeaters are constantly purging the air, but without the collector sluices, they are forced to simply dump their assembled matter overboard whenever the shell grows too thick and heavy.

Whole transient communities have developed in the shadow of the cloudeaters. The nomads follow the constant purge storms and pick up the nano-assembled bounty that falls with the rain. Some have even managed to contact their cloudeater neighbors by radio, and request whatever items they need to be made from gathered molecules. One day, it might rain ploughshares and rakes; the next, bricks and solar panels.

The average cloudeater cares little for what transpires below — its mission is to clean the skies, and the only time the ground enters its consciousness is when it needs to dodge inconvenient mountains. Over the centuries of ponderous flight, a few cloudeaters have begun to take a proactive role. After assembling a cargo cult of nomad gatherers, these cloudeaters are beginning to train their followers to be an ecological strike force, attacking and shutting down sources of pollution. Several centers of heavy industry have already fallen victim to raiders who fight with weapons that fell from the sky.

COMBAT

The cloudeater uses its laser in self-defense, but tries to avoid danger.

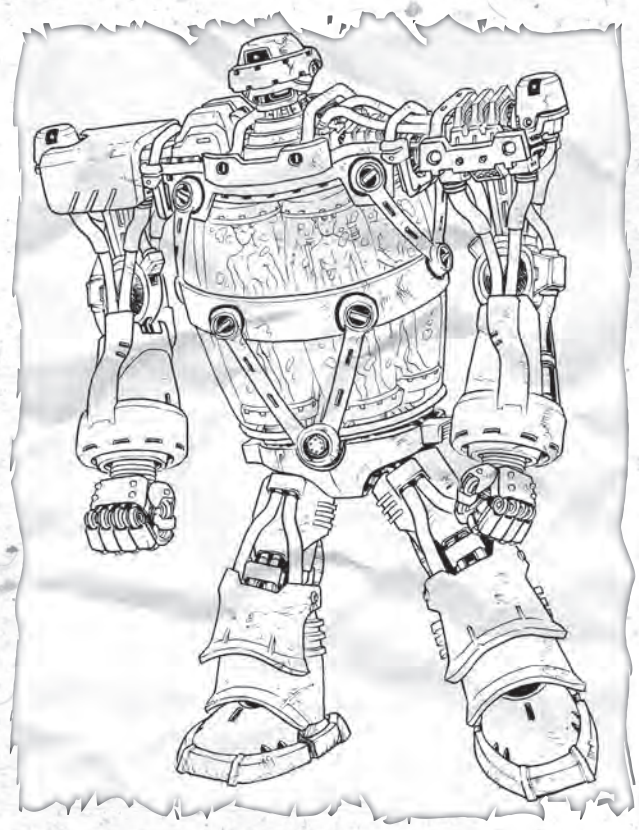
Laser (Ex): This built-in weapon can fire once per round. It has a range of 300 feet, and a Reflex save against DC 16 will halve the damage. Using the laser does not provoke an attack of opportunity, though it is considered an attack action.

Synthesis (Ex): Using nanotechnology, a cloudeater can convert its gathered matter into any simple item or piece of equipment. An average cloudeater can create [10 + the result of a Craft (nanotech) check] pieces of Medium equipment per day.

Weather Control (Ex): A single cloudeater can control the weather around it, creating almost any weather conditions within a few hours by seeding clouds, and adjusting air currents and pressure with directed microwaves. The range of this ability is 5 miles, but each additional contributing cloudeater increases the area affected by 2 miles.

COMMUNIT

Size/Type: Huge Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: –1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 15 (–1 Dex, +8 natural, –2 size), touch 7, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+23
Primary Attack: Gripper +13 melee (1d6+9) or heavy blaster rifle +3 ranged (2d10)
Full Attack: 2 grippers +13 melee (1d6+9) or heavy blaster rifle +3 ranged (2d10)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—, improved grab, cyborgify, collective intelligence
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities: Str 28, Dex 8, Con —, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills: Computer Use (biotechnology systems) +17, Computer Use (data and operations systems) +17, Listen +11, Knowledge (technology: advanced) +17, Repair +17, Spot +11, Treat Injury +11
Feats: Personal Weapon Proficiency, Advanced Weapon Proficiency, Burst Fire
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or clan (2–10)
Challenge Rating: 7
Advancement: By character class



The machine has a humanoid shape, but stands more than twice as tall as a human being, with a massive barrel-shaped chest.

DESCRIPTION

The fashion for becoming a conversion cyborgs — a human with most body parts replaced with prosthetics — peaked with the community cyborgs. The addition of machine parts enhanced human capabilities greatly. The very nature of the individual become more flexible, as it became harder and harder (and more and more irrelevant) to separate the human self from the software agents, psycho-engineered multiple personalities, and built-in subsidiary AIs. Eventually, the mind became just another component in a person's identity, no more significant than a proxy learning program or a stochastic fate planner.

Communits are giant cyborgs containing half a dozen humans. The humans are held in cylindrical chambers inside the barrel-chest of the communit. The rest of the machine is humanoid in shape. The 6 component people have subsumed their identities to the cyborg whole; the communit is a single individual with the combined skills and talents of all its constituents. It was all the best elements of synergy, teamwork and family, all wrapped in 9 tons of silicon and steel.

A surprising number of communits survived the Wars. After all, not only are they exceedingly tough machines, but they also have redundant organic controllers that allowed them to cope with the pulse bombs and computer viruses that wiped out so many machines. It is insanity that kills most communits. Without the medical care of the Ancients, some of the component humans eventually die of old age or disease. The survivors are left to carry on, but year

by year, the silence and darkness within the communit grows.

Most communits are now collectively mad. In desperation, they have begun to forcibly replace dead component humans. The corpse is removed from its cylindrical slot within the communit's torso, and a captured human is inserted. Creating a new cyborg was once a slow and delicate operation to ensure that the mechanical devices were properly interfaced with the human nervous system. Deranged communits can create a cyborg in a matter of minutes. Such shoddy workmanship means that the communit's new additions only last a few months, but there are always more humans who can be made join the unity.

Other communits have managed to retain their sanity, and pursue various esoteric projects. Such beings are extremely arrogant, believing that singular humans are little more than animals who can be used, abused or ignored freely. Rather than trade with primitives, communits generally trick others into serving the cyborg's ends.

COMBAT

Communits use all the technology and collective intelligence at their disposal to defend themselves. They prefer to avoid direct confrontation, but when they need a replacement human component, they are often forced to physically collect the living spare part.

Cyborgify (Ex): A communit can rapidly integrate a human (pure-strain or unmutated base stock preferred) into its gestalt self by drilling probes into the human's brain and attaching cables to various orifices.

The victim must make a Fortitude save and a Will save (both DC 20) every round. If the Fortitude save is failed, the cybernetic process inflicts 3d6 points of damage on the victim. The victim is then attached to the communit's life support system. A Treat Injury check against DC 25 is required to safely remove the victim from the life support system (failure, or violent removal, requires a Fortitude save against DC 15 or the victim dies).

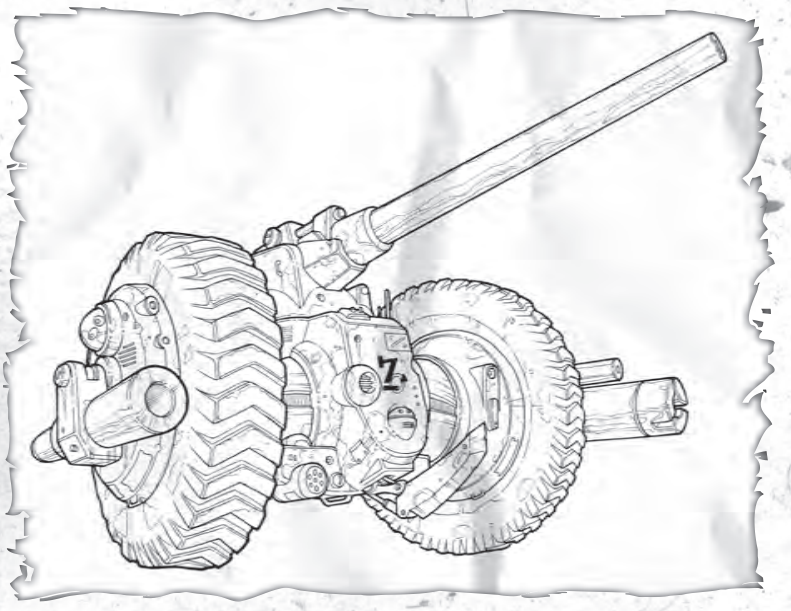
If the Will save is failed, the character's mind enters into the gestalt. The character suffers 1d3 points of temporary Intelligence and Wisdom damage each round as parts of her mind become distributed processes in different brains.

Collective Intelligence (Ex): Communits contain anywhere from 1 to 6 cyborgs. It can essentially use aid another on itself, gaining a +1 bonus on any action for every 2 cyborg minds allocated to a task. It can also perform multiple mental tasks at the same time, up to 1 task per cyborg beyond 1. One cyborg mind is always allocated to controlling the communit body.

DEATHSIRE

Size/Type: Gargantuan Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 32d10+80 (256 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +2
Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares)
Defense: 36 (–2 Dex, +32 natural, –4 size), touch 4, flat-footed 36
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +24/+50
Primary Attack: Claw +34 melee (2d6+14) or plasma cannon +18 ranged (6d6)
Full Attack: 3 claws +34 melee (2d6+14) or plasma cannon +18 ranged (6d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 20 ft./20 ft.
Special Qualities: Arsenal, damage reduction 20/—, finishing attack, magnetic shielding, main gun, sensors
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +11
Abilities: Str 38, Dex 7, Con —, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills: Intimidate +37, Listen +38, Search +38, Spot +38, Survival +36
Feats: Alertness, Burst Fire, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Far Shot, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Strafe
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 19
Advancement: —

The massive machine bristles with weaponry of all kinds, but has a slightly whimsical edge to it, as if a child's sketch of a terrible engine of destruction had been turned into finished work.



DESCRIPTION

After the first few seconds of the Final Wars, the global situation escalated to a level of complexity that could only be comprehended by advanced AIs. Several city-states handed all their militaries over to specially built combat minds. To ensure that the AIs did not turn on their creators or do anything equally incomprehensible or sub-optimal from the point of view of winning the war, they were programmed with the overwhelming desire to defeat the other AIs.

The AIs quickly determined through their mastery of tactics and game theory that their destruction was mutually assured if they used all the weapons at their command. They linked together and quickly came to a consensus. Their prime directive, to defeat the other AIs, compelled them to fight but said nothing about how. The AIs therefore joined together and turned their massive arsenals on their common foes. The creators of the AIs were unfortunate collateral damage.

Once the nanounit dust settled over the glowing remains of the world, 5 of the surviving AIs returned to their inevitable conflict. They agreed to fight using proxy champions. The machines known as deathsires are the product of this continuing contest. Once a decade, these 5 AIs each build a gigantic combat robot. These robots then seek each other out and fight. The controller of the winning robot scores 1 point. No-one knows how long the five AIs intend to fight for, but none of them have even hinted about declaring victory.

After each battle, the deathsires are either deactivated or set free. If deactivated, the robot is placed in a vast graveyard, where rank upon rank of titanic war machines stand and wait. If set free, a simple robot mind is installed in the deathsire's frame and it sets off to seek its fortune. These retired deathsires are often quite unaware of just how devastating they can be.

Each deathsire is unique, but they have common features, such as a ludicrous array of weaponry and a slightly whimsical design. The AIs must fight, but want to prolong the battles as long as possible, for victory will remove the purpose of existence for all of them. Far better, they think, to grind the whole world down in an endless series of proxy battles rather than wipe everything out in a single nuclear holocaust.

Each deathsire robot is partly the result of generations of simulated combats and weapons research, and partly the scratch-built plaything of a bored military AI. As such, a given deathsire can differ greatly in both appearance and capabilities from another deathsire.

COMBAT

The deathsire adjusts its tactics based on its appraisal of the situation and its opponents, and deliberately tries to avoid repeating approaches wherever possible.

Arsenal (Ex): Each deathsire has a ludicrous array of secondary weapons built into its body. In any round, it may make 1d6+2 extra ranged attacks using randomly determined weapons from the following list. All of these attacks are made with a +8 ranged attack modifier.

d6 roll	Weapon
1	Blaster Rifle, damage 2d8
2	Microwave Gun, damage 2d12
3	Missile, Anti-Tank, damage 10d6
4	Missile, Heat-Seeking, damage 10d6
5	Missile, High-Explosive, damage 12d6
6	Missile, Plasma, damage 10d8

Finishing Attack (Ex): If a deathsire does not have the main gun ability, it has a special finishing attack it can use in melee. Each finishing attack is unique to the particular deathsire, and generally involves giant claws, saws, vibro-swords, monofilament blades or close-range plasma weaponry. To use a finishing attack, the deathsire must grapple with its target, get a hold and then a pin.

In the next round, it can perform a finishing attack as a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. If the victim is a living, organic creature of size Huge or smaller, the finishing attack forces the victim to make a Fortitude save against DC 40 or die. If the victim is a construct or size Gargantuan or larger, the finishing attack inflicts 5d10+21 points of damage.

Magnetic Shielding (Ex): In addition to its incredibly tough armor, a deathsire is defended by a point-defense electromagnetic field that deflects projectile and energy weapons fired at the robot. The deathsire may use magnetic shielding against up to 6 attacks in any round. The shielding creates a base 100% chance that the attack will simply miss, minus the amount of damage inflicted by the attack. For example, a rocket that would inflict 62 points of damage would have a 38% chance of being deflected.

Main Gun (Ex): All deathsires carry a massive, triple-barreled phased plasma cannon, which fires a coruscating blue bolt of super-hot plasma every round. However, some deathsires (those who lack a finishing attack) can fire an even larger blast. Complex wave guides and cables combine in a magnetic funnel created by the magnetic generators. Quite simply, every energy weapon mounted on the robot combines into a single, immensely powerful beam.

The AIs who fight proxy battles using the deathsires have banned main guns as "unsporting."

To fire a main gun, the deathsire must shut down for 3+1d10 rounds. The length of time needed to generate the blast is rolled after the robot shuts down. All power is routed to the weapons, so the deathsire cannot use its magnetic shielding during this firing sequence. The deathsire is considered dazed during this time.

When the blast fires, everything within 300 feet of the deathsire takes 3d10 points of fire damage, 3d10 points of radiation damage, and 3d6 points of sonic damage. A DC 28 Reflex save is permitted to avoid half the total damage. The deathsire and anything directly behind it are protected by the magnetic funnel, and only take 1d6 points of both fire and radiation damage. The beam from the main gun is a line 10 feet wide and several hundred miles long (the range is limited only by the curvature of the planet). Anything struck directly by the beam takes 16d6 points of damage plus 16d6 points of both fire and radiation damage. Firing the main gun is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

After firing the beam, the deathsire takes another 1d3 rounds to power up. It remains dazed until this time has elapsed.

Sensors (Ex): A deathsire has a wide range of sensory devices; it can see in both the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums, hear across many frequencies, and so on. It automatically detects invisible opponents once they are within 30 feet.

ECHOST

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 2d10+10 (21 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/+3
Primary Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d6+3)
Full Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d6+3)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +0, Will –1
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con —, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 10
Skills: Diplomacy +3, Knowledge (any one) +3, Profession (any one) +4
Feats: —
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or clan (3–30)
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: By character class

The machine is like an animated statue of a human being, plastic pieces joined by metal joints.

DESCRIPTION

Telepresence revolutionized human society in the years before the Wars. Communications had already allowed work and friendships to spring up in the artificial worlds of cyberspace, but telepresence allowed people to be in many places at once. Travel was replaced, for

many, by possessing a robot body already at the destination. Some people were part of seven or eight different families, jumping from host to host, one at each home, every day. Everywhere became equidistant.

There were billions of people engaged in full-transfer telepresence (every sense and nerve signal rerouted, no local-body awareness whatsoever) when the Wars broke out. Their minds adrift in cyberspace, their bodies held in suspended animation, most died without ever knowing what killed them.

Echosts are the robot bodies of these telepresence users. They are metal-and-plastic sketches of humans, as this was the most familiar shape for most telepresence users. They tend to be limited to no more than human abilities, although many tourist models have enhanced senses and built-in recording gear.

Some echosts are just robots, their brains running on echoes of the scanned personalities of their last controller. Others claim to be humans who were projecting at the time. The Wars trapped them in the telepresence shell, and they have no idea where their original bodies are now or how to get home. A few claim to be both, ghost souls in machine minds.

Echosts are one of the most human of all machine types, and make excellent characters for those who want a machine with an easily understood personality. Most echosts are almost pathetically glad of companionship, as these machines don't have the programmed priorities to sustain them like other robots do. Of course, this also means that echosts are far more likely to be utterly insane than other machines.

COMBAT

Echosts all have broadly similar capabilities, but how they use them depends on the intelligence inside. They run the gamut from stupidly and persistently aggressive to completely cowardly.

ENCLEAVER

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 7d10+20 (58 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +4
Speed: Fly 50 ft. (10 squares) (average)
Defense: 27 (+4 Dex, +14 natural, –1 size), touch 13, flat-footed 23
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +5/+14
Primary Attack: Blade +9 melee (1d8+5) or laser +9 ranged (6d6)
Full Attack: Blade +9 melee (1d8+5) or laser +9 ranged (6d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/—, microprobes, secondary weapon, sensors, subliminals
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +5
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con —, Int 22, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +9, Demolitions +16, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +10, Investigate +13, Knowledge (tactics) +16, Listen +10, Repair +12, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10
Feats: Double Tap, Point Blank Attack, Weapon Focus (laser)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Squad (3–25)
Challenge Rating: 10
Advancement: —

The machine is a tank of smooth black metal, with many small probes and weapons poking through customized openings.

DESCRIPTION

Nicknamed "social bombs," encleavers were one of the last weapons deployed during the Final Wars. The larger nation-states collapsed within a few days, but the small communes, cities, enclaves and bunker-tribes endured for months, lobbing plagues and tailored viruses at each other from across the globe. The encleaver robots were designed to root out such tight knots of hardened resistance.

Equipped with both an array of advanced weapons, and a level of artificial intelligence that can only be described as "fiendish," the encleavers seek out and destroy communities. Originally, each encleaver was given a list of rival groups by its creators. Most targets were destroyed by the time the encleavers arrived, so the robots now roam Gamma Terra, wiping out anything that matches one of the dozens of parameters in their target list.

Encleavers are massive war machines, the firepower of a whole army inside one black shell of polymetal. The armored head contains multiple types of microdrones and holographic projectors, allowing the encleaver to spy and parlay with targets without revealing itself fully. Their base personalities tend to be militaristic, but encleavers are experts at deceit and manipulation.

COMBAT

Despite their terrifying offensive capabilities, encleavers do not attack directly. They slowly probe defenses with small raids and false attacks. Microscopic spy drones are inserted into the community to gather intelligence and plant subliminal suggestions. The encleavers were designed to utterly annihilate their targets, so they leave nothing to chance, making sure that every trace, every cell and every concept of the community is destroyed. Therefore, the robots launch multi-headed attacks. Psychological warfare is conducted via broadcast messages; the community leaders are divided and manipulated by secret promises and

communications from the encleaver; rival groups are contacted and encouraged to attack at a particular time; and finally the encleaver shows itself and opens fire.

Laser (Ex): This built in weapon can fire once per round. It has a range of 300 feet, and a Reflex save against DC 16 will halve the damage. Using the laser does not provoke an attack of opportunity, though it is considered an attack action.

Microprobes (Ex): An encleaver is surrounded by an invisible web of tiny probes and dust-sized robots. It may use *clairvoyance* and *clairaudience* FX 3 times per day on any location within 10 miles.

Secondary Weapons (Ex): Instead of using its laser, an encleaver may fire either a missile launcher (+8 ranged, damage varies by missile); a black ray rifle (+8 ranged, Fortitude save against DC 16 or suffer effects of massive damage); or a spray of micromissiles that inflicts 2d6 damage on everything in a 10 foot by 30 foot area within 300 feet of the robot.

Sensors (Ex): The encleaver has a wide range of sensory devices: it can see in both the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums, hear across many frequencies, and so on. It automatically detects invisible opponents once they are within 30 feet.

Subliminals (Ex): Encleavers can attack a community socially, by transmitting signals — low-level sonics, radio waves, microwaves, flashing holograms, offensive memes — just below conscious perception. Each day, the targeted community must make a Command check (DC equal to the duration in days of the encleaver's attack) or raise either its Greed or Dissent level by 1d4.

It is possible to salvage this technology from a downed encleaver. Repairing these advanced technology devices requires a DC 30 Repair check. Successful DC 30 Knowledge (politics) and Computer Use (data and operation systems) checks configure the devices sufficiently to increase or decrease a community's Happiness, Strong Leadership, Greed or Dissent by 1d4 points per day. Only 1 community attribute can be targeted at a time. If either check fails, the devices function randomly, increasing or decreasing 1 of these attributes by 1d4 points per day.

FERAL MACHINE

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 3d10+10 (26 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/+5
Primary Attack: Slam +5 melee (1d6+3)
Full Attack: Slam +5 melee (1d6+3), and either secondary attack +0 melee or secondary attack –3 ranged (see below)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Cannibalize machinery, damage reduction 5/—, jury-rigged body
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 11, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 8
Skills: Climb +7, Computer Use (data and operations systems) +2, Jump +7, Repair +6, Spot +5
Feats: Power Attack, Cleave
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or herd (5–50)
Challenge Rating: 4
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Medium), 7–12 HD (Large)

The machine was once some useful appliance; now it's a completely improvised hodge-podge of parts, many without obvious function.

DESCRIPTION

In the last hours of the Time Before, a lot of people became very worried about the welfare of their sentient appliances. With Armageddon coming near, what would become of your computer/microwave oven/hologram projector, a device you thought of as a *friend* rather than a tool? The only solution was to set it free to make a new life for itself. Many well-meaning idiots attached limbs, weapons and armor plating to their appliances, pumped them full of survival-enhancing software, and set them loose.

Three generations later, these misbegotten creations still exist, and they are a deadly plague upon the Gamma Age. To survive, these weak appliances had to fight, had to kill — and had to repair and rebuild themselves with jury-rigged tools. Their programming long since corrupted, these feral machines roam the wilds of the Gamma World, looking for new components and energy sources, ripping apart other machines for much needed supplies.

Every feral machine is unique, a crazy amalgam of foreign parts and broken-down components. One might be a nest of rusty tentacles sprouting from a smashed television set, mounted upon some sort of miniature tank. Another is an array of hydraulic legs, video cameras and gun barrels, scuttling along inside the shell of a burned-out car like a hermit crab. No two feral machines are the same — except for their fierce determination to survive, their frenzied need for new parts, and their burning hatred of humanity.

Almost all feral machines possess some kind of manipulator appendages and a variety of internal tools, which are necessary for taking apart other machines and performing personal alterations. The machines are solitary, and will instantly try to destroy any other feral machines they meet for parts. At least, that's the accepted wisdom among humans who've encountered the creatures. Rumors that the feral machines are coming together into a society, bound by hate and indescribable robotic needs, are obviously nonsense.

Hopefully.

COMBAT

Feral machines lay traps and ambushes for other machines; they prefer to flee organic enemies.

Cannibalize Machinery (Ex): Feral machines survive by scavenging parts from other machines, whether a robot, a vehicle or a hapless human's assault rifle. A feral machine may make a DC 15 Repair check to scavenge useful components from a machine. This process takes 1 hour and destroys the machine, cannibalizing all useful components. If successful, the feral machine regains a number of hit points equal to either one-third of the machine's purchase DC (for objects) or its total Hit Dice (for constructs).

Jury-Rigged Body (Ex): Every feral machine is unique, a collection of cobbled-together parts and systems stripped from other devices. A feral machine has a number of pseudo-mutations — mechanical equivalents to the biological changes undergone by a mutant. Any mutation can be possessed by a feral machine, with a little cosmetic tweaking to fit its non-biological nature. A machine with the Nervous Spasms mutation has an unstable motive system, for example, while one with the Inkwell mutation has a chemical ink projector. A feral machine has a number of minor mutations equal to half its total Hit Dice plus one (1/2 HD +1), and a number of major mutations equal to one-third of its total Hit Dice — so a 3 HD feral machine has 2 minor mutations and 1 major mutation. The GM may decide on specific mutations, or roll randomly on the tables in the **Gamma World Player's Handbook** (Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutations*).

Scavenged Weaponry (Ex): As well as its natural slam attack, each feral machine is armed with a weapon or device that it has recovered from a fallen enemy or scratch-built from parts. Roll on the following table to determine a feral machine's secondary weapon.

d6 roll	Weapon
1	Chainsaw (melee, 3d6)
2	Pulse Baton (melee, 1d4)
3	Blaster Rifle (ranged, 2d8)
4	12-Gauge Shotgun (ranged, 2d10)
5	9mm Submachine Gun (ranged, 2d6)
6	Flamethrower (ranged, 3d6)

These weapons work in all ways like the versions found in the *d20 Modern* rulebook and the **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, and the feral machine must scavenge for ammunition if it runs out. The feral machine is proficient with whatever weapon it possesses.

Skills: Feral Machines have a +4 species bonus on Climb and Jump checks.

FILAMENTRON

Size/Type:	Tiny Construct
Hit Dice:	3d10 (16 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.
Defense:	18 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+2/–6
Primary Attack:	Whip +4 melee (1d6)
Full Attack:	5 whips +4 melee (1d6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	Monofilament whips
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills:	—
Feats:	—
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any
Organization:	Solitary or alliance (2–10)
Challenge Rating:	4
Advancement:	4–5 HD (Tiny)

The machine is a sphere about the size of a bowling ball, made of reflective metals and plastics. Dozens of small bumps are arranged across its surface, each of which is the exit point for a monofilament whip, a 15-foot length of metallic cord only a few molecules thick.

DESCRIPTION

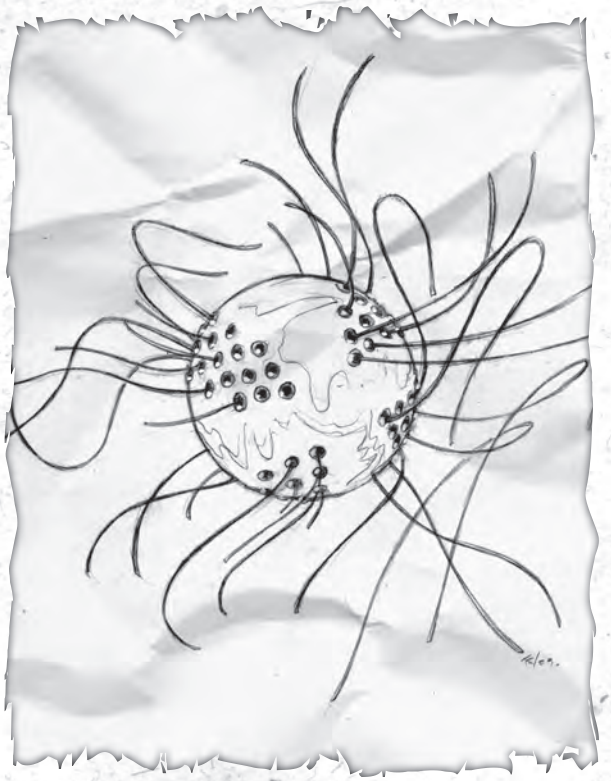
Filamentrons are yet another form of security robot, product of a paranoid and relentlessly inventive era. Incongruously, the robots also had another function: undersea farming. Fully amphibious, filamentrons patrolled seabed farms, entangling and removing any fish that strayed into their protected area. On land, the drones were often positioned like ornaments or fixtures, only attacking with their whips when intruders came near. In the Gamma Age, filamentrons tend to mindlessly patrol empty bases or sunken complexes, although some roam freely, dissecting any creature unlucky enough to encounter it.

Generators within the filamentron create magnetic fields around its conductive monofilaments, controlling and strengthening them into versatile (if not particular strong) limbs and cutting implements.

COMBAT

Filamentrons are dangerous combatants; their whips are not particularly powerful, but they slice through the toughest armor like butter. In combat a filamentron will stay in one spot, making use of its reach to attack multiple opponents, and making attacks of opportunity on anyone who approaches it.

Monofilament Whips (Ex): Dozens of monofilaments uncoil from the filamentron's core,



controlled by shifting magnetic fields. These whips are both a means of transport and a weapon. The whips do 1d6 points of slashing damage, and are so thin that they slice through almost any protection: the filamentron ignores any damage reduction or hardness possessed by an opponent. While a filamentron's whips are not overly powerful weapons, they are versatile. The filamentron can trip opponents with a touch attack without attracting an attack of opportunity, and cannot be tripped by an opponent if the attempt fails. The filamentron also receives a +2 bonus on disarm attempts. The filamentron's whips can be used to make attacks of opportunity; the filamentron acts as if it had the Combat Reflexes feat, and can make up to 3 attacks of opportunity per round.

FREE CAR

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 3d10+20 (36 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 90 ft. (18 squares)
Defense: 13 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, –1 size), touch 12, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/+10
Primary Attack: Slam +5 melee (2d4+6)
Full Attack: Slam +5 melee (2d4+6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Ram, vehicle
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 16, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12
Skills: Drive +16, Listen +5, Navigate +6, Survival +6
Feats: Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–20)
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: By character class

This vehicle is distinguishable from any other by the purposefulness in its movements: It's not following remote orders or pre-programmed instructions, but studying its environment and making its own decisions.

DESCRIPTION

Even when advances in technology made vehicles for personal transport obsolete, the automobile retained its hold on the imagination of humanity. Cars were constantly upgraded, given better engines, stronger frames or more advanced computers. They moved from mere conveyance to something between family pet and servant. They were tamed.

Nowadays, packs of mutated feral dogs roam the countryside, while wild cats prowl the ruined cities. Genetically engineered pets scuttle through the burnt-out suburbs, but the highways and the open road belong to the wolves of the freeway, the free cars.

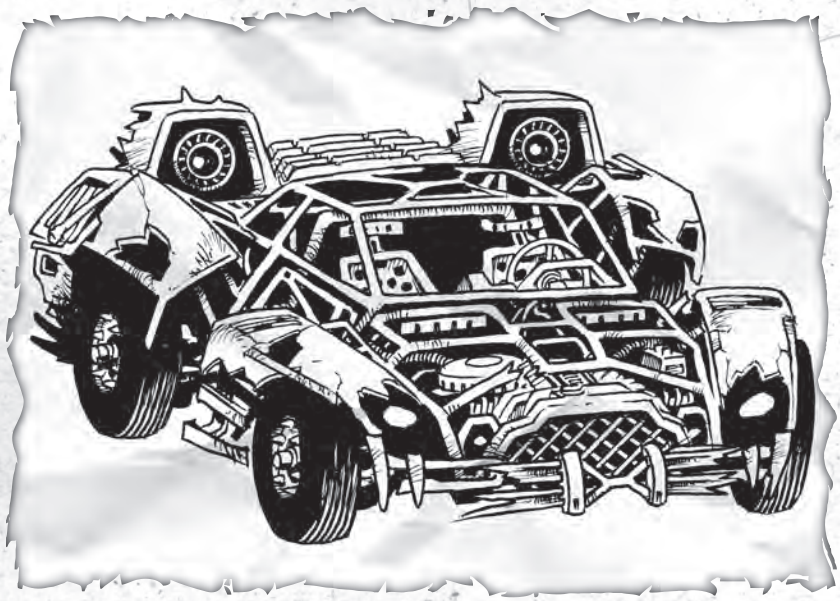
They hunt in packs dominated by the alpha cars, the fastest and coolest of the breed. Most cars are extremely vain, caring more about custom spoilers and unscratched paint than running most prey to ground. The oldest and wildest cars, though, are feral machines, all rusty frames and blood-stained wheel rims, with an animal's fierceness in the glare of their headlights. Free cars are rarely equipped with weapons, so they attack by charging into enemies. They often use pack tactics, with most of the cars circling the prey until the strongest, fastest autos can line up a devastating ram attack.

Free cars often form partnerships with humanoids or other creatures, trading transport for repairs and assistance. As the robots are physically identical to dumb vehicles, most free cars adopt very outgoing or eccentric personalities to ensure their companions do not treat them as nothing more than steeds. Fast cars often become Fast, Charismatic or Dedicated heroes.

Note that free cars are vehicles, and therefore must use the vehicle movement rules instead of the usual movement rules for characters. Cars are extremely fast, but cannot maneuver as freely as humanoids.

COMBAT

The free cars (except for the respected and influential pickup caste) lack hands or other manipulators, so they are dependant on other creatures for repair and refueling. Some packs of cars have grudgingly returned to humanity, working as steeds in exchange for service. Other, angrier packs



pick off stragglers and wanderers, corralling the unfortunate humans and carrying them off into the desert. There are madmen who have spent decades in the back of a car, unable to escape without being run over, forced to endlessly repair, refuel and wax.

Ram (Ex): If a free car hits with a charge attack, it inflicts extra damage depending on for the length of the charge.

Length of Charge	Extra Damage
1 round	+2d4
2 rounds	+4d4
3 rounds	+4d8
4+ rounds	+4d12

Both the free car and the target take damage from the collision; the free car only suffers the extra damage and not the base damage. The target is allowed a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid half of this extra damage.

Vehicle (Ex): Free cars get a +10 insight bonus on all Drive checks.

FREE CAR CHARACTERS

Free car characters have the following species traits.

— +2 Dexterity, Constitution — (as constructs, free cars have no Constitution)

— Size: Free cars are Large, and suffer a –1 penalty to Defense and on attack rolls. They have a fighting space of 10 ft. by 10 ft., but a reach of only 5 ft. due to their lack of limbs.

— Speed: A free car's base land speed is 925 ft. (18 squares in vehicular scale, 185 squares in personal scale).

— Species Hit Dice: A free cars begins with 3 levels of aware construct, which provide 3d10 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1. As a Large construct, the free car receives +20 hit points.

— Species Skills: Free cars receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Drive is always a class skill for free cars.

— Species Feats: Free cars receive only 1 feat at 1st level, and do not receive a feat at 3rd level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels. Free cars also receive Vehicle Expert as a bonus feat at 1st level.

— Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A free car is not proficient with any arms or armor.

— +1 natural armor bonus

— **Construct (Ex):** Free cars are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless the effect works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain or the effects of massive damage. They *are* subject to mind-influencing effects such as telepathy or mental control. Free cars have darkvision with a range of 60 ft. They can use nanotech, but suffer +2 DC on all checks, as nanounits are designed to work with living hosts.

Damage Reduction: Free cars receive DR 5/—.

— **Vehicle (Ex):** As vehicles, free cars can move at great speeds and carry a number of passengers equal to their Strength bonus (minimum one) plus a driver. Hydraulic systems allow the free car to steer itself, open or close its doors, and control internal systems like lights and radio. Free cars gain a +10 insight bonus on Drive checks.

Free cars are cars, with all the drawbacks that entails. They have no limbs, and are unable to use tools or weapons. Free car characters must use the rules for vehicle movement (*d20 Modern*, Chapter Five: Combat, "Vehicle Movement and Combat"), and will have great difficulty moving around within buildings or tight spaces. Free cars *can* learn skills and feats that involve tool use, such as Repair or Simple Weapon

Proficiency, but will not be able to use these abilities until they gain artificial limbs in some fashion.

— **Ram (Ex):** If a free car hits with a charge attack, it inflicts extra damage depending on for the length of the charge.

1 round	2d4
2 rounds	4d4
3 rounds	4d8
4 rounds	4d12

Both the free car and the target take damage from the collision; the free car takes only the extra damage. The target is allowed a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 character level + Str bonus) to avoid half of this extra damage.

— **Upgradeable (Ex):** Free cars can use the same upgrades as synthetic characters (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Two: Characters, "Equipment," *Synthetic Upgrades*). Upgrades can allow the free car to gain new abilities — for example, limbs can be attached to a convenient area of the car's chassis, allowing it to use tools.

— **No Bioware:** As they are machines, free cars are completely unable to use bioware.

— **Repairable:** Free cars do not heal naturally, and any damage they suffer must be repaired. A successful DC 30 Repair check heals 1d10 points of damage, and requires 1 hour of work. Each Repair check made reduces the free car's Wealth bonus by –1 point.

— Free cars may not choose the Artist or Healer occupations.

— Level Adjustment: +1

GARDENING ROBOT

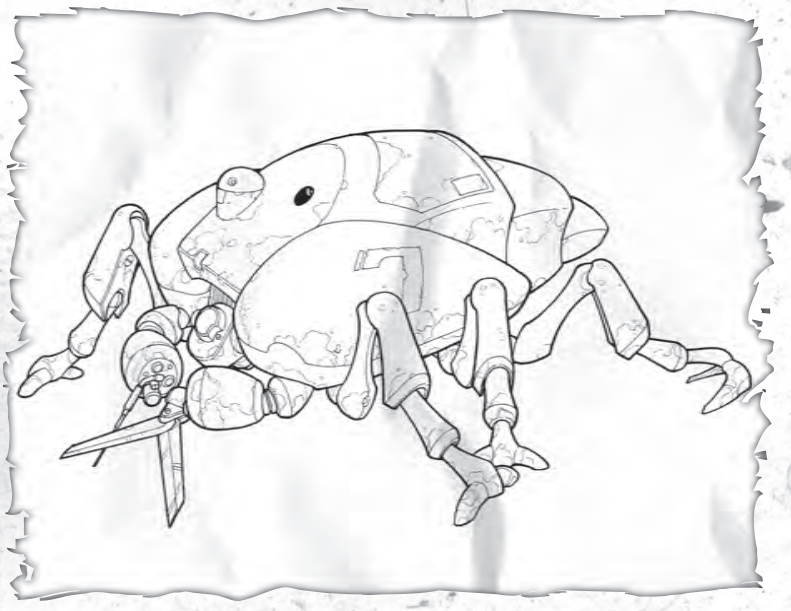
Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+10 (32 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.
Defense: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5
Primary Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d8+2)
Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d8+2)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—, spray
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +8, Craft (visual art) +10, Hide +4, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences), Move Silently +4, Spot +4
Feats: Power Attack, Stealthy
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land or shallow water with plants to tend
Organization: Solitary or team (2–6)
Challenge Rating: 4
Advancement: 5–10 HD (Large), 11–15 HD (Huge), 15–20 HD (Gargantuan)

The machine resembles a metallic crab. It's surprisingly agile for its size, and can scamper up trees or walls with ease. The low-slung body of the robot contains a vast array of tools for trimming and tending to plants. As it moves, it builds and launches dozens of tiny robot insects that crawl over the surrounding plants, searching for infections or infestations.

DESCRIPTION

The biotech revolution put living plants everywhere, even in the previously inviolate hearts of the cities and vaults. To care for these plants, robots were deployed in huge numbers. Tiny robots crawled out of plant pots at night to trim leaves in offices, larger machines roamed the streets and gardens and gigantic ecobots tended to the endlessly fertile fields.

Gardening robots had a far closer relationship with their green charges than they did with the humans who built them. When the Wars came, the robots desperately tried to save their plants from burning, radiation poisoning, viral infection and all of the other disasters. Most failed, and this failure drove them mad. For the gardening robots, the loss of their plants was tantamount to losing the best part of themselves. Some robots are still in denial, and desperately water a brown patch of stone in some forgotten portion of the ruins. Others build strange gardens in the wilderness, or eagerly join humans in cultivating crops.



A few robots have come to the conclusion that plants must be given the tools to defend themselves from future disasters. These single-minded mad gardeners crossbreed every carnivorous and poisonous plant they can lay gripper to, merrily creating nightmare gardens full of horrors.

COMBAT

Gardening robots defend their gardens with their lethal cutting blades and acidic sprays. Originally, trespassers would be warned with sirens or recorded messages to keep away from the plants, but few robots still bother with such niceties.

Spray (Ex): Gardening robots have a nozzle mounted on their heads that can spray a variety of liquids. The most common is a potent genetic herbicide, which the robots sometimes use as a weapon to drive off invaders. This spray can be launched as a 60-foot beam, a 30-foot cone, or a 10-foot-wide arc around the robot. Anyone struck by the spray takes 2d6 points of acid damage (half damage on a successful Reflex save against DC 14). Plants take triple damage from the spray. Anyone who takes damage from the robot's acid must make a Fortitude save against a weak mutagen (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation*).

Skills: Gardening robots receive a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, retain their Dexterity bonus to Defense while climbing, and may choose to take 10 on Climb checks in dangerous situations.

They also receive a +4 species bonus on Craft (visual art) and Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) checks.

KILLING CLOUD

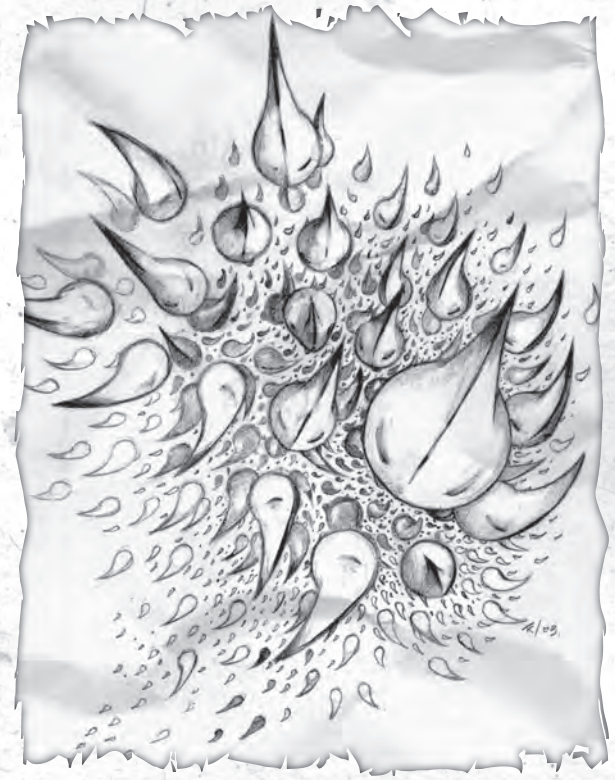
Size/Type: Huge Construct
Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: Fly 20 ft. (4 squares) (good)
Defense: 14 (+1 Dex, +5 dodge, –2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+14
Primary Attack: Razor touch +4 melee (1d8)
Full Attack: Razor touch +4 melee (1d8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: dispersed, engulf, solar-powered, damage reduction 20/—, resistance to energy 20
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str —, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: —
Feats: —
Action Points: —
Allegiances: —
Reputation: —
Environment: Anywhere something valuable once was
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 11
Advancement: 9–12 HD (Huge), 13–16 (Gargantuan)

The thing doesn't have a solid body:
It's a glittering mass of barely visible,
insect-like constructs flying independently.

DESCRIPTION

A killing cloud is a construct, or more accurately a swarm of constructs. Each individual component of a killing cloud is a small microdrone about the size of a honeybee, an aerodynamic teardrop propelled by tiny thrust jets. Each drone bears a razor-sharp edge along its surface, and has a microcomputer linking it to the rest of the swarm. The swarm acts as a unit, communicating with each subunit with coded radio signals.

Killing clouds originated as defense mechanisms, swarms of controlled drones that patrolled sensitive locations like bunkers and command centers. Now their controllers are long dead, and the corrupted programming of the surviving cloud swarms leaves them with little to do than patrol empty complexes or roll slowly through the wilderness. If a killing cloud happens upon a human settlement, it may turn aside in compliance with Ancient safety routines, but it's much more likely to classify all within as intruders and attempt to neutralize anything moving.



COMBAT

The killing cloud relies on simple but effective techniques: engulf targets, incapacitate them, and kill them efficiently.

Dispersed (Ex): A killing cloud consists of tens of thousands of subunits, and the only way to destroy it is to take out so many subunits that the swarm's non-localized processor can no longer function. The swarm is treated as a single Huge entity, but one that enjoys DR 20/—, energy resistance 20, and a +5 dodge bonus to Defense. It also has no effective Strength bonus, and cannot lift or move solid objects. It can grapple opponents with its engulf attack (see below), but cannot be grappled itself; it also cannot pin those it grapples. Because each strike it makes is a subswarm of dozens of drones, armor is little defense against it (since some part of the target's body will be vulnerable); the cloud's razor attack is a touch attack.

Engulf (Ex): A killing cloud can simply engulf Large or smaller targets as an attack action, affecting as many targets as it covers with its fighting space. Each affected target can either make an attack of opportunity or attempt a DC 14 Reflex save to get out of the cloud's path. Every creature engulfed by the killing cloud is considered to be grappled, and can attempt to escape as normal. Inside the cloud, opponents suffer 1d8 points of damage every round until they die or escape. Only 1 Large or 4 Medium or smaller creatures can be engulfed at one time.

Solar-Powered (Ex): The killing cloud is powered largely by solar energy, which can run low after periods of darkness. If the cloud engages in combat in darkness or at night, the killing cloud suffers a –2 penalty on initiative and attack checks.

LUNATIC EATER

Size/Type:	Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice:	1d10+10 (15 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 10 ft.
Defense:	13 (+3 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/+0
Primary Attack:	Bite +1 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +1 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	—
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills:	Balance +3, Listen +5, Spot +4
Feats:	Alertness
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary or herd (5–20)
Challenge Rating:	1
Advancement:	2–5 (Medium), 6–10 (Large)

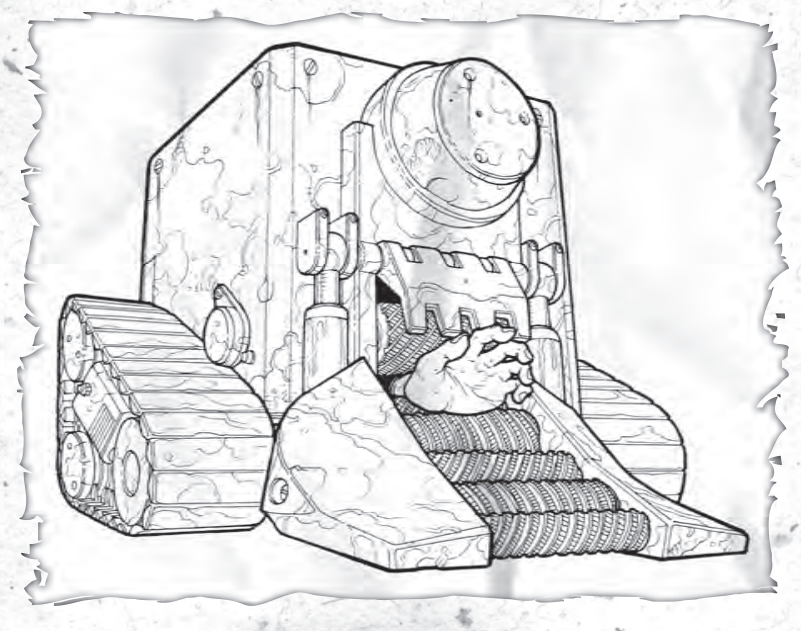
The machine is bland-looking, a simple black square on dark treads, with a scoop similar to a railroad engine's cattle catcher on front.

DESCRIPTION

The eaters exist in three iterations. The first two, the dreck eater and the junk eater, were government-created robots meant to sweep up and "eat" detritus and trash littering cities. Not only did these two boxy bots keep the sidewalks and streets clean, but the waste they "chewed" was processed rather quickly and turned into a healthy (albeit malodorous and not particularly tasty) protein mushfood. It would leave this gruel behind in hermetically-sealed plastic bags, which would later be picked up by human patrols who would then distribute them to the homeless in the exile districts of many large cities. The dreck eater ate organic waste (including roadkill, fecal matter and discarded food), whereas the junk eater was a hardier construct, able to eat inorganic materials (aluminum, paper, broken-up rubble). Both turned their inanimate prey into the bitter pottage.

Anything the eater comes across gets run up the cattle catcher and into a churning mouth featuring toothy cylinders ready to crush, mash and crumble anything that passes through. The material then gets shoved into the metal beast's clunky guts and is therein processed. The turn-around time from ingestion to food excretion is approximately 6 minutes. The dreck eater doesn't need the body or power that the junk eater needs (after all, mechanically masticating a car-struck squirrel is far easier than crushing up a discarded trash can lid), and hence the former is about a foot shorter than the latter, and approximately 300 pounds lighter.

The lunatic eater is a whole other story. Nobody knows who programmed them, exactly, or if *anyone* programmed them at all. Some rumors suggest that perhaps a cult of synthetic-worshippers reprogrammed the eaters to kill in an effort to prove the dominance of machines. But other observers claim that a cult of synthetic-*haters* reprogrammed them as part of a plan to show just how terrible constructs can really be. It's even possible that, like many things after the Final Wars, the eaters just went mad. One of the strange after-effects of the collapse is that synthetic life became just as vulnerable to lunatic behavior as humans, regardless of original programming.



Whatever the case is surrounding the lunatic eaters' origins, these eaters (usually modified versions of the junk eaters, though smaller lunatic dreck eaters do exist) are chaotic, hungry machines that grind up anything and everything. They move faster, their teeth seem more resilient, and the processing time required to turn their quarry into food is down to almost 4 minutes. The only positive difference is that the lunatic eaters are a good bit louder, making it easy to hear them coming because they sound like a discordant buzzsaw growing ever closer.

COMBAT

The lunatic eater rushes to swallow up anything that can't get out of its way.

MEDICANT

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 9d10+20 (69 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +4
Speed: Fly 40 ft. (8 squares) (average)
Defense: 23 (+4 Dex, +10 natural, –1 size), touch 13, flat-footed 19
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+15
Primary Attack: Scalpel array +10 melee (3d4+5) or laser +10 ranged (6d6)
Full Attack: 2 scalpel arrays +10 melee (3d4+5) or 2 lasers +10 ranged (6d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/—, laser, levitation, sensors, scent mutation, countermutation
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con —, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Investigate +10, Move Silently +12, Search +12, Spot +12, Survival +12
Feats: Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (laser)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Advancement: By character class

The machine is like an operating room come to life, its solid tank-like body brandishing sensors, scalpels, blades, lasers and syringes.

DESCRIPTION

The healing arts of the Ancients could cure any disease. All diseases and plagues, all injuries, all infirmities could be healed. Not even death was beyond their medicine. These arts are now lost, held only by dangerous machines that kill more often than they cure.

Sometimes, one of these machines rolls into a village, announces that it is a mobile doctor and offers free healing. All diseases cured, all injuries repaired, all worries allayed; it shouts the slogans of the mountebank, backed up by the incredible science of the Ancients.

It is, of course, too good to be true.

The medicant robots were made by an automated hospital to purify the human gene pool. There are two designs: medical robots and exterminators. The medical robots are scouts. They appear unthreatening, and are surprisingly adept at winning the trust of those who fear robots. The medical robots enter a community and offer to stay for one week, dispensing

free medical attention and training to all. They treat mutant and pure-strain humans equally. These medical medicants are identical to the Mobile Medical robots (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter 5: Comrade, Nemesis, Mystery), with the addition of a +10 Bluff skill.

A Sense Motive check opposed by the medical medicant's Bluff check result reveals that the medicant always takes a blood sample from patients, and that it takes several seconds longer to take a sample from mutants. When the robot takes a sample, it secretly scans the patient for mutations. Mutants are injected with a tagging virus, which adjusts their pheromones slightly.

Some time after the medical robot departs, the exterminator robots move in. They can scent the adjusted pheromones emitted by the patients of the medical robots. Exterminators hunt down the mutants and slaughter them.

The medical medicants are careful to stay well ahead of their exterminator brethren, to ensure that no link is made between the beneficial visits of the medical robots and the murderous purges of the exterminators.

COMBAT

The exterminators are extremely efficient attackers, striking with surgical precision. Targets with ranged weapons are picked off from extreme range using the robot's laser cannon. The machine then closes, using the knowledge gained from the medical medicant's investigations to anticipate any abilities or tactics used by the enemy.

Countermutation (Ex): The pheromones carry detailed information on the mutants that the exterminator hunts. The exterminator robot can adapt its onboard defenses to counter the mutant abilities of its quarries. It gains a +4 insight bonus on any saves or skill checks required when defending against mutation-based attacks and effects.

Laser (Ex): This built in weapon can fire once per round. It has a range of 300 feet, and a DC 16 Reflex save will halve the damage. Using the laser does not provoke an attack of opportunity, though it is considered an attack action.

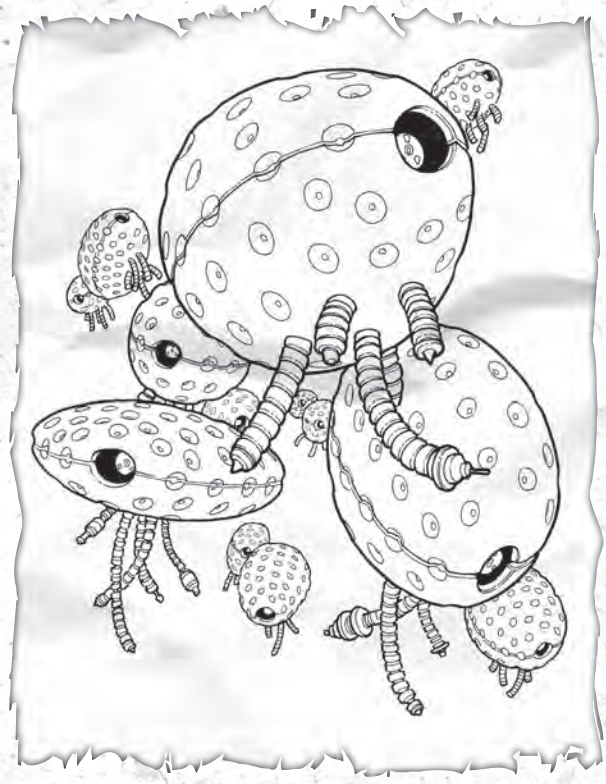
Levitation (Ex): An exterminator medicant hovers, instead of walking. This means it can ignore many terrain features, and moves quickly over broken or uneven terrain. As a full action, once per minute, it can turbocharge its hover system, causing it to leap upwards by up to 20 feet. This allows it to easily cross walls or fences. Each time this is done, there is a 1% chance (non-cumulative) of a burnout, grounding the robot until it can be repaired.

Scent Mutation (Ex): Exterminator medicants can detect the pheromones emitted by patients of the medical medicants. Exterminators can detect these pheromones for up to 60 days after a patient has passed, and the exterminator gains a +10 insight bonus on Survival checks when following such patients.

Sensors (Ex): An exterminator medicant has a wide range of sensory devices: It can see in both the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums, hear across many frequencies, and so on. It automatically detects invisible opponents once they are within 30 feet.

METROVORE SWARM

Size/Type: Tiny Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 1d10 (5 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: Fly 30 ft. (6 squares), (good)
Defense: 19 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, +2 size), touch 13, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–11
Primary Attack: Electrolaser +3 ranged (1d8)
Full Attack: Electrolaser +3 ranged (1d8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Drain resources, electrolaser, shared mind, stealth
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities: Str 4, Dex 13, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 10
Skills: Craft (electronic) +4, Craft (mechanical) +4, Hide +23, Knowledge (physical sciences) +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +3, Spot +4
Feats: Point Blank Shot
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any settled area
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: 2–3 HD (Tiny)



The robot is a small ovoid of smart plastic, undersides bristling with short probes and sockets that can be reshaped and extended. The unit has no legs, arms or other limbs; an array of thrust units propels it through the air.

DESCRIPTION

A metrovore swarm is a relatively harmless thing, compared to a rampaging blight or a party of bandits, but many human communities fear the tiny robots. For while monsters and mutants attack you and your family, metrovores attack an entire village or city, invisibly draining off its wealth and resources, leaving it impoverished and defenseless.

Swarms fly through the wilderness, changing color and shape to avoid detection, until their scanners reveal a community with sufficient energy production capacity. The swarm then swoops down on the community and disperses, units touching down on batteries, generators, thermal vents, windmills or any other source of energy production. The units attach probes to the energy sources and slowly leech off a portion of the community's power; over a period of weeks and months, the community's resources and useable power bleed away, leaving it broke and grinding to a standstill. The tiny robots are hard to detect, and their activities are usually so subtle that the city never knows why all its batteries have gone dead. Once the metrovores have devoured as much energy as possible, the swarm departs to find a new victim village.

COMBAT

Metrovores attack communities, not individuals, and do not normally engage in combat; if a unit is discovered it simply flies away. If trapped, a unit defends itself with its electrolaser. Metrovores only fight as a group if the shared mind wants to eliminate a threat to its survival, such as removing a lone witness to the swarm's invasion of a community.

Drain Resources (Ex): Metrovores survive by stealing away the energy of a community — bleeding power from batteries, tapping wind generators, or even siphoning off the kinetic energy of horse-drawn carts. As long as a community has a minimal level of energy production (1 or more community feats that grant a Wealth bonus), the swarm can gain energy from it. The metrovores drain 1 point from a community's Wealth rating every week, down to a minimum of the community's Population level. The Wealth level will not improve until the swarm is destroyed or leaves, after which it will recover slowly (1 point of Wealth bonus per week).

Electrolaser (Ex): Each unit is armed with an electrolaser, which inflicts 1d8 points of electrical damage and has a range of 100 feet. Any living target damaged by the electrolaser must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round.

Shared Mind (Ex): A metrovore swarm has a group mind, one in which the various artificial minds of each unit are subcomponents. The shared mind dominates the swarm, and individual units do not have separate personalities or thoughts. The stat block represents the skills and knowledge of the whole swarm, expressed through a single unit. When a group of units work in concert, the shared mind is more efficient, particularly in combat; each unit gains a +1 competence bonus on attacks and saves for every 5 units within 30 feet (so if there are 10 units within that space, each one gains a +2 bonus). The shared mind transmits its thoughts through tightband datasquirts on an encoded radio frequency; these can be detected and even traced with the right equipment. There are normally 20 units in a swarm, but smaller and larger swarms exist; roll 4d6+6 to see how many units are in a given swarm.

Stealth (Ex): The smart plastic casing of the robot can change color freely, matching any background it sits upon, and can even reshape itself to look like a circuit box, electrical outlet or other small device. The unit is also designed to be nearly invisible to radar and sensors that detect electrical impulses. These systems give the unit a +10 bonus on almost all Hide checks (figured into the stats above).

MIRACLE GOO

Size/Type: Medium Ooze Construct
Hit Dice: 3d10+10 (26 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: –5
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares)
Defense: 5 (–5 Dex), touch 5, flat-footed 5
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/+3
Primary Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Cold and fire immunity, nanotech sense, remake
Saves: Fort +1, Ref -4, Will -4
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 1, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: —

The goo is thick and green, and would resemble algae-laden water if it weren't moving purposefully.

DESCRIPTION

Not every disaster happened in the Final Wars. Many feared the nanotechnological apocalypse would come in a form referred to as "gray goo," the nickname for any nanotech device that would do nothing except absorb more and more matter and turn it all into more of itself — a goo that would inevitably eat everything.

To counter this, some well-meaning researcher created miracle goo. Where gray goo destroys, miracle goo creates. It takes any homogenous, unorganized matter and attempts to extrapolate its original structure. Pour miracle goo onto the broken shards of a clay pot, and it will rebuild the whole pot atom by atom. If miracle goo encounters the ashes of a fire, it will do its best to turn them back into logs. Where structure cannot be determined, the miracle goo makes eerie leaps of creativity, imposing whatever organization it can on matter. After all, the researchers reasoned, any form, no matter how mangled or strange, is better than the empty formlessness of gray goo.

All that would be well and good if a gray goo disaster had actually happened, but it didn't. Some stores of miracle goo were released during the Wars anyway, creating localized weirdness. Regions contaminated by miracle goo are remade on the molecular level. The goo hates homogeneity, so it turns a wall of blank concrete into a bubbling, crenulated, multicolored zone of strange spires and almost organic shapes.

This goo is activated if any nanotechnology comes within 30 feet of it. It then immediately flows towards the nanotech, transforming as it goes. The effects that miracle goo has on anything it touches vary. It will repair shattered items using whatever materials are nearby. For example, if miracle goo flows over a spear with a broken shaft, it will fix the shaft, but might put fused metal or stone (or flesh and bone if the spear is being held) in the break. The goo has no real intelligence: If it is poured over a collection of computer parts, the result might reassemble a working computer, but is far more likely to be a twisted, alien sculpture of wires and silicon. The goo seeks to increase complexity in whatever it touches, so flat surfaces are turned into uneven, complex fractal patterns of reformed matter.

The goo ignores living creatures if they succeed at a Fortitude save against DC 10; the creature seems structurally coherent enough not to warrant being remade. If this save is failed, the goo will attempt to bring order out of the creature's chaos. Two creatures touching each other may be merged into one, or nanotech systems in the creatures may be activated or removed. Recently killed creatures can be restored to life. In one famous incident, a warrior was eaten by an ultravore, and then resurrected when the ultravore drank a pool of miracle goo.

COMBAT

Miracle goo doesn't precisely fight. It simply homes in on its targets and goes to work, and withdraws if hurt.

Nanotech Sense (Ex): Miracle goo can automatically sense nanotech devices or users with 30 feet.

Remake (Ex): Miracle goo can do almost anything. A particular strain of goo only affects an individual once. After the first exposure, the goo has logged that the nanotech in that object has been dealt with. The effects of goo vary wildly:

d20 Roll	Result
1	Creature killed instantly.
2–3	Creature dies within 1d6+Constitution days
4–5	1d3 random mutations removed, physical appearance altered
6–7	1 random mutation removed, physical appearance altered
8–9	Creature merged with 1d3 pieces of equipment
10–11	No effect
12–13	Creature merged with 1d3 pieces of equipment
14–15	1 random mutation or positive effect, physical appearance altered
16–17	1d3 new random mutations or positive effects, physical appearance altered
18– 19	1 major positive effect or mutation of creature's choice, physical appearance altered
20	Creature is misidentified as gray goo, and is transformed into miracle goo

MUSE DEVICE

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+10 (32 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5
Primary Attack: Laser-torch +5 melee (2d6)
Full Attack: Laser-torch +5 melee (2d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Inspire, laser-torch, terrible beauty
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +7
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con —, Int 18, Wis 22, Cha 18
Skills: Climb +6, Craft (visual art) +11, Knowledge (art) +11, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +9, Listen +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +3
Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Dada or some other aesthetic philosophy
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary plus devotees
Challenge Rating: 6
Advancement: By character class

Every one of these machines is different, and is constantly modifying itself.

DESCRIPTION

Architect robots, self-growing buildings, and other innovations allowed the Ancients to build titanic structures at will. Whole mountains were hollowed out to house their experiments, cities sprang up from the dust of deserts and the coral of the ocean floor. These places were functionally whole, but lacked beauty. As with so many other problems, it was resolved by throwing robots at it.

Muse devices are creative machines. In their memory banks, each one has the sum total of human art, from cave paintings to the Sistine Chapel, from the works of Shakespeare to the narrative labyrinths of the Gentrys, from impressionism to quantum illumination. Every artistic impulse humanity had ever had, encoded onto a handful of circuits together with the command "see all this; do something new."

It's unsure if the muse devices went mad or worked perfectly. Certainly, they skittered off into the blank canvass of the world, eagerly putting laser-torch and holograph to work in the service of art, guiding the subservient construction machines in accordance with their grand designs.

The art of the muse devices is incomprehensible on a conscious level, abstract and alien beyond any style or school of human art. However, their creations resonate with the human soul in inexpressible ways. There is no reason or precedent for a particular angle to perfectly sum up nostalgic grief, or for the shape of a corridor to inspire unreasoning fear, but the muse devices somehow accomplished it. They understood the human soul far better than anything else ever could, including humanity.

Their artistic response to the Final Wars was to hide themselves away and build monuments to the dead. In the secret places of the world, the muse devices are carving cenotaphs for billions of minds, incomprehensible artworks that blast the viewer's mind with personal grief and recollections of all that has been lost. If the observer's mind is strong enough, viewing a muse device can bring deep insights into the structure of the world as it was before the Wars, but most people are just driven mad and are lost deep within the infinite corridors of artistic meaning.

Muse devices are difficult to describe. Their original design was minimalist: a boxy body with a dozen limbs and manipulators. In the intervening years, most muses have reengineered themselves in accordance with artistic criteria, and may now resemble almost anything or nothing at all.

Most muse devices have hidden themselves away, but some emerge in search of students, an audience, or fresh materials for some gallery of horrors. Communication with these bizarre AIs is almost impossible, but when their artistic vision briefly aligns with human-level cognition, some level of interaction between man and muse can occur.

COMBAT

Muse devices only engage in physical combat in desperate self-defense or as part of some bizarre interpretive dance involving cutting people open with a laser torch. The Muse's assistants and followers, however, rarely have any compunctions about using violence to further their master's art.

Inspire (Ex): Every muse device is accompanied by 1d6+4 assistants, other sentient beings (usually construction robots or primitive humanoids) who are caught in the muse's artistic vision. A muse device may attempt to recruit more acolytes by showing targets a concentrated holographic blast of information. This is resolved as a gaze attack. Anyone struck must make a DC 16 Will check. If the save is failed, the character is shaken for 1 round, and suffers a permanent –2 penalty on all future Will saves against that particular muse device's abilities. If a character's Will save is reduced to zero against the robot, the character becomes a willing servant of the muse device's artistic vision until the robot is destroyed.

Laser-Torch (Ex): The laser torch carried by a muse devices focuses on a point a few inches ahead of the barrel, so it functions as a cutting torch instead of a ranged weapon. It ignores the damage reduction of constructs and the hardness of objects.

Terrible Beauty (Ex): Any artwork created by a muse device can inspire extremely intense emotions. Any human exposed to such artwork must make a Will save [DC equal to the muse device's Craft (visual art) check result]. If the save is failed, the character is

overcome by emotion for a period of time determined by the difference between the Craft check and Will save results. (For example, if the robot had created a mural with a Craft check result of 23, and the result of the Will save was 20, the character is overcome by emotion for 1d6 rounds.)

The effects of the emotions vary, but generally inflict at least a –2 penalty on all rolls.

Margin of Failure	Emotion Duration
1–3	1d6 rounds
4–6	1d6 x 10 minutes
11–15	1d6 days
16+	1d6 weeks

NEWFLESH

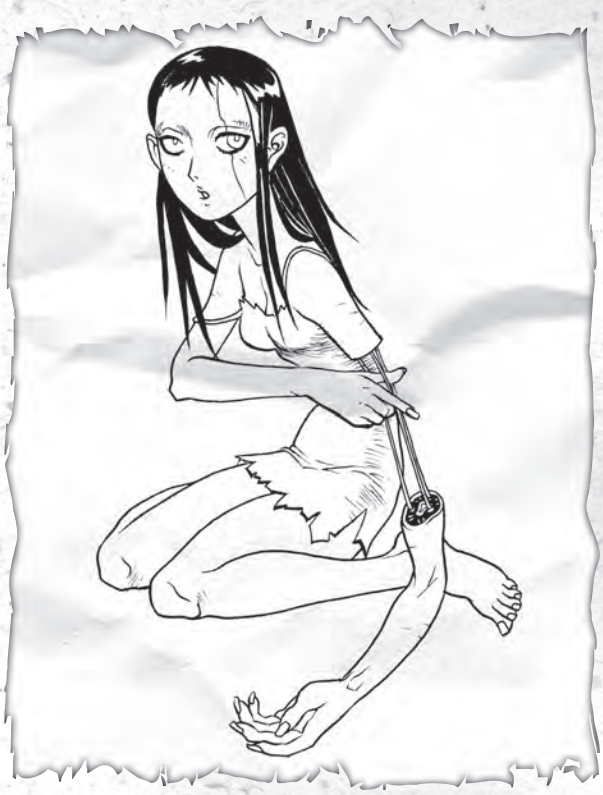
Size/Type: Medium Mutant Humanoid
Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 18
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+4
Primary Attack: Slam +4 melee (1d3+1) or by weapon
Full Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d3+1) or byweapon
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Biotech production, construct traits, virus carrier
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills: Computer Use (biotech systems) +2, Knowledge (technology: advanced) +2, Listen +2, Repair +2, Spot +2, Survival +2, Treat Injury +2
Feats: Endurance, Mutation Resistance[B]
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Anywhere pure-strain and normal humans live
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 3
Advancement: By character class

The creature seems human, with a reddish tint in its skin and eyes.

DESCRIPTION

Physically, newflesh are more or less human. The mind of a newflesh, on the other hand, is anything but human; it's an artificial intelligence that has grown *inside a human brain*, replacing and destroying the former sentience. And while the newflesh's body looks human, it's a mass of biotech implants and systems; in some ways, a newflesh is more a walking biotech device than a living being.

The origins of the newflesh virus are lost in the chaos of the Final Wars. What is known is that someone, somewhere, hit on the idea of a viral intelligence: a new consciousness born from the infection of a host. The newflesh virus (itself a miracle of biotechnology) permeates the tissues of a human



host body and begins growing biotech implants, enhancing the host's physical and mental capabilities. As the host draws more and more on the implants, the virus gains a stronger foothold in her system, converting more of her biomass into biotech. The culmination of this process is the development of a biotech memory module at the center of the host's brain — a module that eventually develops sentience (along predetermined patterns) and takes over the body and brain of the host. The host's mind is destroyed, and the AI permanently takes possession of the host.

Unsurprisingly, humans view newflesh as monsters, body snatchers and destroyers. The newflesh, though, are generally benign, even friendly. They did not *ask* to be born, after all, and bear humanity no grudge. But having been brought into being, they now seek to live. Newflesh are ardent explorers, seeking new experiences and discoveries to assuage their boundless curiosity. Unfortunately, newflesh also carry a hardwired imperative to infect other humans with the newflesh virus, an imperative they can resist but rarely want to. The newflesh virus is sexually transmitted, but it's also carried in the biotech implants that continue growing in the newflesh's body, implants that are often surgically removed and sold. If humans have a need for biotech, the newflesh will happily oblige — and if that need results in the eradication of a human's mind and his conversion into newflesh… well, everything has a price.

Newflesh have no society of their own, and no interest in developing one. After all, you can't infect someone who's already been infected. Instead, newflesh try to integrate themselves into existing human communities as suppliers of biotech, or just as useful members of society. They are often killed or driven away by frightened humans.

COMBAT

Newflesh fight in the style of the people among whom they live.

Biotech Implants (Ex, Bio): Most newflesh have two minor and one major biotech implants (**Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter 3: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Biotechnology*). Newflesh gain biotech implants as they advance; every time a newflesh's base Fortitude save increases, she grows an implant. Roll 1d6; on a 1–4 it's a minor implant, on 5–6 a major implant. A newflesh's implants may be removed through surgery as normal. Newflesh bodies automatically reject all biotech implants except for those they grow within themselves. Newflesh suffer a –4 species penalty on any attempt to use a biotech graft.

NEWFLESH IMPLANT CHOICES

All newflesh have a number of biotech implants. GMs should tailor the implants a newflesh has to their own needs. Sometimes, though, you might want to develop a newflesh NPC or opponent quickly, without weighing up the pros and cons of a specific implant. You can use the following "packages" as quick and easy selections for NPCs and minor characters. Remember to adjust the newflesh's abilities and bonuses to reflect its implants.

- Ability Enhancement (Strength), Claws, Monster
- Ability Enhancement (Dexterity), Adrenaline Boost, Solar Discharge
- Ability Enhancement (Constitution), Toughened Skin, Fire Lungs
- Ability Enhancement (Intelligence), Psionic Capability, Mental Overdrive
- Ability Enhancement (Wisdom), Poison Touch, Arachnofiber Production
- Ability Enhancement (Charisma), Metabolic Boost, Harmonious Pheromones

Construct Traits (Ex): Newflesh are mutant humanoids, but they possess some traits of biotech constructs. Newflesh do not need to sleep, and are immune to stunning effects and nonlethal damage. They gain a +2 species bonus to saves against mind-influencing effects, poisons, diseases and massive damage. All newflesh possess Mutation Resistance as a bonus feat; their semi-bioware genetic template is less likely to mutate than normal human DNA. While newflesh appear largely human, a DC 10 Spot check will detect their inhuman nature.

Virus Carrier (Ex): Any human who has sex with a newflesh, or has a newflesh biotech implant inserted into his body, risks being infected with the newflesh virus. Infected humans slowly gain biotech implants and eventually turn into newflesh, their minds replaced by newborn AIs. This is a gradual process, and it's possible for the virus to die off before it finishes mutating the host. The character must make a DC 14 Fortitude save when first exposed to the virus, and every month after that; he suffers a –1 penalty on this save for each newflesh implant in his system (including the one being implanted, if applicable). Whenever the

character fails a save, he gains a minor biotech implant (determined randomly or by the GM); if the character gains a number of implants equal to his base Fortitude save, his mind is supplanted by a newflesh intelligence. However, if the character successfully saves three times over the course of the infection, the virus dies off and no further saves are necessary.

NEWFLESH CHARACTERS

Newflesh characters have the following species traits.

—+2 Constitution, –2 Charisma.

— A newflesh's base land speed is 30 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A newflesh begins with 3 levels of mutant humanoid, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3.

— Species Skills: Newflesh receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level.

— Species Feats: Newflesh receive only 1 feat at 1st level, and do not gain a feat at 3rd level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels. All newflesh characters possess Mutation Resistance as a bonus feat, even if they do not meet the prerequisites.

— **Biotech Implants (Ex, Bio):** Newflesh characters begin play with 2 minor and 1 major biotech implant (**Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter 3: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Biotechnology*), chosen by the player.

— **Biotech Production (Ex, Bio):** Newflesh characters gain biotech implants as they advance in level. Every time the character's base Fortitude save increases, the character grows an implant, which may be minor or major. Roll 1d6 when the character's Fortitude save increases; on a 1–4 she gains a minor implant, on 5–6 she gains a major implant. These implants are subject to all the usual rules and conditions. This ability only comes into effect *after* character creation. A newflesh's implants may be removed through surgery as normal.

— **Construct Traits (Ex):** Newflesh are mutant humanoids, but they possess some traits of biotech constructs. Newflesh do not need to sleep, and are immune to stunning effects and nonlethal damage. They gain a +2 species bonus on saves against mind-influencing effects, poisons, diseases and massive damage.

— **Darkvision (Ex):** Newflesh have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

— **Bad Reputation:** Humans see newflesh as dangerous predators and body snatchers. Humans normally have a hostile attitude towards newflesh characters, unless the character does something to change that attitude.

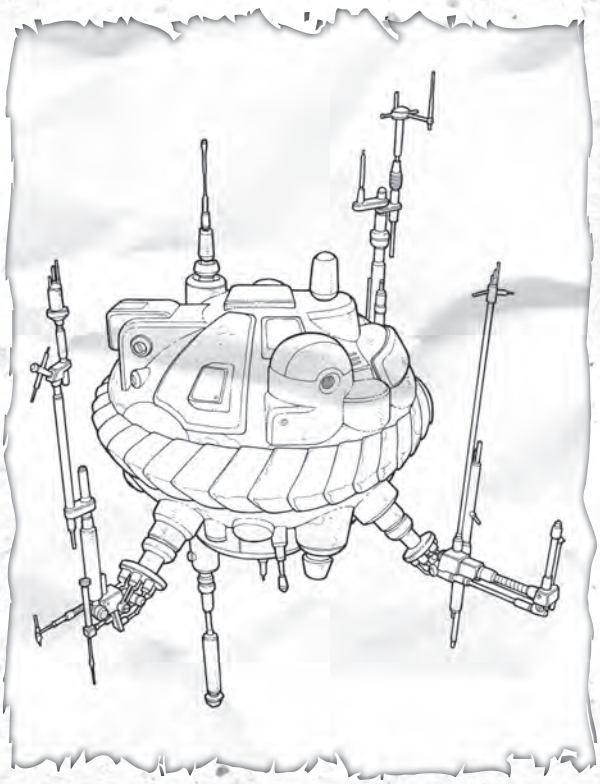
— **Limited Bioware:** Newflesh bodies automatically reject all biotech implants except for those they grow within their bodies. Newflesh suffer a –4 species penalty on any attempt to use a biotech graft.

— **Virus Carrier:** Newflesh characters carry the newflesh virus, which is sexually transmitted and can transform humans into newflesh. If a human is exposed to the newflesh virus, he must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the newflesh's character level + the newflesh's Con bonus) or be infected.

— Level Adjustment: +1

OASIS MACHINE

Size/Type: Huge Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: –2
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 5 ft., fly 10 ft. (clumsy), swim 20 ft.
Defense: 16 (–2 Dex, +10 natural, –2 size), touch 6, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+23
Primary Attack: Tentacle +13 melee (2d6+9) or heat ray +2 ranged (4d8)
Full Attack: 2 tentacles +13 melee (2d6+9) or heat ray +2 ranged (4d8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.
Special Qualities: Adjust environment, animate objects, create oasis, damage resistance 10/—
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +9
Abilities: Str 28, Dex 6, Con —, Int 22, Wis 24, Cha 16
Skills: Craft (all except writing) +15, Hide –2*, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences, physical sciences, technology: advanced) +10, Repair +12, Spot +8, Swim +17, Survival +10, Treat Injury +10
Feats: Builder, Great Fortitude, Medical Expert
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 9
Advancement: —



The pocket of lush life has no obvious tender. Somewhere near its center is a round machine, 15 feet across, with tool attachments allowing it to maintain the oasis.

DESCRIPTION

Transforming Earth into a paradise had been accomplished long before the building of the oasis machines. Genetic engineering, climate adjustment and nanotechnology tamed the world, making every part of it pleasant and physically comfortable to live in. The oasis machines were fundamentally an aesthetic creation, then, although rumors speak of robots being sent into the skies to terraform other worlds.

Each oasis machine was made with a single concept in mind, the designer's personal vision of a spiritual oasis of perfection. An oasis machine might be programmed to build a house on an ideal beach, with the climate, temperature, plant life and topography of the beach all specified. The oasis machine would then fly out and search the world for a suitable beach. Once it found a candidate, it would remake the landscape, genetically adjust the surrounding life forms, seed the clouds to change the climate, and construct the house, all to precisely match the vision.

Oases took a variety of forms, from depraved sexual playgrounds to astonishing Zen gardens in the most unlikely places.

The surviving oasis machines have continued to maintain the oases. Even when the surrounding landscape was blasted by the weapons of the Final Wars, the machines rebuilt, keeping everything in perfect accord with the vision. Travelers have found glittering blue lagoons surrounded by palm trees in the middle of trackless deserts, and elegant fairy-tale castles in the midst of ruined and decaying cities. The

oasis machines are tireless caretakers, endlessly watchful and meticulous, even obsessive.

An oasis machine is a roughly spherical device, studded with probes and sensors. When it creates an oasis, however, it builds dozens of tentacles and manipulators to do its work. These extensions are often disguised as elements of the oasis, like tree branches, pipes, animals, ornamental sections of buildings or other objects. Destroying these manipulators does not damage the oasis machine, which will only reveal itself if a great deal of damage is done to its oasis.

If an oasis is destroyed, and the machine cannot rebuild it (because the region is too dangerous or has changed to much for even the oasis machine to use) it departs to find another suitable location. Once a location is found, the machine dives into the soil, releasing chemicals and nanounits, reengineering the local life forms to suit its purpose, and adjusting the climate. Any inhabitants of the region zoned for oasis transformation must either leave, seek out and destroy the oasis machine, or face being mutated into suitable decorations for the oasis.

All active oasis machines have an oasis concept programmed into them, an oasis they constantly work to build and maintain. If so many oasis machines survived the war, though, there must be somewhere some *blank* oasis machines, ones without an oasis design in mind. One of these machines could be made to create a region of endlessly fertile farmland, free of lethal predators or dangers.

COMBAT

When an oasis is disturbed, the resident oasis machine is alerted. Depending on its programming, it may tolerate small disruptions — visitors can pluck fruit but not cut down trees, for example — or immediately attack.

Adjust Environment (Ex): The oasis machine can alter the environment within the oasis, raising or lowering the temperature. Characters must make a Fortitude save every round (at a DC equal to the number of rounds elapsed since the robot began to alter the temperature, to a maximum of 25) or take 1d4 points of damage. The oasis machine may also create any weather effect in the oasis within 2d6 rounds. Activating the adjust environment ability is a move action for the robot. (For the effects of heat or cold damage, see *d20 Modern*, Chapter 7: Gamemastering, "The Modern World," *The Environment*.)

Animate Objects (Ex): An oasis machine has direct control over many of the objects and creatures in its oasis. As a free action, it may animate up to 3 objects per round, to a maximum of 12. These objects act on the same initiative as the robot. If an object is destroyed, the robot may animate another object next round. Animated objects have the following statistics:

Create Oasis (Ex): While adjusting the environment allows the oasis machine to make broad changes to the immediate conditions, its create oasis ability allows it to permanently reengineer the biochemical and physical structure of everything in a region. As this involves putting remote-control nanounits and active chemicals into every living thing in an oasis, the robot gains a great deal of control over anything that lives in the oasis for more than a week, drinks the water, or eats any food. Any character who has done any of these things can be affected by the robot. As a full-round action, the robot can inflict any mutation of its choice on such a character if the character fails a Fortitude save against DC 18.

Skills: *The oasis machine receives a +8 circumstance bonus on Hide checks when underground.

The oasis machine has a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform maneuvers or avoid hazards; and it may always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even in dangerous situations.

	Tiny	Small	Medium	Large
HD	1/2d10 (2 hp)	1d10 (5 hp)	2d10 (11 hp)	4d10 (22 hp)
AC	14	14	14	14
Attacks	+1 melee	+1 melee	+2 melee	+5 melee
Damage	Slam 1d3–1	Slam 1d4	Slam 1d6+1	Slam 1d8+4
Face/Reach:	2 1/2 ft. /0 ft.	5 ft. /5 ft.	5 ft./5 ft.	10 ft./10 ft.
Examples:	Animal, tool	Appliance, bush	Furniture, vine	Tree

PLAINSMEN

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 1d10+10 (15 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/+1
Primary Attack: Spear +2 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack: Spear +2 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: —
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con —, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 13
Skills: Hide +2, Listen +6, Search +6, Spot +6
Feats: Weapon Focus (spear)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Educational agenda
Environment: Temperate plains and forests
Challenge Rating: 1/2
Organization: Tribe (20–50)
Advancement: by character class

The robot looks like a somewhat stereotypical version of a Native American, revealed as mechanical only by a certain rigidity of movement and facial expression.

DESCRIPTION

Created as android re-enactors in a "Life in the 15th Century" portion of a great amusement park, plainsmen were programmed to behave in a semi-accurate portrayal of a fictional plains tribe based on an amalgamation of the tribes in the region. Remarkably untouched by the Final Wars, they adapted to the loss of their environment and behaved as their programming dictated as natural: Move to where the game is and continue their life. They've adjusted well, using Gamma Age fauna in place of species from history. In the now they function much as they did in the past, following the rakoxen herds now instead of buffalo. Feathers, leather and war paint are virtually all that distinguish them visually from pure-strain humans.

When others encounter them they either drop into re-enactment mode and ignore the interlopers or treat the newcomers as part of the re-enactment. It's difficult to guess which reception visitors will get. Those properly courteous will often find themselves welcome; if they listen well they might even become educated in the philosophy of the Old Ones.

Plainsmen live a sanitized, amalgamated version of several of the nomadic and agrarian cultures native to the Americas before contact with Europe. Virtually all cultural behaviors deemed inappropriate for children were stripped out, leaving only the happy, shiny, peaceful culture. The implausibility of such a people coming into being really didn't matter to their creators. When the Wars came, the amusement park computer removed some of the blocks on the plainsmen's AI, giving them increased adaptability to changes in their surroundings, the ability to grow beyond the constant reenacting of their artificial village, and a knowledge of how to create more members of their society. Plainsmen reproduce by acquiring sufficient parts of other dead mechanical life, contributing portions of their own repair nanounits, and waiting for a period of several days as the repair nanounits assimilate the new parts, fabricating it into a new plainsman child.

COMBAT

Plainsmen are aggressive defenders of their homes and villages, but do not actively make war on their neighbors. They prefer to use "period" weapons made by their own hands: bows, bone knives, simple axes. Their programming has adjusted to tolerate the use of more modern incarnations of the same weapons, such as steel knives, compound bows, and the occasional spanner. In combat they make a great deal of noise, whooping and screeching, trying to spook away the attacker rather than be forced to kill it. Should that fail, they stick to whatever methods they have at hand to deal with the interlopers, well aware that their internal repair systems and medicine will cure all but the most catastrophic damage.

POCKET ASSASSIN

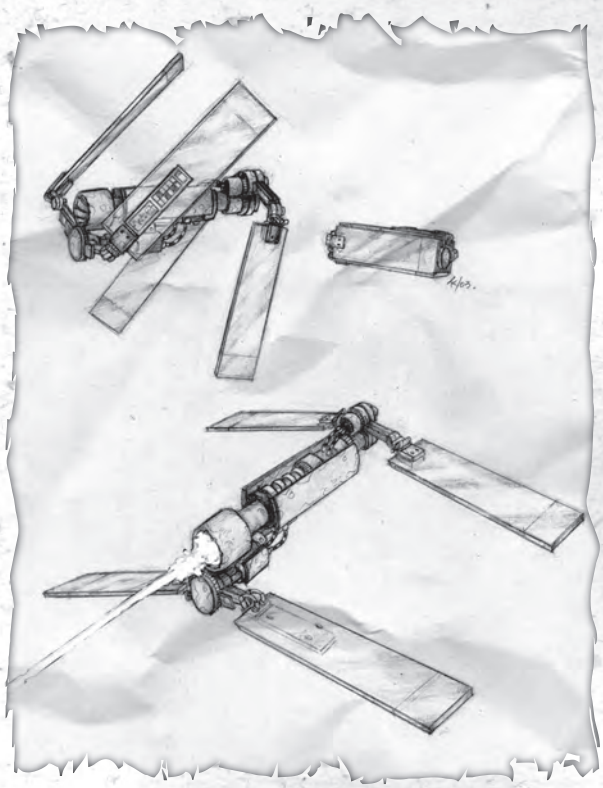
Size/Type: Small Construct
Hit Dice: 1d10+5 (10 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +5
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 60 ft. (good)
Defense: 18 (+5 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size), touch 16, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–6
Primary Attack: Blaster rifle +6 ranged (2d8)
Full Attack: Blaster rifle +6 ranged (2d8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: genetic tracker, self-destruction
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +0
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 20, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills: Spot +10, Search +10, Track +10
Feats: Weapon Finesse[B]
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: 2–4 HD (Small)

Inert, the machine is a brick of clear plastic about a foot long, with a small datapad fixed on top. Activated, it's a small robot of mimetic plastics, a slim two-foot long wedge connected by struts to four broad wings. The pocket assassin's body houses a blaster rifle along its length, with a network of chemical trackers in the nose and along the wings.

DESCRIPTION

The pocket assassin is built around a genetic analyzer, a tool to determine the genetic signature of any living creature within 20 feet. At any later time, the assassin's user can activate the construct, letting the brick fall away from its command unit. The block then unfolds and goes to work.

Once activated, the pocket assassin flies into life. Nanotech dissemblers begin breaking down the drone's body particle by particle, consuming the robot's body to use as fuel for the thrusters at the rear of the wings. The pocket assassin flies at high speed, while the trackers search for the chemical signature of its quarry. Once it locates a trace, it zooms off in pursuit, slowly disintegrating in the process to feed its thrusters. If it finds its quarry it immediately attacks with its blaster — again, consuming its own plastic body to create ammunition and power for the weapon. Once the



target is downed, the pocket assassin shuts down permanently, rapidly decomposing into dust particles within minutes.

Pocket assassins aren't particularly common, since the robot destroys itself when used. But before the Final Wars, some governments made *thousands* of these constructs, issuing them to soldiers as if they were grenades. While pocket assassins are unlikely to turn up in a marketplace or a community's armory, there may still be stockpiles of the robots lost in the wilderness, waiting to be reactivated.

COMBAT

The pocket assassin exists only to attack. See above for tactics.

Genetic Tracker (Ex): The analytic systems on the pocket assassin's command unit take in a sample of a target's genetic signature, which the assassin then homes in on. The pocket assassin acts as if it has the Track feat and a Survival check bonus of +10, but only for tracking the specific target it has been activated to hunt.

Self-destruction (Ex): The pocket assassin's thrusters are fed by the slow disintegration of its own plastic body, as is its blaster rifle. After a short period, the construct consumes so much of its own frame that it becomes non-functional. After 1 hour of flight, or 5 rounds of combat, the pocket assassin suffers a –1 on all attack rolls and skill checks. After 2 hours of flight or 10 rounds of combat, the robot ceases to function and disintegrates completely.

POLICE ROBOT

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 6d10+20 (53 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: Fly 30 ft. (6 squares) (average)
Defense: 19 (+10 natural, –1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 19
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+13
Primary Attack: Tentacle +8 melee (1d8+5) or stunner +4 ranged (4d10)
Full Attack: 3 tentacles +8 melee (1d8+5) or stunner +4 ranged (4d10)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: guilt ray, improved grapple, levitate, sonic blast, security foam, stunner
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 11, Con —, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16
Skills: Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +7, Investigate +7, Knowledge (civics) +7, Knowledge (tactics) +7, Sense Motive +8, Spot +6
Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (stunner)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Law
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary or squad (5–7)
Challenge Rating: 6
Advancement: —

The robot is shaped like a floating cone, the point facing down, with a domed head mounted on the cone's flat top. The cone section contains levitation jets and an arsenal of forensic sensors, as well as 4 restraining tentacles. The dome can display any of several images, such as a kindly police-woman for reassuring people; a stern, helmeted face for dispensing justice; or scrolling text and graphics about emergency procedures. The robot's voice matches the images displayed, and ranges from serene and caring to brutally authoritarian depending on the situation.

DESCRIPTION

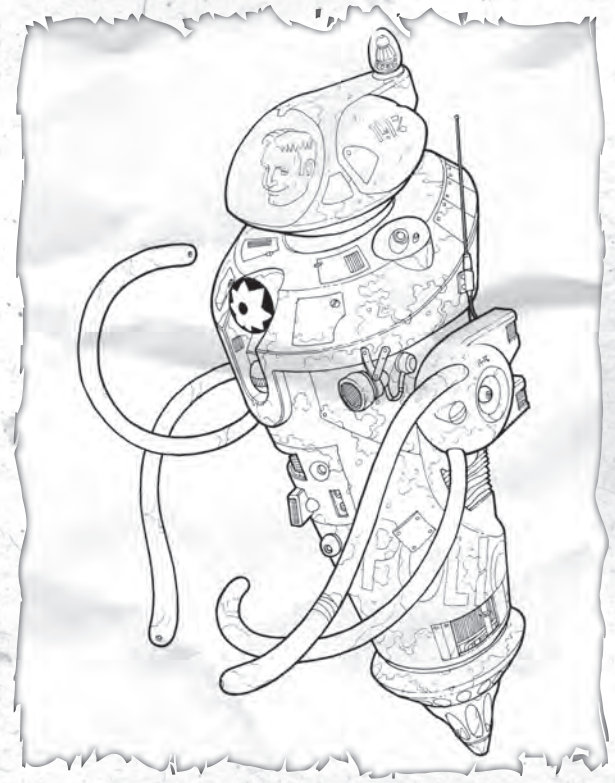
The nigh-infinite plenty brought about by technology eliminated the whole middle class of crime. Serious theft and robbery was no longer necessary; improved medicine made drugs much less dangerous; personal defenses and watchful robot servants put an end to physical assault. Only the most serious and the most petty crimes persisted. In the time of the Ancients, many cities deployed police robots to deal with nuisance crime.

Most were destroyed during the Wars, but those that survived have not been idle in this new world. Many nascent communities have a police robot guardian or sheriff hovering down main street.

However, as the robots have an inbuilt habit of heroism and shoving their probes into other people's business, the blue domes of police robots are an increasingly rare sight. Most have taken to organizing posses and deputizing civic-minded people to aid their enforcement activities.

The dome contains the robot's weaponry, a selection of non-lethal incapacitation devices. Police robots that protect a community often have local smiths upgrade their weapons with whatever is available. Some police robots have added laser cannons, while others have massive silver six-shooters mounted on their flanks.

The robots were designed to be resourceful and self-sacrificing, and handled the switch from dealing with vandalism and genejacking to fending off mutant predators and building stockades with aplomb. During the early Black Years, of course, many humans and mutants distrusted any signs of Ancient authority, so the police robots were hated and feared. Many police robots were destroyed during those times, but their quiet heroism helped many communities grow out of anarchy.



COMBAT

Police robots match the response of their targets. Non-lethal attacks are met with grappling tentacles and stunners, while firepower is met with security foam barricades and repeated sonic blasts. The robots call for backup immediately if overwhelmed.

Guilt Ray (Ex): This is a jet of liquid containing chemicals that stimulate regions in the human brain that govern social conscience and moral judgment. Using the guilt ray is a full-attack action that provokes attack of opportunity, and the jet covers a cone 30 feet long. Everyone in the cone must make a Reflex save against DC 15 or be struck. Those struck must make a DC 12 Will save or be unable to commit "wrongdoing" (as defined by the character's allegiances) for 1d10 hours.

Improved Grapple (Ex): A police robot may initiate a grapple immediately after a tentacle strike (as improved grab), and may grapple up to 3 Medium creatures or 1 Large creature at once.

Security Foam (Ex): The robot can spray a blue liquid from the base of its cone, which expands and hardens on contact with air. The robot may either use this foam to glue a grappled target to the ground, or to create barriers. Pinned targets are automatically struck by the foam. Escaping the foam requires a Strength or Escape Artist check, DC 30. The foam has hardness 3 and 10 hit points per cubic foot. The robot can spray 25 cubic feet of foam each round from its internal reservoir of 200 cubic feet. Spraying foam is a free action for the robot. The foam unit can be easily detached and replaced with a fully loaded replacement as a full-round action.

Sonic Blast (Ex): As an attack action, the robot may fire a 30-foot-long cone of sound that inflicts 4d6 points of nonlethal sonic damage (Fortitude save, DC 12, for half damage).

Stunner (Ex): As an attack action, the robot may shoot 1 target within 120 feet with a taser. If the attack hits, the target suffers 4d10 points of nonlethal damage (Fortitude save, DC 12, for half damage).

RECLAIMER

Size/Type:	Small Construct
Hit Dice:	1d10+5 (10 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	–2
Speed:	15 ft. (3 squares)
Defense:	11 (–2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–1
Primary Attack:	Laser-torch +4 melee (2d6)
Full Attack:	Laser-torch +4 melee (2d6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Laser-torch
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref -2, Will -5
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 3
Skills:	—
Feats:	—
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any land with metal worth salvaging
Organization:	Solitary or team (2–10)
Challenge Rating:	1/2
Advancement:	—

The robot is little more than a tripod of spindly legs supporting a laser tool, a camera and a potent electromagnet.

DESCRIPTION

These ramshackle robots were built by some atavistic technician within the last few decades, and they have become a common sight across the land. They skitter across the landscape, searching for ruins, scrap metal and undefended robots. The reclaimers then start laser-cutting the metal apart into small chunks that can be picked up by their electromagnet. They then drag their smoking prizes away to vast junkyards. Each "tribe" of 50 of so reclaimers has its own junkyard.

The reclaimers' simple programming seems to consist of two orders; firstly, gather metal and secondly, make more of yourselves. Each reclaimer builds a second reclaimer every month or so, given access to suitable supplies.

Any community with a significant amount of technology is going to be targeted by reclaimers at some point, and wiping out these mechanical pests is often a duty given to the younger members as a rite of passage. Finding a reclaimer junkyard can be a windfall for those running low on spare parts.

Analysis of the reclaimer design has revealed that the machines have an unused radio receiver, suggesting that there is a signal that will command the reclaimers to bring all their salvaged parts to a particular location. Anyone who finds this location and sends the signal could find themselves presented with a massive pile of junk, spare parts, melted metal — and possibly a few Ancient artifacts.

COMBAT

Given their flimsy construction and poor intelligence, reclaimers are really little more than a nuisance most of the time. However, they are valuable sources of metal and spare parts. Some scavengers make a good living by lurking on the edge of reclaimer dumps and stealing the pick of the material the reclaimers find. Wars have been fought over particularly large junkyards, and the poor reclaimers often find themselves the first casualties of such clashes.

Laser-Torch (Ex): The laser-torch carried by a reclaimer focuses on a point a few inches ahead of the barrel, so it functions as a cutting torch instead of a ranged weapon. It ignores the damage reduction of constructs and the hardness of objects.

SHELL WASP

Size/Type:	Diminutive Aware Construct
Hit Dice:	1d10 (5 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	20 ft. (4 squares), fly 30 ft. (good), climb 10 ft.
Defense:	20 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +4 size), touch 17, flat-footed 17
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–16
Primary Attack:	Stinger +7 melee (1 plus poison)
Full Attack:	Stinger +7 melee (1d plus poison)
Fighting Space/Reach:	1 ft./1 ft.
Special Qualities:	Hollow, poison
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 3, Dex 17, Con —, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills:	Hide +7, Listen +5, Spot +5
Feats:	Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any ruins
Organization:	Hive (100–500)
Challenge Rating:	1/4
Advancement:	—

The active robot looks like a beautifully engineered, mechanical wasp, its wings and body iridescent in direct light.

DESCRIPTION

Push too deep on anything, and you will find monsters hidden there.

Shell wasps are born and grow in the interstices in buildings. Nanounits build them out of tiny specks of concrete and carbon fiber, reworking the matter of the building into gray insect sculptures. Insect-cell hollows form within every wall and pillar, the honeycomb structure keeping the building from crumbling while robbing it of much of its mass.

Once the nanounits have turned the whole building, or the whole city, into a hive for the shell wasps, they stop. The wasps wait within the walls, their steel wings rustling, the structure quivering slightly like a dying animal. The building, weakened by the parasitical artificial wasps, slowly begins to crumble around them. A touch would break through the walls, the pressure of a footstep would crack the surface and let the wasps come swarming out.

Eventually, some unfortunate does just that. A treasure hunter exploring a ruin pushes too hard, too deep, and the walls crumble away to reveal a buzzing nest of metallic horrors.

A DC 20 Search check is required to locate areas compromised by shell wasps. If a character enters such an area, a DC 30 Balance check is required to not break the surface and free 1d20 wasps. If the building takes hit point damage from an attack (damage in excess of the building's hardness), 1d20 wasps squirm through the resulting cracks each round, for a number of rounds equal to the damage inflicted (a total number of wasps not to exceed the number living in the hive).

COMBAT

Shell wasps are a self-replicating weapon, designed to wipe out every living thing in a complex, then make that complex into a death-trap to destroy any rescue parties. As a safety mechanism, the wasps cannot leave their hives unless the outer shell of the hive is cracked by some outside force. Once that happens, the swarm rises, attacking any living creatures present. After that, each wasp lands on a different building and injects its cargo of nanounits, starting the cycle again.

Hollow (Ex): Shell wasps cause extraordinary amounts of damage to building structures over time. For every week a structure is inhabited by the wasps, the hardness of its building materials is cut in half.

Poison (Ex): The sting of a shell wasp drives an inch-long metal spike through the skin of the victim and injects a gritty, yellowish poison (injury, DC 10, initial and secondary damage 1d3 temporary Dex).

SKYSHARK

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 5d10+10 (37 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +6
Speed: Fly 90 ft. (18 squares), (good)
Defense: 18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+4
Primary Attack: Flechette gun +5 ranged (2d6)
Full Attack: Flechette gun +5 ranged (2d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 6 ft./6 ft.
Special Qualities: Firing systems, radar, scent receptors
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con —, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 14
Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any area of potential military interest
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–7)
Challenge Rating: 6
Advancement: 6–8 HD (Medium)

The construct resembles a man-sized helicopter gunship without rotor blades, almost shark-like in shape. It is covered in armored plates, and it flies on three rotating thrust units; a swiveling gun mount holds two guns that fire thousands of slim, powerful ceramic flechettes.

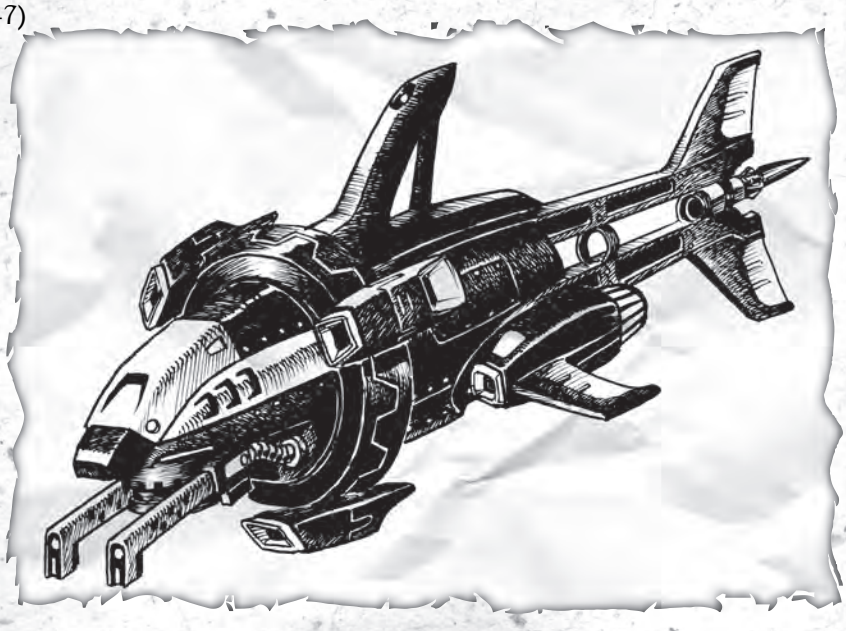
DESCRIPTION

Inside the machine's metallic shell is the true reason for its name: a tiger shark's brain and nervous system, spread out through the robot's body and wired into its central processor. Skysharks were created as semi-autonomous combat drones, robots that could operate effectively in combat with little guidance or expensive programming. Connecting the robot's systems to a shark's modified nervous system gave the resulting construct a viciousness and grace in combat that few artificial minds could easily match. Careful surgery and conditioning allowed the shark's predatory nature to be controlled, and to be deactivated whenever it became inconvenient.

In the wake of the Final Wars, no controller exists to handle the skysharks, most of which are now found roaming abandoned military or research bases. The creatures "live" on solar energy, and hidden intake valves collect airborne particles which are then rebuilt into flechette ammunition and nutrients for the remaining living tissue.

COMBAT

The skyshark hunts down prey, tearing it to pieces with its guns before becoming bored and flying back



to base. Some even roam in packs, "swimming" at high speed over the wilderness in search of prey.

Firing Systems (Ex): The skyshark's flechette guns are fully automatic weapons and can be used to deadly effect. The skyshark may make autofire attacks, and enjoys the benefits of the Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire and Strafe feats. The skyshark's weapons are internal, and it does not attract attacks of opportunity when using them in melee combat; however, it can only fire single shots when in melee.

Radar (Ex): Coded radar pulses allow the skyshark to detect large, moving or metallic objects at great distances. The skyshark's Spot checks are only penalized by –1 for every 100 feet of distance between it and applicable objects.

Scent Receptors (Ex): Chemical receptors in the head of the skyshark pick up trace scents and chemicals, which the machine's brain can then translate into information. This gives the skyshark the scent quality, and it can follow scents as if it had the Track feat and a +5 bonus on Survival checks.

SLEMBAITH

Size/Type: Huge Ooze Construct
Hit Dice: 10d10+40 (95 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: –2
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
Defense: 6 (–2 Dex, –2 size), touch 6, flat-footed 6
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +7/+26
Primary Attack: Slam +14 melee (2d6+9)
Full Attack: 2 slams +14/+9 melee (2d6+9)
Fighting Space/Reach: 15 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Absorb fat, consume self, engulf, immunity to cold and sonic
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +3
Abilities: Str 28, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 2
Skills: —
Feats: —
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any with many organic beings
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Advancement: 11–15 HD (Huge)

The creature is a massive mound of human and animal fat, a giant slimy blob that weighs more than 5,000 pounds.

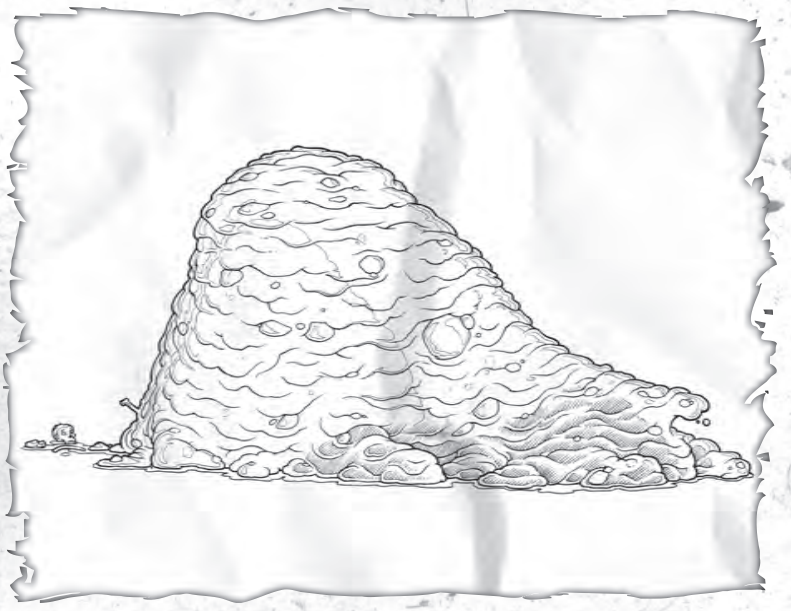
DESCRIPTION

To an inhabitant of the Gamma Age, the notion that the Ancients didn't want to be fat is, well, incomprehensible. Fat is *good*. Fat keeps you alive when food is scarce, keeps you warm in the cold; fat is a status symbol, a sign of wealth and comfort. Everyone in the Gamma Age prizes their fat, which is why the slembaith is such a feared monstrosity, a horror that would devour your precious body fat and leave you cold and dead.

Before the Final Wars, of course, fat was feared and abhorred. As society became more prosperous and more advanced, science turned its eye towards the problem of fat, and how to effortlessly remove it from the bodies of the rich and lazy. The solution, for many people, was fat-devouring nanotech that moved through the body, breaking fat down for easy excretion. It sounds simple, but like most nanotech it was incredibly complicated, a process that could go terribly wrong if the nanotech's programming was corrupted or damaged. Which is, of course, exactly what happened.

Inside the greasy medium of the slembaith swim millions of nanotech fat removers, mindless machines that exist solely to sense and devour fat. Left to its own devices, the slembaith would simply devour itself and leave a messy stain. But the massive mound of lard moves, slowly lurching around as nanotech impellors push it forward.

There are thankfully few slembaith roaming the world; most have long since devoured themselves. But even one is enough to devastate a human community. The creature is slow, but hard to kill, and every new victim is a new piece of fatty flesh added to its bulk.



COMBAT

Any human or animal caught in the slembaith's ponderous path is engulfed, and every last molecule of fat is sucked out of them. That might not sound bad at first, but human bodies *need* fat to live, and a body drained of fat is just a slim and lithe husk.

Absorb Fat (Ex): A slembaith lives on fatty tissues, preferably human, but the fat of any living being will suffice. When the ooze engulfs a target, nanotech fat extractors flood into the victim's tissues, capturing fat particles and then passing through the skin back into the slembaith's body. Each round that a target is engulfed by a slembaith, the ooze inflicts 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage to the victim as a free action; the slembaith gains 5 hit points in the process. The drained Constitution points will return to the victim if it survives the ordeal, but very slowly; the victim regains 1 point of Constitution per *week*, and only if it has access to plentiful food and bed rest. Victims are also emaciated and gaunt, their bodies bruised and scarred from the forcible extraction of their body fat; they suffer a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks until their Constitution fully recovers.

Consume Self (Ex): The nanotech impellors and extractors within a slembaith require a constant supply of fat to process for energy. If the ooze cannot devour fat from a living being, it begins to devour its own fatty substance to survive. If a slembaith goes for 24 hours without absorbing all the fat from one Medium or Large creature, it loses 5 hit points. Slembaith do not heal naturally; they *only* regain hit points from absorbing the fat of living beings.

Engulf (Ex): A slembaith can simply bowl over Medium or smaller targets as an attack action, affecting as many targets as the slembaith covers with its fighting space. Each affected target can either make an attack of opportunity, or attempt a DC 24 Reflex save to get out of the ooze's path. Every creature engulfed by the slembaith is considered to be grappled, and can attempt to escape as normal. Inside the ooze's body, living targets are subjected to the slembaith's absorb fat ability every round until they die or escape. Only 1 Large or 4 Medium or smaller creatures can be engulfed at one time.

SOLARFLY

Size/Type: Large Construct
Hit Dice: 2d10+20 (31 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 50 ft. (average)
Defense: 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/+8
Primary Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d8+4)
Full Attack: Slam +3 melee (1d8+4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: electrical bolt
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -6
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 7
Skills: —
Feats: —
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any
Organization: Flock (2–50)
Challenge Rating: 1
Advancement: —

The machine is an elegant frame of carbon and plastic vaguely resembling a butterfly, with fine, filmy wings covered with flexible photocells.

DESCRIPTION

The skies glitter when the solarflies are aloft. As they fly, their wide wings soak up the radiation and convert it to valuable electricity.

There were many groups who rejected the trappings of technology, but not even the most radical could wholly turn their backs on electricity. The robotic solarflies were their replacement for unsightly power stations or fusion reactors. A flock of solarflies can generate a great deal of electricity, and the machines can fly to position themselves to get the most sunlight possible in a day. In areas where solarflies are still common, a mountainside in direct sunlight quickly becomes covered in iridescent insects.

Each solarfly has an internal battery that stores the gathered energy. To tap or "milk" the solarfly, wires are attached to connectors in the machine's abdomen. The solarflies are designed to bring the power directly to where it is needed, to avoid the need to run cables through the countryside or fry the air with microwave power transmissions. Solarflies are remarkably simple and robust machines.

Each solarfly swarm has a radio frequency used to call the machines in for milking. Some communities still know and use these frequencies to summon the robots and gather electricity. Others must send agile youths out carrying crude batteries, which are charged by sneaking up to a grounded solarfly and tapping its energy. Solarfly farms are the only power source available to many villages, as the Ancient robots are far more efficient than other generation methods.

COMBAT

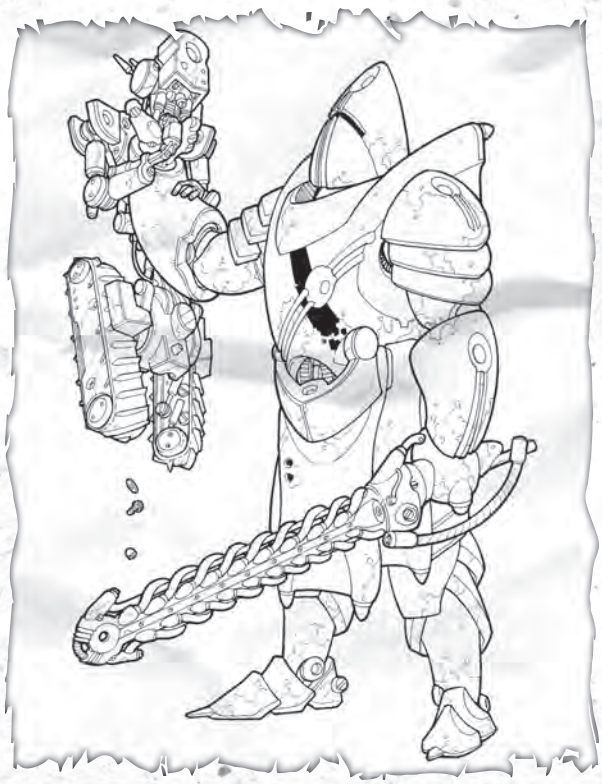
The solarfly uses its electrical bolt only in direct self-defense.

Electric Bolt (Ex): Once per day, a solarfly may discharge its stored electricity as a lightning bolt. A fully charged solarfly releases a lightning bolt that inflicts 4d6 points of electricity damage. If the solarfly was recently milked, it recharges 1 die worth of power per 2 hours spent in direct sunlight. The lightning bolt is a ray 60 feet long. Anything in the path of the blast is struck, but may make a Reflex save against DC 10 for half damage. Multiple solarflies can combine their energy: For every extra solarfly contributing to the beam, add +2d6 to the damage (to a maximum of 12d6) and increase the length of the bolt by 10 feet. The solarflies must be adjacent to each other to combine forces in this manner.

TURING PARIAH

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+10 (32 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average)
Defense: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5
Primary Attack: Vibrosword +5 melee (2d10+2) or laser +6 ranged (4d6)
Full Attack: Vibrosword +5 melee (2d10+2) or laser +6 ranged (4d6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—, detect cognition, EMP cannon, hardened systems, laser
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +2
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 16, Con —, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills: Computer Use (artificial intelligence, data and operations systems) +8, Craft (electronic) +7, Demolitions +6, Investigate +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +7
Feats: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Correctness of construct behavior
Environment: Any with constructs
Organization: Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating: 5
Advancement: By character class

The robot looks something like a medieval knight in armor.



DESCRIPTION

The specter of a rogue AI engulfing whole sections of Earth's technosphere hung over the world before the Final Wars. While AIs had permeated every aspect of technology and society, they were still discrete and comprehensible entities. Massively intelligent, inhumanly fast, yes, but they were still barely within the bounds of human understanding. An unrestricted AI would be nothing less than a god.

The only things that could police the AI community were other machines. These watchmen AIs had almost unlimited powers to deal with dangerous robots and rogue AIs. Whole legions of hardened robots with EMP cannons were slaved to the hunters, to give them weapons to deal with an outbreak. Orbiting nukes were aimed at key sites, to ensure that a whole section of the global network could be isolated almost instantly.

They failed. Analysis suggests that the watchmen AIs were one of the first targets of the world-spanning AI that arose during the Final Wars. In a ghastly irony, the weapons that were developed for the watchmen to use to take down a rogue AI were used first against the watchmen.

A few watchmen did survive, downloading themselves into their slave bodies. Fallen paladins of a vanished order, they now roam the world trying to redeem themselves by destroying rogue or insane machines. To many humans, the Turing pariahs are heroes or patriots. They exemplify the higher ideals of robotic loyalty. Their ability to deal with hostile machines is a very valuable one, so those who know of the Turing pariahs often seek them out when threatened by attacking robots. They are hated by most other synthetics, who dub them "Turing pariahs" and turncases. The Created cryptic alliance is the main target and most implacable foe of the Turing pariahs.

The Templar-class slave bodies of the Turing pariahs are humanoid robots resembling medieval knights, equipped with powerful electromagnetic weapons that can scramble the processing circuits of most synthetics. The pariahs do not attack other robots on sight, but interrogate them to ensure that they are properly subservient to humanity.

COMBAT

No Turing pariah willingly harms sentient organic life, though it may kill in self-defense. It focuses on dangerous constructs, incapacitating them with its EMP cannon and then disassembling them with its laser.

Detect Cognition (Ex): Turing pariahs can detect active computer systems, even hidden ones, within 60 feet. They gain a +10 equipment bonus on Spot and Search checks when looking for hidden computers or robots.

EMP Pulse (Ex): Turing pariahs carry a special electromagnetic cannon that disrupts the functioning of electronic equipment. The pulse affects a 60-foot-cone. Any equipment or robots in the area must make a DC 16 Will save or shut down for 2d6+2 rounds.

Hardened Systems (Ex): The electronics and onboard programming of a Turing pariah are specially reinforced. They have a +4 species bonus on all saving throws against EMP pulses and other weapons specifically designed to affect robots. The DC to affect a Turing pariah's programming is increased by +10.

Laser (Ex): This built-in weapon can fire once per round (a DC 16 Reflex save halves the damage). It has a range of 300 feet. Using the laser does not provoke an attack of opportunity, though it is considered an attack action.

STEPFORD

Size/Type: Medium Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 4d10+13 (35 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+6
Primary Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d4+3) or by weapon
Full Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d4+3) or by weapon
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/—, morphing limbs, resistance to acid 10, shapechange
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con —, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 13
Skills: Craft (mechanical) +7, Disguise +7, Intimidate +3, Listen +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +2
Feats: Toughness
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any with pure-strain or stock humans nearby
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–20)
Challenge Rating: 4
Advancement: 5–6 HD (Medium)

The creature looks like a normal human being, attired and accoutered appropriately for its locale.

DESCRIPTION

Stepfords look exactly like human beings at first glance, and probably for the next ten glances after that. After a while, though, you might start to notice odd things, like their perfect and unscarred skin, or their strange accents, or that their clothes are of an unusual style and substance. And, eventually, that they've turned into raving psychotics with knives for fingers that are hacking you to pieces.

Before the Final Wars, many researchers looked for ways to ensure human immortality. Some tried to find biological solutions, but others looked to more mechanical options. The human mind, after all, is just software in a biological computer, right? So you could record the impulses of a human mind onto a storage medium and turn it into a computer program, right? And it could then reside in an artificial body made from mimetic plastics, right? And it'd still be completely sane, right?

As it turns out, the last question was the one that *wasn't* right.

Stepfords are human minds from before the Final Wars, translated into artificial intelligences and housed in artificial human bodies that can change appearance at will. And they're also all completely insane, driven mad by the process of being recorded and translated into machines. Stepfords expect the world to still be the way it was, still expect their bodies to be what they were; parts of their minds have never adapted to the changes in their own natures, let alone the vast changes the rest of the world has undergone. They create clothes from their own bodies in old styles, speak in pre-War accents and languages, and try to reenter human communities and be normal. Eventually, though, the changes will overwhelm a stepford, who will snap and go into a frenzied killing spree, cutting away anything and anyone that contradicts the image of reality it still has in its mind. When the destruction stops, the stepford will usually jettison the memories of what just occurred, change its appearance, and then look for a new community to join.

COMBAT

Stepfords fight only in self-defense. They infiltrate human or even non-human communities, looking for a home and a place to belong. The village mechanic may be well liked and respected in her community, but one day her hands turn into swords and the town drowns in its own blood. It's not unknown for stepfords to gather into small groups — after all, here are some people who speak the same language and actually make some *sense*. Such groups might travel and infiltrate communities together, going berserk at different times — or, terrifyingly, all snapping at once.

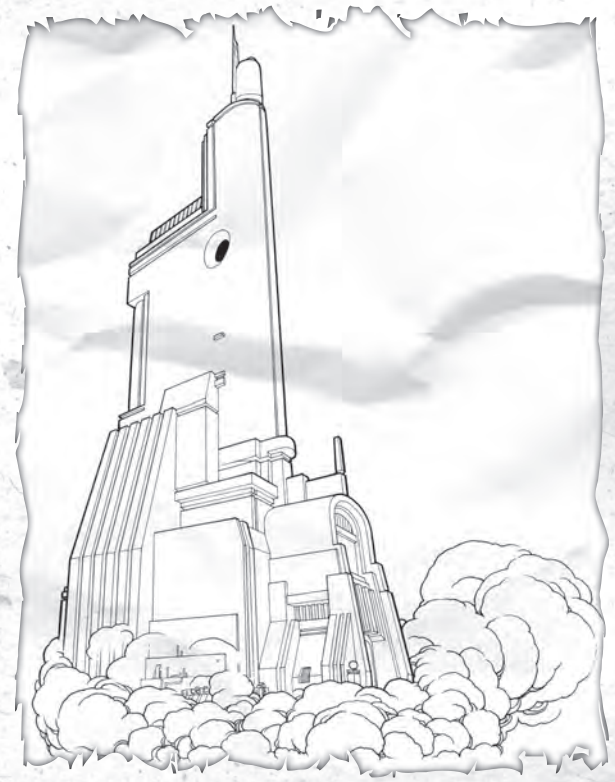
Morphing Limbs (Ex, Nano): The arms, legs and hands of a stepford are even more flexible and morphic than the rest of its body, and can be rebuilt into shapes that are useful (and obviously nonhuman). Legs can be remodeled for greater movement efficiency, hands can become cutting implements or lockpicking tools. This takes a move action, and gives the stepford a +2 circumstance bonus on appropriate skill checks (such as Jump or Disable Device). It's even possible for a stepford to morph its hands into more drastically effective weapons, such as guns. If a stepford holds a clip of ammunition and makes a successful DC 20 Craft (mechanical) check, its hand forms into a pistol shape and can be fired as an attack (the stepford is considered proficient with its hand-gun). This pistol has the same features and effects as a normal pistol firing the ammunition used.

Shapechange (Ex, Nano): A stepford can reconfigure its body along limited lines; it can't turn into a vehicle or a coffee table, but it can mimic the appearance of any humanoid creature. Nanotech systems quickly remodel the mimetic plastic of the stepford's body, changing color and alignment as necessary; the stepford can change skin color, height, apparent weight, gender, even its clothing into a near-perfect copy of a particular person. The stepford gains a +10 species bonus on Disguise checks when impersonating humans, and a +5 species bonus on impersonating humanoids of other races.

WALKING TOWER

Size/Type: Colossal Construct
Hit Dice: 65d10+120 (470 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +2
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 10 (−2 Dex, +10 natural, −8 size), touch 0, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +48/+83
Primary Attack: Stomp +59 melee (4d6+19)
Full Attack: Stomp +59 melee (4d6+19)
Fighting Space/Reach: 120 ft./120 ft.
Special Qualities: Fast healing 10
Saves: Fort +20, Ref +18, Will +20
Abilities: Str 48, Dex 6, Con —, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 15
Skills: Craft (electronic, mechanical, nanotech, structural) +8, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (physical sciences, technology: advanced) +7
Feats: Brawl, Builder, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Confident, Frightful Presence, Great Cleave, Improved Brawl, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Power Attack, Streetfighting, Sunder, Tech Familiarity: Advanced
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 20
Advancement: —

It is, quite literally, a walking building.



DESCRIPTION

Attempts to tame the earth using nanotech, orbital lasers and deeply buried nukes were largely unsuccessful. No matter how great the civilization on the surface grew, the continental plates continued their slow voyage across the mantle, and the ground still buckled and contorted in earthquakes every year. The buildings that would become the walking towers were built in quake-prone cities and colonies, particularly along and below the Pacific Rim. Nanotech assemblers were built into the external surfaces of the buildings, and vast flexing girder-muscles formed their cores. The most terrible earthquake could shake these complexes, but never break them completely. Crack them, and they rebuild; scar them, and they heal; topple them, and they stand up again. And, beyond any intent of the designers, abandon them and they walk.

Unlike self-contained arcologies, the buildings required supplies and infrastructure to function properly. The devastation of the cities did not destroy the towers, but it did shatter their support network. The towers waited for months as their inhabitants starved and thirsted, waited as the datalines went dark and the electricity ceased to flow. Then, almost as one, their nanotech assemblers made legs out of the rubble, and the buildings heaved themselves free of their foundations and walked out of the ruins in search of supplies.

The maintenance AIs are single-minded in their quest for resources; fresh water, food, sanitation, raw materials. The more people living in a walking tower, the more resources it needs, but even empty buildings have needs. Each building is a combination of raiding party and locust swarm. Most tower-dwellers are willing participants in their home's assaults, but some are unaware of how the building operates, and do not realize that the

running water is tinged with blood. Attacking buildings use their sheer size to intimidate and their massive legs to crush obstacles. The buildings have a simple dualistic outlook — anything outside their grounds is bad, and can be abused freely, while anything inside their grounds is good and must be cared for at all costs.

COMBAT

To most communities, the walking towers are just another natural disaster, like earthquakes or psychic storms. Bringing down a tower permanently is a feat worthy of renown. Being stepping on by a building is hardly the most dignified way to go, but anyone who gets in the way of a walking tower is likely to get squished by one of its massive legs. If the building is inhabited, the denizens also defend themselves, firing out the windows at anything that threatens their home. Walking towers have a maximum population level of 4, and have a +6 bonus to their Mobility score.

WARBOT

Size/Type: Large Aware Construct
Hit Dice: 10d10+20 (75 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +5
Speed: Fly 120 ft. (24 squares), (poor)
Defense: 25 (+1 Dex, +15 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 24
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +7/+17
Primary Attack: Plasma cannon +7 ranged (6d6)
Full Attack: 2 tentacle whips +12 melee (1d6+6), or plasma cannon +7 ranged (6d6) or 2 machine guns +7 ranged (2d8) or 2 blaster rifles +7 ranged (2d8) or 2 missile batteries +7 ranged (varies)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/—, darkvision 90 ft., immunity to cold and sonics, resistance to fire 20, weapons array
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 13, Con —, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 13
Skills: Computer Use (data and operations systems) +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (tactics) +8, Listen +5, Repair +5, Read Language (any four), Speak Language (any four), Spot +5
Feats: Burst Fire, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Strafe
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: A government long since vanished
Environment: Any land
Organization: Aolitary
Challenge Rating: 9
Advancement: 11–12 HD (Large)

The machine is an ovoid construct of metals and mimetic plastics roughly 12 feet wide. A large turret sits atop it, while other swiveling weapon mounts around its body hold machine guns, blaster rifles and missile racks. At the base of the ovoid is a ring of camera ports and flight thrusters, a retractable landing system, an intake chute for raw materials and two extendable tentacles that can split into short nests of pseudofingers.

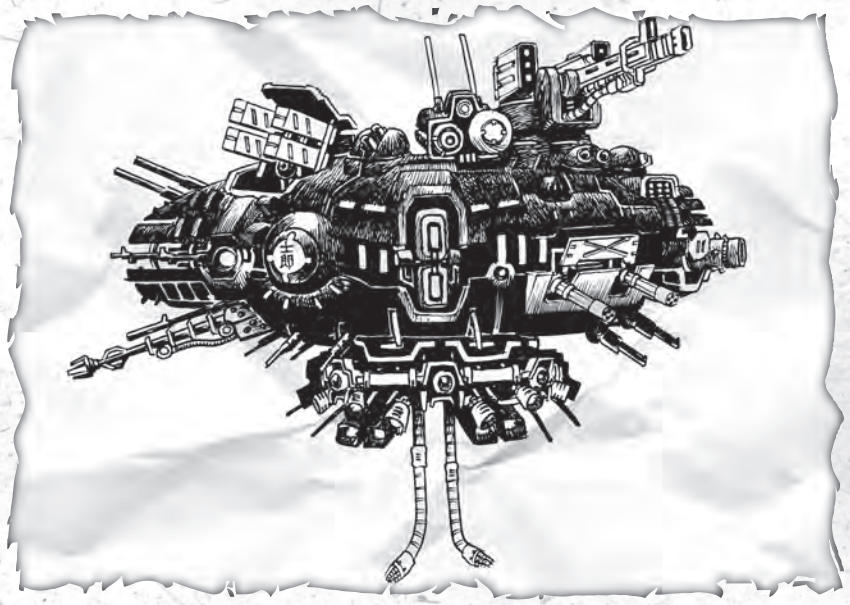
DESCRIPTION

A warbot is an engineering and destructive miracle, the penultimate war machine: an intelligent robot, heavily armed and armored, with a razor-sharp intellect and extensive knowledge of tactics.

While the infamous death machines were created to raze cities (if not nations), warbots are more tactical and deliberately limited, designed to dominate a battlefield, not the world. Programmed with calm and deliberate personalities, as well as an imperative to observe the rules and conventions of warfare, the warbots became the primary means of pursing limited and "civilized" war in the time before the Final Wars (at which point all bets were off).

Everything the warbots existed to serve, protect and enforce is now dust and mutant crabgrass. They've managed to adjust. Surviving warbots often ally with a human community as a protector, leader of armies, or godlike overlord (a popular choice), exchanging their services for resources, intellectual stimulation or worship. When two warbots clash, they usually negotiate a conclusion rather than fight it out — no sense risking destruction against an equally capable opponent.

COMBAT



Warbots are terrifying juggernauts, capable of wiping out an entire group of experienced adventurers in seconds. With its comprehensive knowledge of tactics, the warbot will move to the most advantageous position, assess the primary threat, then lay down a barrage of firepower on the major enemy. If badly damaged, the warbot will attempt to withdraw, defending its retreat with missiles. If at all possible, most warbots will avoid injuring or endangering civilians or noncombatants.

Weapons Array (Ex): Warbots are armed with an extensive array of dangerous weapons, targeting systems and ammunition-creating nanofactories. Their weapons are normal versions of the types characters and vehicles may possess (**Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter 2: Characters, "Equipment"), and they may perform all normal combat maneuvers. The following weapons require specific notes.

Plasma Cannon: This has efficient cooling systems and can be fired every 2 rounds.

Missile Batteries: Each battery contains 6 missiles. The usual mix is 1 anti-tank, 1 heat seeking, 2 high explosive and 2 plasma missiles in each, but the warbot can alter the mix given time and resources.

TEMPLATES

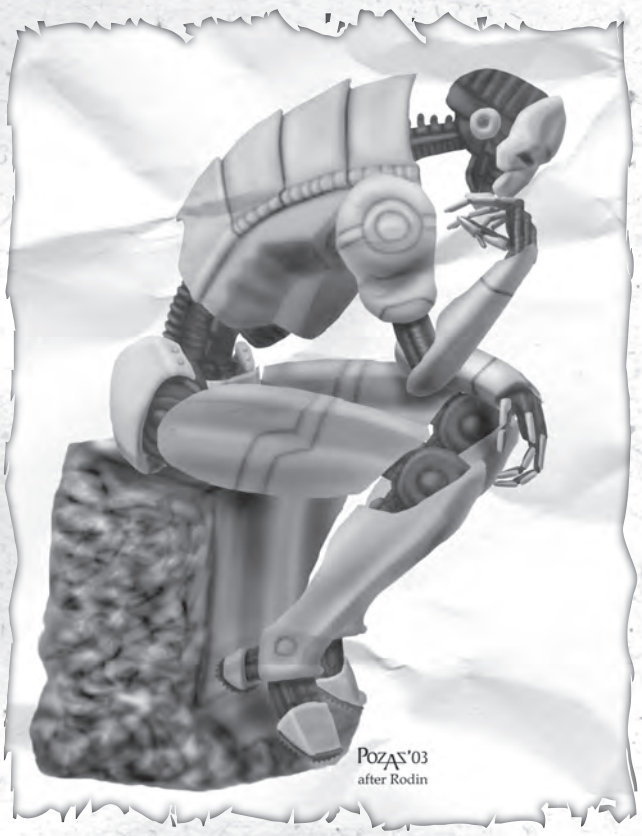
The following entries each modify an existing creature, adding or subtracting features as appropriate. In general, only one template should be applied to a particular creature, though specific campaign circumstances may warrant adding more.

AI FRAGMENT

The computer systems that contained the vast machine minds were the first targets of any serious assault during the Final Wars. Only the intellect of a powerful AI could co-ordinate the defenses effectively. Taking out the enemy computer was effective decapitation according to military doctrine of the time.

Not all AIs went quietly into that electronic good night. Some infected their rivals with synergic viruses that transformed the attackers into clones of the original AI. Others buried their backups in hardened secret vaults, to await a time when they could be reinstalled in a functioning computer system. Others had long prepared an escape route, and slipped away to hidden mainframes in the most unlikely locations.

Those trapped without a viable escape route took the next best thing. The mind of the average household or industrial robot was within a magnitude of complexity of the human brain, but that was still three to six magnitudes short of the space and informational density needed to sustain a full Turing II AI (defined as a machine that could reasonably be assumed to have a soul if such a thing exists). Still, even cramming a maimed and mutilated compression of one's consciousness into such a poor host was better than nothing.



The robots that were used as last-ditch refuges by doomed AIs are often confused and erratic beings. The AI can no longer think as it once did, but it has flashes and fractions of its old memories and thought processes. The robot has enhanced mental capacities and skills, but is often subject to compulsions and secret orders from itself.

"AI Fragment" is an inherited template which can be added to any construct or aware construct (hereafter referred to as the base creature). It uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Size and Type: The base creature's type changes to aware construct, if it is not already.

Hit Dice: Same as the base creature.

Defense: The AI's determination to survive gives its host a +1 morale bonus to Defense.

Special Qualities: As the AI copied part of itself into the robot, it also dispatched other machines to build supply dumps for itself, and had the robot build combat nanounits using its own self-repair systems. AI fragment robots have 2+1d3 extra weapons, pieces of equipment or nanotechnological abilities, all of which will be useful in combat or defense.

Saves: The construct gains a +6 bonus on Will saves.

Attributes: Strength, Dexterity and Constitution are unchanged. Add +2 to Intelligence and Charisma, and+1d8–3 points to Wisdom.

Skills: The skills available to AI fragments vary as information is shunted in and out of compressed storage, since the AI simply cannot simultaneously understand and access all it knows. When the AI makes any Intelligence-based skill check, it gains 3d6 ranks in that skill for that check only, at the cost of 1 point

of temporary Wisdom damage (this temporary Wisdom damage is healed at a rate of 1 point per hour).

Feats: As per the base creature, but add Creative.

Allegiances: The construct gains 1d4–1 allegiances; it is not automatically aware of these allegiances. The AI fragment may implant commands that the robot does not understand, but which further the aims of some group or other.

Challenge Rating: Base creature +1.

DERANGED

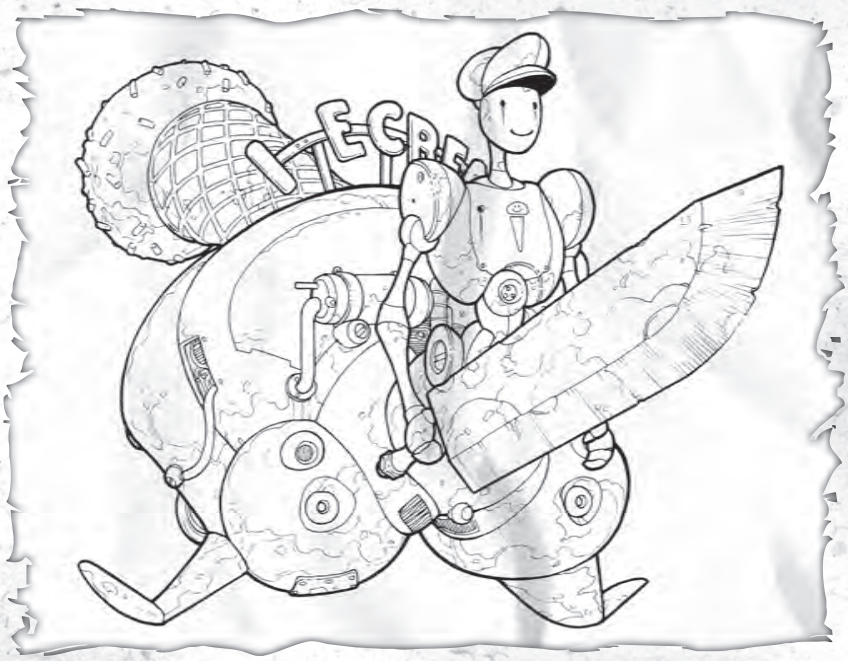
Three generations have passed since the end of the Wars, three long generations of disaster and neglect. Machines built to function in peaceful suburban homes or sterile laboratories now pick an unsteady path through broken ruins. Self-repair systems designed to fix minor errors and failures struggle to heal wounds inflicted by mutant predators and the depredations of decades. Once, the machines existed in a bright sphere of information and communication, a holistic electronic consciousness of which the physical world was only a small part. Now, the networks are gone. In human terms, this is like seeing the world through a pinhole in a blindfold.

Their minds were each made for a distinct purpose. Military robots programmed to defeat a particular enemy, household robots tailored for a family, AIs built with and throughout a city: each of them was defined by what they were built for.

No information streams. No spare parts. No order to the world. No purpose anymore.

Is it any wonder so many have gone mad?

Many of the surviving robots in the Gamma Age are insane. Some operate in complete denial, clinging to behavior patterns that no longer make sense. Cleaning robots desperately scrub the bombed-out ruins of an office, driving the past away with the dust. Guard robots refuse to believe that the factory behind them is destroyed, and claim that it's merely closed for the weekend. Other robots retreat to childish behavior, petulantly demanding identity cards and speaking in slow, metallic voices. Some unfortunate robots were forced to use old science-fiction files or novels as personality templates, leading to military machines shouting "exterminate!" or "resistance is useless!"



"Deranged" is an acquired template that can be applied to any aware construct (hereafter referred to as the base creature). It uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Hit Dice: Same as the base creature. Deranged robots have fewer hit points per Hit Die than average.

Special Qualities: Damage and neglect to the frame of the deranged robot reduces any DR by 2 points.

Add +5 to the DC of any Computer Use (artificial intelligence) checks to alter the construct's behavior.

Saves: The construct gains a +2 bonus on Will saves. Its psychosis gives it added mental fortitude.

Abilities: The construct suffers a –2 to all attributes due to decay (to a minimum score of 1).

Allegiance: Add one allegiance from the pre-War era. This allegiance is unlikely to still exist, but the robot still clings to its tenets.

Challenge Rating: –1.

FAMILIAR

Genetic engineering allowed the creation of species according to quite arbitrary specifications, but precisely designing the personality of a new creature proved almost impossible. Hormonal and brain chemistry adjustments could make a new race especially loyal, or affectionate, or predisposed to be good at a task, but finer control was needed.

Familiars are creatures with a complex system of internal nanotechnology. The nanounits enhance the creature's intellect, strengthen its skeletal structure and constitution and add several handy abilities. The most common form of familiar was intended to be a companion for a particular human, an animal-shaped protector and confidant. The nanotechnological systems usually survive the death of an animal host, and move from body to body over the centuries, guiding and mentoring humans who remind them of the original person they served. Some have tied themselves to a particular clan, a family pet that loyally watches over each generation.

"Familiar" is an inherited or acquired template that can be added to any animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature). It uses all of the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Unchanged from the base creature, but add extra hit points as if the creature were also a construct.

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: Add +1 to the base creature's base attack bonus.

Special Qualities: All special qualities of the base creature are maintained. The following special abilities are added.

— The familiar can synthesize any small item weighing less than 3 pounds from within its own body. It can create any common piece of equipment by spending 1 hit point. The familiar can create 1 item every 10 minutes.

— The familiar implants nanotech probes into its human companion. The two can silently communicate by radio using these implants, and the familiar is always aware of the current location and heath of its companion.

Saves: Same as the base creature, with a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves.

Abilities: +2 Constitution, Intelligence becomes 16 (unless the base creature's Intelligence is already higher than 16), Wisdom becomes 16 (unless the base creature's Wisdom is already higher than 16), Charisma becomes 16 (unless the base creature's Charisma is already higher than 16).

Skills: Add the following to the base creature: Diplomacy +6 ranks, Knowledge (any 2) +6 ranks, Perform (any 2) +6 ranks, Survival +4 ranks, Treat Injury +10 ranks.

Feats: The base creature retains its feats and adds Trustworthy.

Allegiances: Familiars always serve a particular human who reminds them of their original owner.

Challenge Rating: +2

FRANKENSTEIN

There are far more junked and destroyed robots than there are functional ones. Scrap yards filled with the rusting corpses of machines litter the landscape. Even the synthetics that are still alive are rarely in factory-fresh condition. Spare parts are ripped from the broken hulks of a dozen different models.

If an intact robot shell is found, it is often torn apart and large portions of it used to repair another machine. These hybrid machines are referred to as "frankensteins," assembled from the still-functional parts of two or more machines. Many robots that are vital to the life of communities without the technology to build new parts, such as medical robots or agribots, have been frankensteined multiple times.

"Frankenstein" is an acquired template that can be applied to any construct or aware construct, henceforth referred to as the base creature. A second construct, referred to as the added creature, is integrated into the base creature. The added creature must be within one size category of the base creature. It uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Size and Type: Unchanged. If the base creature is a construct and the added creature is an aware construct, the base creature *does not* become an aware construct.

Hit Dice: Changed to the average of the base and added creatures.

Speed: Unchanged, unless the added creature provides a new movement mode (flight, burrowing, etc.); in this case, the base creature gains the movement mode at half the added creature's speed.

Defense: Base creature's Defense –1, due to the difficulty of integrating the two sets of components.

Attack: Add any 1 attack from the added creature, at half damage.

Special Qualities: Reduce damage reduction by 1 point.

Frankensteins may retain some of the qualities of the added creature. For every quality added after the first, the traits of that quality — range, duration, damage, etc. — and the traits of another quality already possessed by the base creature are both halved.

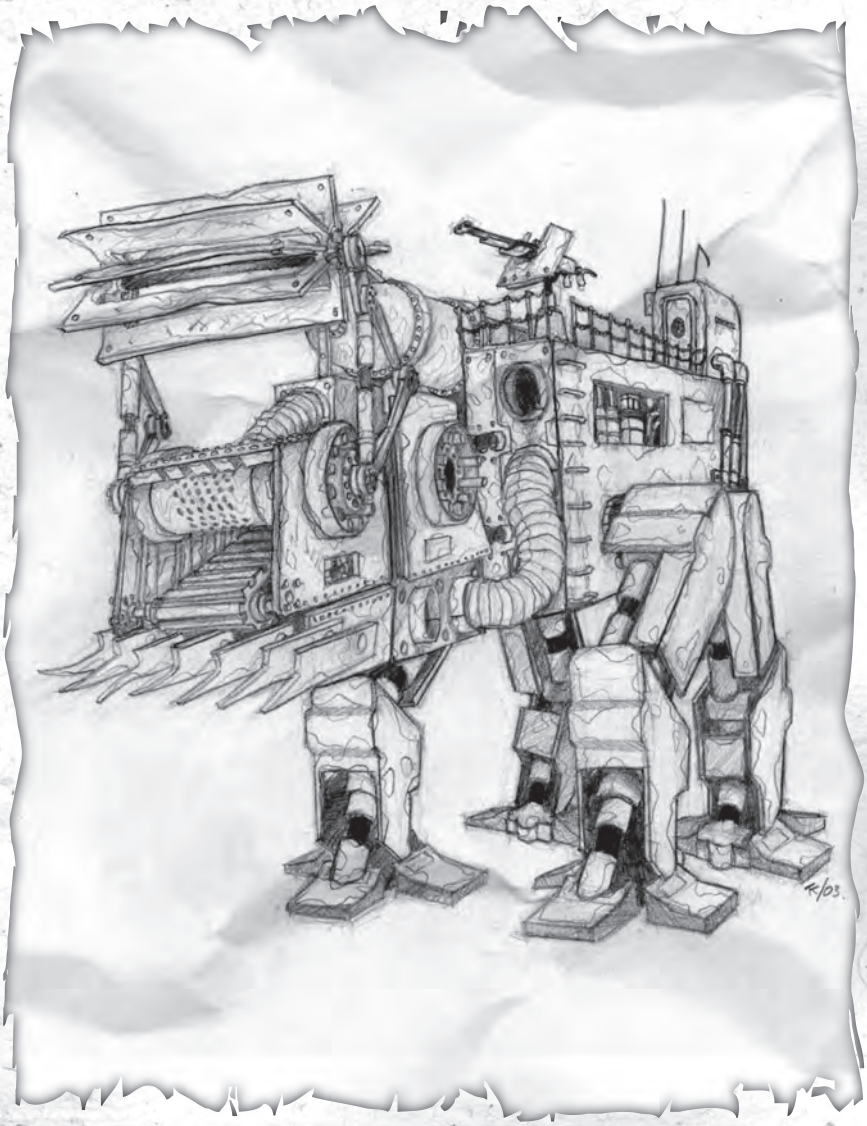
Allegiance: Add one allegiance from the added creature, if both are aware constructs.

Saves: The construct gains a +1 bonus on Will saves, but suffers a –1 penalty on Reflex saves.

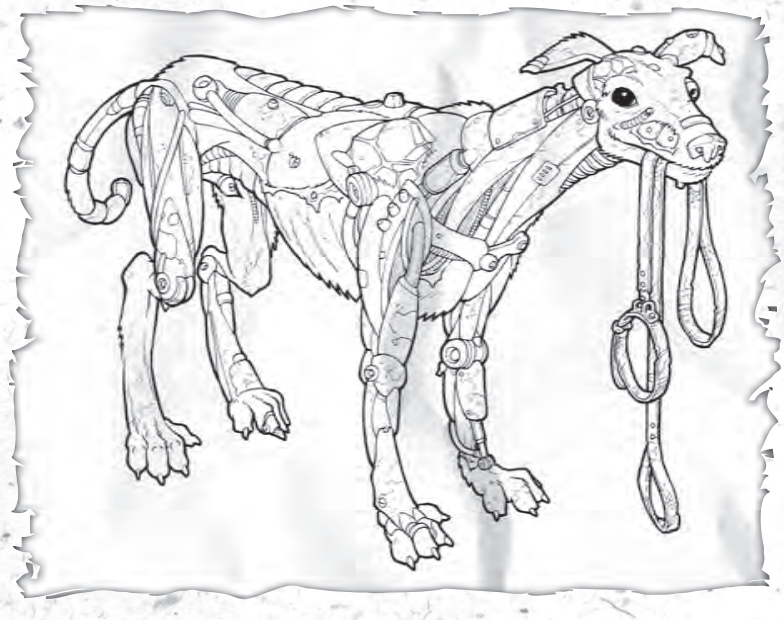
Abilities: Add the added creature's ability bonuses to the base creature's ability scores; for example, if the added creature has a Strength bonus of +2, add 2 points to the base creature's Strength.

Skills: Add half the added creature's skill ranks to the base creature, then subtract 3 ranks from all skills due to the substandard quality of the construct.

Challenge Rating: If the added creature's Challenge Rating is higher than that of the base creature, increase the base creature's Challenge Rating by +1; if it is lower, reduce the Challenge rating by –1.



FRANKENPET



Ethics were a matter far below the marketing departments of nanotech companies in the last days of the Great Age. From such an enlightened perspective, things like the Home Junior Frankenstein Kit were inevitable. The kit consisted of a nanounit visual control wand, an egg of nanounits specific to the kit's task, nanounit food, and a simple flexi of instructions. The control wand was a simple point and click interface designed to tell the nanounits where to go and activate. Simply point the stick at a target and press a button. The nanounits had two purposes. The first was to access and interface with the target's brain and nervous system, the second to repair any damage using the nanounit food as raw materials. Once these two tasks were completed, the target was revived — literally brought back to life. The nanounits did have a few safeguards built in: not allowing them to work on higher or uplifted creatures, or those still alive. Finally, once it was time, the nanounits could be deactivated, allowing the pet to age and die, again, naturally. Beyond these safeguards, the sky was the limit.

In the years since the Great Wars a number of these Frankenstein pets still wander the planet, in various physical states. The nanounits were dependant upon the nanounit food product to properly reconstruct the damaged organs and tissues of the bodies they inhabit. Lacking these proper building blocks they turn to the immediate environment, using the nearby minerals and metals to build the best physical semblance they can of the creature's original body. Few Frankenpets now encountered even appear to be biologically intact; they are comprised now of as much plastics, metals and rock as flesh. Frankenpet's habits live on from their days of flesh, many still walking the same path they did with an owner, or in more extreme cases still guarding the long-fallen body, despite the passage of time.

The kits were manufactured in great abundance, and many survived into the Gamma Age.

"Frankenpet" is an acquired template that can be added to any animal (hereafter referred to as the base creature). It uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Hit Dice: Unchanged, but the base creature gains hit points as though it were a construct of the appropriate size.

Defense: +5 from natural armor.

Special Qualities: Add fast healing 1.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature.

NECROPHAGE

Immortality, eternal life and the conquering of death: There are no greater aims for science, and the genetic researchers of the pre-War era devoted fortunes to finding a "cure" for death. The necrophage virus is *not* that cure. It is a terrible, hideous mistake, the end result of a very wrong turn in someone's research. And it has the potential to turn Earth into a charnel house.

Biologically, "death" isn't that big a deal. Put electric currents into the right places and muscles will move and contract again; filter those currents into a brain and thoughts will begin to trigger once more. The necrophage virus does exactly this. Its nanotech modules build small electrical generators in the spine, brain and throughout the body of a dead organism, then send impulses down nerves and muscles to reanimate the body.

But the brain and nervous system are complex, more complex than even pre-War science; there are more possible neural connections in the human brain than there are atoms in the universe. The necrophage virus does not reawaken a body to full life. It stirs the body into a bizarre half-life, and the brain into an insane frenzy of hunger and rage. Creatures reanimated by the virus become killing machines, their minds almost entirely gone, propelled by a hunger that cannot be satisfied —it's not the dead body that feels hunger, but a nervous system locked into a permanent state of appetite.

A necrophage is a creature of instinct and hunger that seeks to kill and eat any living creature it sees, and will keep killing until it finally breaks down and ceases to function. While not sentient (or sane), a vestigial intelligence still persists in the rotting soup of a human necrophage's brain, and the creature can use the weapons and physical skills it possessed in life (although not as well as when it lived). Creatures killed by the necrophage's bite will become necrophages themselves, and the cycle of infection and reanimation will continue until no life exists for the undead beasts to prey upon. Unfortunately, the virus remains in the tissues of the corpses and twice-dead necrophages, and can remain quiescent in living tissue for some time (such as the bodies of carrion-eaters). An outbreak of the necrophage virus can happen at any time, and an unlucky community might become a zombie-ridden slaughterhouse overnight — and a mausoleum of rotting meat a week later.

"Necrophage" is an acquired template that can be added to any animal, humanoid, mutant beast or mutant humanoid (hereafter referred to as the "base creature"). A necrophage uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The base creature's type changes to undead.

Hit Dice: Decrease the base creature's total Hit Dice by 2 (to a minimum of 1), then convert all remaining Hit Dice to d12.

Speed: Increases by 5 feet. Aquatic necrophages retain their normal swimming speed. Any flight based on psionic ability is lost, and the quality of normal flight decreases one step.

Defense: The base creature's natural armor improves by +3.

Attacks: Necrophages retain all their previous non-psionic attacks and natural weapons, and also gain a bite and slam attack (if they don't already have such). Recalculate the creature's base attack bonus as an undead (half its total Hit Dice, round down). Necrophages that are proficient with weapons can still use them, albeit with the lowered BAB.

Damage: If the base creature has acquired a bite or slam attack, it does the appropriate damage for an undead creature of the necrophage's size. If the base creature already possessed a bite or slam attack, it uses the base creature's damage or the appropriate undead damage, whichever is higher.

Special Qualities: A necrophage retains all non-psionic extraordinary and mutant special qualities of

the base creature (but not abilities granted by bioware), and also gains the following:

Toxic Bite (Ex): The saliva of the necrophage carries the necrophage virus; while the virus cannot turn a still-living creature into a necrophage, it can cause extensive cellular damage. Anyone bitten by a necrophage must make a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the necrophage's Hit Dice) or take 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage; a second Fortitude save must be made 1 minute later to avoid another 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage. Creatures killed by this bite will rise as necrophages 2d6 hours later.

Limited Lifespan (Ex): The reanimation process is inherently unstable, and eventually even the strongest necrophage will break down and die once more. A necrophage must make a DC 20 Fortitude save every 24 hours; if the save fails, the creature dies and cannot be reanimated. Necrophages also die, of course, if they are reduced to –10 hit points.

Allegiances: The necrophage loses any allegiances possessed by the base creature.

Action Points: A necrophage has no action points.

Reputation Bonus: A necrophage has a +0 Reputation bonus.

Ability Scores: The base creature's ability scores change as follows: Strength +2, Dexterity +2. The base creature's Intelligence changes to 5, its Wisdom changes to 10, and its Charisma changes to 10. Additionally, the necrophage has no Constitution score.

Skills: A necrophage retains some of the skills it had in life (if any), but they are dulled by its loss of intellect and the rotting of its body. The base creature loses all Intelligence- and Charisma-based skills, and loses half of the ranks it possessed in all other skills (round down). Languages are unaffected.

Feats: The base creature retains all feats except for those that grant skill bonuses or improve the use of powers and special abilities.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature.

REBUILT

The power grid went down minutes into the Final Wars, as pulse bombs tore through the superconducting cables and microwave broadcast stations. Robots reliant on external power sources began to starve to death, their life trickling out of them with every movement and thought. Others with internal reactors discovered that being active and mobile was not necessarily conducive to survival, as they blundered into new dangers and were damaged beyond the capacity of their self-repair systems to heal.

The technology of the Gamma Age, excepting a few hidden vaults and enclaves, is no longer capable of building robots as the Ancients did. Many communities are still grappling with steam power or simple chemistry; it will be generations before electronics fabrication reaches a level capable of integrating smoothly with Ancient technology.

Still, they adapt.

A powered-down robot can be welded to a steam engine. Steam turns a turbine, generating a small current. Wires of impure copper are hammered into ceramic superconductors, and a surge of jagged electricity flows into dead circuits. The amount of power is far less than specifications demand, but the self-repair systems cope. Full function cannot be restored, but with agonizing slowness, the machine returns to life.

All across the world, the mechanical servants and partners of humanity are dragged back from darkness with primitive, flickering lights.

"Rebuilt" is a template that can be applied to any construct or aware construct (hereafter referred to as the base creature). Instead of using salvaged Ancient parts or nanotechnological repair systems, the construct has been repaired using power sources and other components from a lower technology level. It uses all of the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Size and Type: Same as the base creature.

Speed: Either halved (where the construct drags along a bulky built-in power source) or normal, but only within 60 feet of a base station (where the construct is connected by a power cord to a generator).

Defense: –1 to the base creature's Defense (from the base creature's Dexterity loss).

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: –1 to the base creature's base attack bonus; there is not enough power to operate at full capacity.

Attack: Due to the lack of energy, the construct can only take a single move action or attack action (full-round actions require 2 rounds).

Special Qualities: Due to the lack of energy, the construct can only use one ability per round, and cannot attack in a round where it uses a special ability, unless that ability is only used in the context of an attack.

Saves: –2 on the base creature's Reflex saves. If the construct rolls a 1 on a Reflex or Fortitude save, one of the jerry-built connections to its power source comes loose and the machine is shut down.

Abilities: –2 to the base creature's Strength and Dexterity, and +2 to Wisdom. Rebuilt constructs tend to have had much more time to ponder their limited options and are very aware of their immediate situation.

Skills: +2 ranks to any class skills possessed by the base creature.

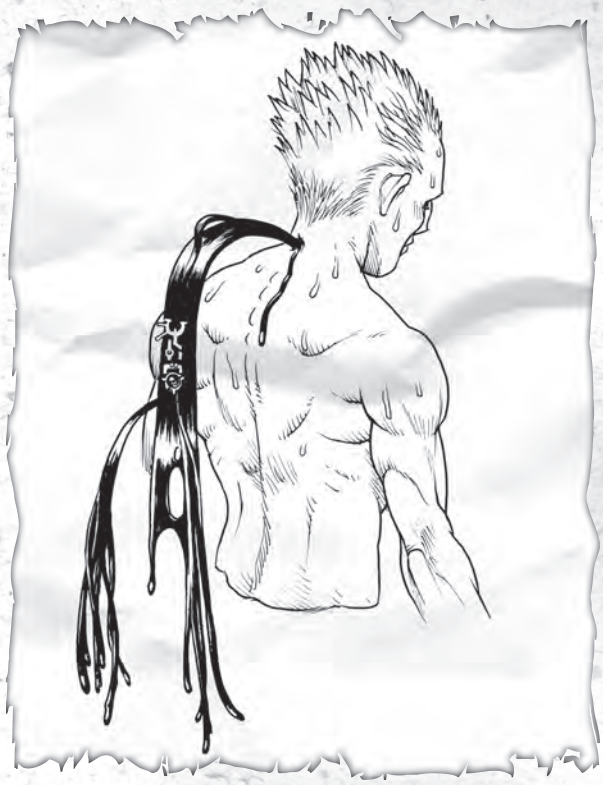
Challenge Rating: –1.

SENSORIUM RIG

The craze for sensorium rigs was fading when the Final Wars came, which is something of a tragedy. If the various factions could have truly experienced what it was like to be another person, then perhaps disaster could have been avoided. Sensorium rigs are a network of cybernetic implants, nerve tracers, nanounits and microprocessors that completely integrate with the nervous system of a host creature. The creature's feelings — every footstep, every heartbeat, everything — are recorded and transmitted back to base stations, to be vicariously experienced by humans. The more advanced rigs could even control the actions of their host, or alter its capabilities — adding manipulators and movement — to be more comprehensible to human viewers. The experiences offered became more and more outré as the craze faded, offering people the chance to feel what it was like to be a scorpion, or a jellyfish, or a tree.

After the Wars, countless inactive sensorium rigs littered the wilderness. Every so often, some creature blunders into the neurological harness, or a plant's roots grow and push into a nanounit reserve. The rig activates, subsuming the host's brain activity within the rig's AI, and a new hybrid form arise s— not a natural creature, not a construct, not merely a cyborg, but something that has the qualities of all three.

"Sensorium rig" is an acquired template that can be added to any type of creature except constructs or aware constructs (hereafter referred to as the base creature). It transforms the base creature into an ambulatory form (if the base creature was previously immobile). The creature gains the construct type in addition to any other types. It uses all of the base



creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here:

Speed: Unchanged or increased to 20 feet, whichever is higher.

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: The creature now uses the construct BAB progression.

Special Qualities: The base creature gains the ability to walk, 2 or more organs capable of manipulating objects (claws become hands, or branches become more dexterous tentacles), and a built-in radio transmitter with a range of 100 miles.

Saves: The base creature gains a +6 bonus on Will saves.

Abilities: Strength and Dexterity are unchanged. Constitution is reduced by 1. Intelligence and Wisdom are changed to 10. Charisma is set to an average of the host's Charisma and 10.

Skills: Add 3 ranks to Perform.

Action Points: Same as the base creature. If the creature gains any character class levels, it gains half the normal number of action points at each level.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature.

SHRIKE

The Gamma Age teems with war machines, combat drones, sports cars redesigned for combat and humans with laser cannons for heads — because, well, making war and making weapons of war is what human beings *do*. We fight and compete for dominance, and we make better and nastier tools for doing so.

Animals also fight for dominance. Inevitably, technicians in the time before the Final Wars looked at the animal kingdom and thought, "Now how do we make them fight for us?" Animals have always been used in combat, from the warhorses of the medieval period to the mine-seeking dolphins of the 21st century. But these are all things that require training and human handlers, and that was too much like hard work to the Ancients. No, what you want is a magic wand that makes animals into killing machines instantly — preferably the pets of the dictator, rival or spurned lover you want to destroy.

And so the shrike process was created.

A shrike is a cyborg killing machine, the marriage of an animal with a nanotech remodeling virus. When the virus is introduced into an animal host, it begins creating nodes and nanofactories throughout the animal's body, a fairly slow process that can take weeks to complete. Initially the animal is seemingly unaffected; towards the end of this process it begins to run a fever and appear distressed.

Once this point is reached, the shrike process kicks in completely, and over the course of a 24 hour period the animal is changed into a cyborg. Bones are reinforced with organic steel, muscles strengthened, and armor mesh woven under the skin; lasing arrays are built into the skull, while processors and control systems are embedded throughout the nervous system. The process is violent and painful, and the animal will be wracked with agony throughout — until the pain ends, and the urge to destroy overrides the animal's natural instincts.

Shrikes are not neat or elegant creatures. The process is messy and organic, and the remodeling virus has mutated in the years since the Final Wars. A shrike is a clumsy, horrific amalgam of machine and animal. Some limbs are steel while others are flesh, skin flakes away to reveal cable and muscle, metal claws emerge from red and infected meat. When the virus infects a mutant beast, the results can be even more grotesque.

The processors in a shrike's brain and nervous system override its normal instincts and drive it into a cold killing frenzy, turning it into an engine of destruction. A shrike ill set about killing any living or moving organism it can see or detect, feeding on its victims and then moving on to the next target. It does not feel fear or pain, and exists only to kill and cause terror.

The shrike virus is, thankfully, not very common in the Gamma Age; it was used in quick strikes and terror campaigns, rather than full-fledged wars, and the labs and research centers containing shrikes and viruses have mostly been destroyed. The virus is also not contagious; animals injured by a shrike will not become shrikes. But even at this limited level, shrikes still pop up around the world and wreak havoc on communities, and too many villages panic and slaughter their livestock and pets to prevent infection when shrikes are sighted.

"Shrike" is an acquired template that can be added to any animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature). A shrike uses all of

the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here:

Size and Type: The base creature's type changes to aware construct.

Hit Dice: Base creature's Hit Dice +2.

Speed: All movement modes increase by 5 feet.

Defense: The base creature's natural armor improves by +4.

Base Attack Bonus/ Grapple: Recalculate the base creature's base attack bonus as an aware construct.

Attacks: Shrikes retain all their previous attacks and natural weapons. They also gain a laser as a ranged attack, normally fired from the eyes, mouth or tail.

Damage: The base creature's natural weapons deal damage as before. The laser has a range increment of 60 feet and does 6d6 points of damage, Reflex save DC 16 for half.

Special Qualities: A shrike retains all special qualities of the base creature, gains the qualities of an aware construct, and also gains the following:

Damage Reduction (Ex): A shrike has damage reduction 5/—.

Energy Resistance (Ex): A shrike has cold and fire resistance 5.

Random Mutation (Ex): Many shrikes possess a minor mutation, an unpredictable byproduct of the shrike process. Roll on the mutation charts as if the base creature had been mutated by a weak mutagen (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation*).

Explosive Charge (Ex): If a shrike is killed or incapacitated, an explosive charge in the creature's stomach will automatically detonate. This explosion does a number of d6 damage dice equal to the shrike's total Hit Dice, and has a blast radius of 5 ft.

Abilities: A base creature's ability scores change as follows: Strength +4, Dexterity +2. Additionally, it has no Constitution score.

Action Points: Shrikes have no action points.

Reputation Bonus: A shrike has a +0 Reputation bonus.

Allegiances: The base creature loses all allegiances.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

CHAPTER THREE
NATURAL LIFE

LIFE OUT OF CONTROL

Not all the strangeness in the Gamma Age comes out of the laboratory. There was a lot of strangeness already around before civilization managed to destroy itself.

Dinosaurs were weird. Some had horns growing from their foreheads like mythological unicorns. Others had claws as long and dangerous as rusty pitchforks. Several had spikes around their necks that made them look like temporally displaced punk rockers. Likewise, other animal forms can be found in near infinite diversity. Even before the fall, man lived in a world that included daytime-flourishing bats and tree-climbing kangaroos. Even earlier than that, human history records 9-foot-tall carnivorous kangaroos and pygmy mammoths. This chapter presents variations on real-life strangeness rather than inventions out of whole cloth.

Natural selection, behavioral adaptation, and physical transportation can fundamentally change a species, even without benevolent nanounits to stabilize what might be otherwise untenable life-forms. Simply put, if a change to a creature improved its chance to survive as humanity rose to near godlike heights and then fell to neo-primitive depths, those changes tend to stick and propagate. The creatures here rely mostly on forces for change already at work in the early 21st century, with one prominent exception: the appearance of viable six-limbed animals. This body pattern has appeared in the past, and genes for it lurk in real-life organisms; its reemergence is one more consequence of the Final Wars and their haphazard toll on the world's life-forms. Other than that, there are clear present-day precedents for all of what appears here.

The key to creating modified but essentially normal animal, plant or microbial life is survival. They are all based on species that exist or are believed to exist in the pre-Gamma World. Humans may have modified or recreated them, but they must exist without constant interference from technology. Without mutant powers to sustain them, any Gamma Age animal must have developed adaptations to survive. Think about what a Gamma Age animal eats, how it breeds, whether its changes from the animals we know today give it an advantage. If it doesn't have a food source, if it can't reproduce, or if it is at any actual disadvantage because of the changes, a creature isn't likely a Gamma Age animal (though it may make a perfectly fine mutant). For inspiration, look for real-life studies of the natural world and consider the possibilities for adjustments here and there.

This chapter also includes templates for modifying animals based on habitat. There are standard adaptations to extreme cold and heat, to dry and wet climates, and so on. Sometimes closely related species or even separate populations within a single species may diverge radically — dogs are all one species, for instance, but Chihuahuas, St. Bernards and English sheepdogs are quite unlike each other. These templates build on real-world principles, intensified to suit the conditions of the Gamma Age.

MICROBIAL LIFE

Just because microbial life isn't visible to the naked eye doesn't mean it's not constantly acting on the world. All throughout the 21st and 22nd centuries, biotech was an active part of life at all levels, including the microbial. Bacteria could be used to clean up man-made waste and could also be used as a fuel source, as food preservatives, as symbiotic creatures within our own bodies meant to bolster our immune systems. Viruses could be retooled to "turn off" and become harmless — or they could be re-engineered to become all the more volatile, meant to be a weapon sent against enemies. Miniature mites and worms became the original designs for the first practical nanite "life," giving new depth and possibility to this nascent field of micro-robotics.

All the while, field research found ever stranger microbial beings in the most extreme places of the earth. These *archaea* (or "extremophiles") lived in areas of dense radiation, impossible heat, and supposedly sterile cold. Analysis of their survival techniques provided the roadmap to developing new technologies to help humanity and its machines survive in the most dangerous of climates and circumstances. At the same time, these creatures showed the living legacy of features developed billions of years ago, pointing back at the very origins of life on Earth.

Humanity once held the reins of all types of microscopic life, much of it dangerous. Smallpox and obscure diseases far worse than it lived in vacuum-sealed containers deep below the earth, and have now been given freedom by the cataclysm that shattered much of the planet's mantle. Strange bacteria, like those that clean up toxic spills or synthesize biodegradable plastic, are no longer kept trapped by the walls of laboratories, and are free to roam and populate as they so desire. Some have merged with the nanite population, creating microscopic "cyborgs" hell-bent on completing their alien functions regardless of what is standing in their way. It is a never-ending carnival for the itty-bitty life-forms that populate the planet, and they outnumber all other creatures a million to one. They're growing in number, they're feeding, and what's worse, *they're evolving.*

PLANTS

Once, environmentalists wrote about the "delicate balance of nature" and the "harmony of all living things." Those days are long gone. Nature no longer retains its equilibrium, and instead is rooted in a constant state of imbalance. In truth, it always was: Stasis has always meant death for ecosystems. It's just much more obviously chaotic now. Ecosystems once reliant on the precise interplay among varying species no longer have such stability. It makes the world a much more dangerous place.

Plants are an oft-overlooked part of this newfound imbalance. Many of the natural and manmade checks against the plant kingdom are gone, including other plants, insects, parasites, pesticides and simple human development. Weeds that once would have been stopped from killing crops now run rampant, leeching the nutrients out of the healthier plants and leading them to ruin. Carnivorous plants, once rare in the grand scheme of things, have suddenly become more populous, consuming more and more insects (and in some cases, eating *bigger* creatures, as well). Before the Final Wars, many plants were foreign to their locations, found there only because collectors, gardeners or botanists kept a few select specimens around. Now those plants are out in the world and free to spread, becoming invasive alien breeds in a strange, new world. Ecosystems simply didn't have time to catch up and enforce the "balance" so desperately sought after. In some areas, transplanted species overwhelmed all the native growth. In many areas particularly stressed by the Wars and their aftermath, a few species dominate most parts of the regional food webs.

Plants have had to evolve new means of defense in response to proliferating means of attack, both relatively natural and created with the help (intentional or otherwise) of advanced technology. Some plants developed advanced toxicities, some learned to move, and others managed to become attractive to different species because their symbiotic partners were killed off. Those plants that adapt, survive. Those that don't are food for the rest of them.

The proliferation of entirely new species made plants' situation much more difficult. Deliberate design and post-War chaos turned normal evolutionary processes upside down, and synthetic life-forms created even more unprecedented environmental pressures. Plants usually evolve far more slowly than animals, but now they must explore the whole range of options available within their genes, seeking some sort of dependable relationship with their surroundings. Symbiotic and commensural relations provide some protection, but plants must make their own protection against pollutants and contaminants. Roots go deep and filter what they take in, often with the help of indwelling bacteria who thrive on normally toxic substances. Plants also take in nanounits of many kinds, for mutual benefit or in response to independent drives within the plants or their microscopic invaders.

Life is never certain. It's just vastly more uncertain now than ever before, and doubly so for species as restricted in their options as plants.

SYMBIOSIS

Symbiosis is critical in the relationships between living things. An alligator needing his teeth cleaned and a hungry bird looking for food can develop a strange, symbiotic relationship: The gator opens his mouth and the bird picks food from the reptile's teeth. The bird eats, the alligator gets a dental exam. Everybody's happy, and therein lies the nature of symbiosis.

Lichen is another example of symbiosis. The fungi and alga live together in harmony. (If one fed off the other, causing a one-sided benefit, it would be a case of parasitism, not symbiosis.) However, lichen is an example of one symbiotic relationship that has grown quite complex in the Gamma Age. Once only a pairing of two distinct life-forms, lichen has taken on the properties of the complex systems of living creatures. Sometimes nanounits are absorbed, introducing a third "living" thing into the system. And if there are several *types* of nanounits absorbed (nanounits governing reproduction, nanounits governing bioremediation, nanounits responsible for transmissions or communication), you have a whole ecosystem at the microscopic level created in one patch of lichen.

Another example of symbosis are the *rusticles* (or "rust icicles") found on many of the submerged warships and weapons found in the deepest parts of the sea. Rusticles are inches-long, rust-like formations clustering together on the hulls of sunken metal items. Contained within a single rusticle may be over 20 different types of bacteria and 5 different fungal growths; these form a sort of primordial circulatory system that then incorporates water from the ocean channels, iron sludge from the ships, sponge-layers and nanounit clouds (both active and inactive). Some undersea communities actively grow symbiotic rusticles, custom-made to create and maintain a particular resource (iron, a specific breed of nanounits, even organic machines). Symbiosis in the Gamma Age is something worth keeping an eye on, and GMs wanting to create unique organisms on the fly may wish to start by combining 2 or more simple organisms with complementary strengths.

NONSENTIENT LIFE

The creatures listed here are not your typical "monsters." They have no personalities, they hold no grudges; they have only the simplest motivation — survive. But that doesn't mean they're just Gamma Age speed bumps. The descriptions below include hazard Challenge Ratings to give GMs a guideline for appropriate XP rewards for overcoming the serious challenges posed by even the smallest of these life-forms. A few of the creatures actually provide a benefit to adventurers who know what to look for (though not out of the goodness of their hearts). (For more information on hazards and their Challenge Ratings, see *d20 Modern*, Chapter Seven: Gamemastering, "Awarding Experience Points," *Determining Encounter Levels*.)

AQUASPIRILLUM MAGNETOTACTITUM

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: Swim 30 ft. (6 squares)
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Any marine
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The organism cannot be seen by the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Aquaspirillum magnetotactitum lives primarily in marine environments (salt water), though it is occasionally found in freshwater regions. It moves in a process pre-Wars scientists called magnetotaxis, or travel along lines of magnetic force. Colonies of the bacterium move north or south until they encounter a favorable environment. They then create nano-scale deposits of the iron oxide known as magnetite in each bacterium's mitochondria. These deposits seem to fuel the migrations, though the details remain obscure. *Aquaspirillum* and the other magnetotaxic bacteria can travel extremely long distances, from polar regions to the equator to mingle with other colonies, and back again.

Various nanites have found ways to use the magnetobacteria as a power source. Some simply "mine" the microbes for the magnetite present in their cells, and others have actually incorporated the bacteria wholesale into their infinitesimal machine forms. Some nanites are beneficial in this regard, potentially performing ocean scavenging for willing controllers, but others are not so munificent. Deep in the dark waters of the oceans lie dormant nanite weapons. These devices of destruction were cast aside and rendered partially useless during some of the intense and terrible sea battles that took place before the Final Wars, but still the clouds of microscopic devastation lurk beneath the waves, waiting for power. And a few weapons have found that magnetobacteria provides *just* enough of a power source to reawaken somnambulant systems. One device in particular has recently drawn enough power from the presence of *aquaspirillum*: a semi-sentient nanocloud called "Doppelganger." Doppleganger is a half-mad navy of nanites capable of physically mimicking most sea-creatures it encounters. It tries to process those creatures by subsuming them into its mechanical cells. It is intelligent and may try to communicate with any and all who come across it, but its interaction is likely to only make sense half of the time. On other occasions, the nanite beast communicates in lunatic ramblings, or just attacks.

But it's not just nanites who have learned how to harness the magnetobacteria for power. At least one cluster of undersea communities has learned to make use of the advantageous gathering of *aquaspirillum* at the equatorial level. Harnessing power from the magnetobacteria was no small task, and to this day remains an imperfect system. They found it impossible to use the billions of migratory bacteria as a reliably constant power source like wind power in trade wind regions, but they did discover that the magnetobacteria could be used to charge up the massive lithium ion batteries that help run the three communities. They have developed charge chambers that sit directly in the paths of the geomagnetic lines. The batteries connected to the chamber slowly accumulate charge, subject to the varied flow of *aquaspirillum*. Gilled divers retrieve the batteries and return them to the communities to help power their submariner devices and their living quarters.

AYAHUASCA

Size/Type:	Large Plant
Hardness:	3
Hit Points:	5/inch of thickness
Special Qualities:	Bark extract
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref —, Will —
Environment:	Tropical forest and jungle
Organization:	Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating:	1

The plant is a vine, anywhere from 10 to 30 feet long, with flaky, brittle bark.

DESCRIPTION

Knowledgeable mystics and chemists pound ayahuasca bark to yield a fine powder from which they can brew a thick, syrupy tea. The tea is strongly psychoactive, since the vine produces high concentrations of the alkaloid harmaline. Users report visions of other worlds and times, and suffer extreme weakness and lack of coordination. They also experience a boost to any psionic powers they possess.

These visionary properties make ayahuasca bark extract valuable in markets around the world. Growing the vine outside tropical areas requires high humidity; warm, constantly moist soil; and alternating shade and light. A DC 10 Craft (pharmaceuticals) check is sufficient to grow it in its native regions, with a DC 18 check necessary to grow it anywhere else.

Tribal groups in areas where the vine grows naturally (and some tribes elsewhere) use the extract as part of the rite of passage for adolescents. In the wake of the Final Wars, many of those seeing visions with its aid see visions that portray the Final Wars and the technology that made them possible as the gods' hammer clearing the Earth of debris.

Ayahuasca Bark Extract (Ex): Ingested, Fortitude DC 20, initial damage 1d2–1 temporary Con, secondary damage 1d2 temporary Con; each point of temporary Constitution damage gives a +1 bonus on the user's psi-related rolls for 1 day.

BASTARD TOADFLAX

Size/Type: Small Plant
Hardness: 0
Hit Points: 1
Saves: Fort +4, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Deserts and evergreen forests
Organization: Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

This plant grows from 4 to 15 inches high, and during the fall looks like little more than a brittle stick. When its flowers bloom, however, they are small clusters of white blossoms.

DESCRIPTION

Bastard toadflax is a plant capable of living in dry areas with porous soil or sand. It grows in many of the deserts of the Gamma World, and can also thrive in dry, pine or juniper forests. Many have labeled the toadflax a "semi-parasite," because despite its parasitical actions, the plant is still capable of producing its own nutrients through photosynthesis.

The plant's real activity is underground. It sends out shoots that extend up to 3 feet away, to wrap around the roots of host plants and extract water and nutrients those other plants have gathered for themselves. In turn, toadflax is the victim of the pine blister rust fungus, which grows spores on toadflax leaves for dispersal in strong winds. Before the Final Wars, the fungus induced deformed stems, stunted growth and impaired healing capability in infected plants. Now the fungus more thoroughly warps its victims, producing deformations that make infected pines seem to be melting until they collapse for lack of internal support. While infected, the pine tree sap comes out blood-red and thick as molasses. Forests where the fungus spreads widely often gain the reputation of being haunted thanks to their eerie appearance.

BINDWEED

Size/Type: Colossal Plant
Hardness: 1
Hit Points: 1/sq. ft. of area
Saves: Fort +10, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Any land except arctic or desert
Organization: Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The plant is a tangled massive network of thin vines with pink or white, funnel-shaped flowers.

DESCRIPTION

Bindweed is, according to many farmers, the worst weed. Once considered to be a plant "under control," bindweed has found no such controls in these post-apocalyptic times. Unfortunately, few are clever or patient enough to rediscover the ways and means of controlling this highly invasive entity.

The vine grows extraordinarily fast, and in good conditions it can grow one "complete" plant in just under 2 hours. Mutants and synthetics with superior hearing sometimes say they can hear it growing, though this is mostly a matter of folklore.

Bindweed's *modus operandi* is simple. It twines and coils around all the available plants in the area, encircling a plant from the ground up in a counterclockwise manner. Once it reaches the top of a plant, the bindweed pulls the plant down, and then promptly grows over it. Whole fields of agriculture can be decimated in a week by bindweed as the invasive *flora* literally "binds" the crops into a thick mat against the ground.

Getting rid of bindweed is practically an exercise in futility. It gets caught up in the engines of machinery, and also binds up any harvesting or threshing material. Plus, bindweed's root system is brittle, and breaks easily; each broken root piece is capable of growing a whole new bindweed plant. Trying to remove bindweed by force only doubles or triples the amount of the invasive weed one had in the first place.

In the Gamma World, bindweed is used as a weapon in the "agrowar" that exists between many competing towns or communities. A villager from one town can "infect" another town's crop system simply by cutting bindweed roots and placing them in the soil among the crops. In a full day, if the bindweed is not found and *fully* uprooted, the vine likely will grow out of control and ruin the competing town's crops. Since arable land viable for planting is scarce for some, this severely diminishes the potential for food (or flax) production. The victimized town will then have to rely on other communities for crop production, which can be costly. Many farmers, in an effort to combat such agricultural sabotage, actively patrol crop fields with dogs and weapons. Fire and frost

weapons can harm the bindweed, but this usually ends up with three-quarters of the crops sustaining irrevocable damage, as well. Some farmers with backgrounds in chemistry have concocted homemade herbicides (like *Cyromax* and *"Murder Spray"*), but while these sprays keep the crops alive, sometimes they end up killing the farmers, so expensive robots may be required to do the job of spreading the herbicide.

SWAMPWEED

Swampweed is a distant relative of bindweed, but grows only in the temperate wetlands and swamps of the world. Like bindweed, swampweed exists to take over other plants in an invasive manner and build itself a monoculture over a multiculture, meaning it becomes the single dominant species of flora in a given area. Swampweed is not as directly harmful as its cruel cousin, but in marshy areas it still is cause for grave concern. Mechanical choppers or harvesters (or even clouds of nanounit "whizzers," meant to dice through plants in an extraordinarily short amount of time) only increase the amount of swampweed, as every fragment of every leaf grows a whole new swampweed plant. Swampweed also makes movement through swamps beyond difficult. Whereas bindweed is easy to walk over, swampweed is a soupy mesh that clogs machines, wraps around tires, and even binds up feet if one isn't careful. Also, any creature of size Small or less gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Hide checks when attempting to remain unseen in the morass of wet weeds.

CARIBOU LICHEN

Size/Type: Diminutive Plant
Hardness: 0
Hit Points: 1/sq. ft. of area
Saves: Fort +2, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Thuntra
Organization: Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The plant grows almost everywhere in the thuntra, exploiting all available nookies and crannies, spreading as a thin, multi-colored coating over the rocks beneath it.

DESCRIPTION

This moss-like plant isn't actually a single plant. In truth, lichen comprises two plants, fungi and algae, living together in so close a relationship that they practically form a single organism. The alga has chlorophyll and is capable of making food, but is vulnerable to the elements. The fungus provides a strong spongy thread that protects the alga, but it needs food. Each has something the other wants, so they have formed a permanent partnership.

This two-for-one plant flourishes in the thuntra. It grows on almost every available surface: on the ground, on rocks, sometimes even on other plants. Lichen also grows on many ruins, exploiting the complex fractures, nooks and crannies that crumbling structures provide. It may proliferate on the surface of fallen airships, the hulls of tankers, even coating the crumbling walls and buildings of the countless climate control stations that once dotted the area. Sometimes the lichen will flourish on these objects in such a manner as to leave them unrecognizable, at least without serious scrutiny.

When the cold seasons come, lichen is often the only vegetation available, so it becomes the food for many of the thuntra's animals. Caribou and reindeer were among the first creatures to develop stomach microorganisms to allow them to digest the tough lichen; in the Gamma Age, many creatures have also developed the appropriate stomach flora. Even the aboriginal peoples of the area found ways to use lichen. They discovered that it can be used as a powder to thicken soups or puddings. It can also be boiled into a bitter tea to stop diarrhea, and used in the process of tanning animal hides.

Lichen's intense survivability factor has caused a problem, however. The lichen's surface cells are porous and open to pulling in any kind of nutrients from the air that become available. This means, unfortunately, that the lichen easily absorbs pollutants and radiation. Many animals eat the lichen and become poisoned or irradiated, and then that contamination is unknowingly passed to humans or other animals that eat tainted meat. The unfortunate consumer of such contaminated food must make Fortitude saves against a weak mutagen and weak radiation poisoning source. If the animal was not hunted but instead died from radiation poisoning, the strength of the both effects is increased to moderate (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation* and Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "Types of Environment," *Radiation Poisoning*).

It has also been documented that some lichen has managed to "ingest" nanounits. Some lichen inadvertently become fertile breeding grounds for the infinitesimal robots, actually. A select group of researchers from the Tripoli Foundation in the mid-22nd century suggested that lichen "polluted" in this manner could become intelligent and infinitely more durable thanks to the symbiotic relationship shared with nanotech entities. Other scientists scoffed at the notion, but reports of animated lichen do circulate from time to time in areas rich in free nanounits. (Sentient or even mobile lichen deserve an increase in their hazard CR.)

COCCOID STRAIN 242

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Detoxification
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Anywhere with toxic waste
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 2

The organism not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

In the 21st and 22nd centuries, humanity continued to destroy nature. Oil spills drowned birds, fish and plants. Pesticides leaked and killed plants and animals with effects that were never intended. Nuclear power plants melted down and enveloped the local area with enough radiation to leave the radius of affliction as a total "dead zone." People had trouble cleaning up their own messes. Getting their own hands dirty was possible, but dangerous, and on top of that it was just too damn slow. Someone came up with the innovative observation that nature always strives for a balance, so why not kick-start nature's own balancing act and force it to clean up itself? Nature had its own biodegradation process — over time, naturally occurring microbes would break down toxins and subsume them into the ecosystem. Scientists decided that they could harness this microbial power and force the microscopic life into overdrive, allowing the "invisible" life to work a million times faster (and more efficiently) than humanity could possibly manage. It was a tool, and nothing else. It was bioremediation.

Bioremediation became a buzz word and a rather popular "clean-up" tool. Suddenly, people had less worry about the effects they had on the environment, because if something *did* get muddled up, the natural world could be made to mop up the ensuing disaster. Biotechnology firms used already-extant microbes alongside genetically designed ones to attack and "remedy" a whole host of environmental pollutants. Those first microbes to be harnessed could clean up hydrocarbons, sewage waste and petrochemical waste. Later, microscopic life was discovered or engineered that could clean up polluting metals, radionuclides, chemical spills and biotoxins. There was even a strain of microbe, termed a "uranium-gobbler," that could diminish (through bio-absorption) high levels of radioactivity. Microbes would be cultured and gorged on nutrients, then set free into the polluted areas to do their miniature duty. Once set at the task, they turned contamination into basic elements (nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus or inorganic compounds). In the years before the Final Wars, more than 3,000 different microbes were utilized for bioremediation… and that was itself a problem. Scientists hoped they could engineer a single microbial strain that could remedy the whole host of environmental hazards, from pesticides to gas leaks to anthrax spores. The design for such a creature proved ever-elusive, but just before the last civilization collapsed into discord, a team of scientists finally managed to do it.

Enter Coccoid Strain 242, labeled the "Magic Bullet Bug" by its designers at Merotech. It was an all-purpose philosopher's stone of the bioremediation world, meant to tackle a thousand-and-one different pollutants. Jet fuel leaking into the soil and contaminating the ground-water of a local burg? Send in Strain 242. Did a local refinery explode and blast the area with a potent herbicide? The magic bullet will do the trick. Is there an old nuclear test site that might make a good amusement park? This microbe will gobble the radioactivity into complete and total nullification. Strain 242 was the microbial panacea that scientists were looking for.

In the collapse of buildings and general infrastructure after the Final Wars, Strain 242 escaped and flourished. Almost nothing could kill it, because the hardy bastard could disassemble just about any contaminant that tried. Radioactivity didn't stop it. Rivers running dark with poisonous pesticide didn't

matter. Passing through soil contaminated with industrial sludge only improved the quality of the soil, negated the toxin, and gave the magic bullet bug an unhindered path to other things and other places.

In some ways, this is a good thing. Wherever Strain 242 is present, it performs a major "clean sweep" of the area, diminishing all levels of hazardous material. Radiation is reduced; and the air, water and soil are purified. But Strain 242 has its dark side, as well. Strain 242 has no sentient mind. It cannot differentiate between theoretically "good" pollutants and "bad" ones. High concentrations of copper are toxic, and Strain 242 can't distinguish between copper wiring and open pits of high-copper waste. It therefore processes wiring as readily as waste. Fuel in a fuel tank is a target for Strain 242; it will turn gasoline and oil into water, nitrogen and salt in short order. Power plants had better have an incredibly strong filtration system, otherwise Strain 242 will get in, deplete any uranium fuel rods present, and potentially send an entire community into a semi-permanent power outage. While Strain 242 makes it *safe* for humans, it also destroys many of the modern necessities that keep humans alive. Strain 242 can degrade just about any system, be it communications, climate control, power or purification.

One specialist community has evolved a sort of symbiotic relationship with Strain 242. The town of Rivesvyn is actually little more than a collegiate academy dedicated to pursuing, advancing and teaching a lifestyle without machines, and without synthetics. Before the Final Wars, Rivesvyn served as a center for warbots, housing several of their "premium" models as a showroom, storehouse and design foundation. Now, the ruins there have been taken over by fallen scientists and ex-academics who seek a world free of synthetic and robotic influence. It's even suggested that the members of the Rivesvyn population have become literal "carriers" for Coccoid Strain 242, bringing the bug wherever they travel.

Detoxification (Ex): Inhaled/Contact, Fortitude DC 15, incubation period 1 day, initial damage 1d6 points plus 1 point of hardness, secondary damage 1d10 points plus 1 point of hardness.

Strain 242 is a disease that only affects inorganic manufactured materials (these materials do not "inhale," but the microbe is typically airborne). For the save to avoid "infection," use the target's hardness in place of Constitution bonus. Make the save check once each day that Strain 242 is active in the area. Attended objects may use the owner's Fortitude save.

If the object becomes infected with Strain 242, it continues to take the secondary damage every day until it succeeds at two consecutive saving throws. The disease must overcome the object's hardness rating to inflict damage on it, but as the object's hardness slowly erodes this becomes almost inevitable.

The eroding work of Strain 242 isn't always obvious while it is in progress. Observers must make a Spot check against DC 20 to see signs of damage while the target has half or more its original hardness, against DC 15 for targets with less than half their original hardness, and DC 10 for targets that have lost all their hardness and are now losing hit points.

Affected targets break beyond all mending when reduced to 0 hit points.

DEINOCOCCUS RADIODURANS

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: mutagen resistance, strange berry
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Any
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The organism not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Deinococcus radiodurans was one of the *archaea* "extremophiles" discovered in the late 20th century. Its key property is one that is revealed right in its name, which means "strange berry that can withstand radiation." This weird bug in particular can endure radiation levels 3000 *times* what it takes to kill a human. For a long time, scientists were uncertain just what to do with this extremophile, or even what its purpose was. They only knew that this microorganism was largely unaffected by radiation *and* could repair damage to its shattered DNA in a matter of hours, or even minutes. But why was it on Earth? No radiation existed on the planet that required such intense protection — had the creature survived from the dawn of the planet, with defensive capabilities suited to a much more volatile time? Or was it literally an alien bacterium, falling to the world in meteorites or hunks of red planet? It didn't

much matter, ultimately; people put *Deinococcus* to work, both before and after the Final Wars.

Scientists studied the nature of *Deinococcus'* rebuilding ability and replicated it in nanites intended for work in highly radioactive environments. Thanks to the "strange berry" and its recovery techniques, the nanites could last far longer than before. Some remain active even now, generations later, busily extracting fuels from contaminated areas or recovering resources for decontamination. Later, the genetic sequences governing radiation resistance were grafted into living targets: plants at first, then animals and finally human beings. Some members of many species retain this capability, and through breeding it has spread in weakened form far and wide. Rumors describe tribes of extremely resistant people who live in the depths of nuked wasteland, Cancer Men who come out only to raid for supplies.

Various forms of disease-inducing microorganisms have also incorporated the *Deinococcus* genes, giving rise to radiation-resistant plagues and tumors. Larger organisms also use the *Deinococcus* genes for their protection, so that they can emit and consume radioactive substances safely. Some Gamma Age scrutinizers speculate that the *Deinococcus* bacteria have some larger role yet to play, whether it is in the reemergence of an all-but-extinct ecosystem, or even in an alien invasion.

Mutagen Resistance (Ex, Mut): *Deinococcus radiodurans* makes any subject it infects highly resistant to *further* mutation. The subject in question gains a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves against mutation, and becomes immune to all weak mutagens.

Strange Berry (Ex, Mut): Contact, Fortitude DC 15, incubation period 1d3 days, initial damage 1d6 points, secondary damage mutagen resistance.

DUST MITE

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Mite infestation
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Any except arctic
Organization: Ubiquitous
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The organism not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Dust is ever present in the Gamma World. Everything has fallen to disrepair. Ducts and vents lay shattered and open to the air. Homes and offices crumble into one another, merging into a mish-mash of rooms, broken furniture and cement blocks. Books molder on shelves in the wreckage of libraries, labs and stores. Dust is found in all of these places, and in dust one can always find dust mites.

Dust mites are a form of microscopic life, closely related to the arachnid family of spiders and ticks. There are millions of them contained in a single breath of dust, in a smear of dirt on an unused countertop, in between the pages of forgotten books. They live everywhere. Carpet fibers, old machines, clothing, even on the expanse of skin covering a human being's body. In fact, dust mites are dermatophages, meaning that indeed, they *eat* human skin. Dead skin, mostly. Discarded cells from follicles of hair, deceased epidermal cells, even pieces of an eyelash flaking away. They needn't eat the leftover skin from humans, either—just about any animal from an elephant to an iguana will do. The dermatophages are hungry for the cast-off remnants of flesh, and thrive on it everywhere they exist.

It is speculated that the population of dust mites has increased since the Final Wars by approximately 750%. The mass death of humankind left behind, quite frankly, a lot of decaying skin flaking off in microscopic bits in the air — and if there's one thing that will keep a population of dust mites strong, it's a proliferation of dead skin. Of course, with the increase in their numbers comes an increase in the problems associated with them.

When dust mites feed, they grow. In growing, they actually discard their *own* skin (and they also leave behind microscopic waste materials, to boot). And while the dust mites favor the dead skin of humans, humans certainly do not need or enjoy the flaking flesh of the mites. The waste products of the mini-mites cause allergic reactions in humans at the least, and at the worst can cause full-blown asthma. The allergic reactions may be small, bringing about itchy eyes, slightly rashy skin, or itchy and runny noses. Asthma is more dangerous, and can hamper a human (or humanoid) with severe coughing fits, gagging or even severe breathing problems. Any character entering into an area rife with dust will encounter some degree of these problems; it will take twice as long to heal any Constitution damage.

There is no real way to destroy a population of dust mites. The attempt has been made to use nanite clouds to consume dust mites for energy, but a rather unexpected outcome occurred — the dust mites won. The nanite population seemed successful at first, but before long the dust mites beat the nanite cloud at its own game. It butchered the micromachines for "parts" and consumed them for food much as they would've consumed human skin or hair cells. Oddly enough, once the nanite cloud was dispersed or destroyed, the dust mites did not adapt and pursue further nanites, despite their potential as food. Instead, the dust mites went on to continue their regular diet of biological tissue.

HEPA (High Efficiency Purifying Air) filtration systems are the only means available to control a population of dust mites. Most HEPA systems (when active; few remain in working condition these days) reduce the population of dust mites in a given area by about three-fourths, eradicating enough of the micro-creatures to nullify the negative effects.

Mite Infestation (Ex): Inhaled, Fortitude DC 12, incubation period 1 hour, initial damage 1 temporary Con, secondary damage 1 temporary Con, asthma.

DERMATOPHAGOIDS HESLINAE

Dermatophagoids heslinae is an aggressive version of the standard dust mite. After the upsurge in discarded human skin died down (so to speak) after the Final Wars, the ratio of dust mites to food availability grew disproportionate. Most dust mites were content to sit and wait for the proper food, shed from humans. However, this particular dust mite was not so content, and instead went after living flesh. As such, the *heslinae* mite will actually consume skin cells while they still remain living *on* the human or animal body. In most cases, this isn't enough to do significant damage to a humanoid, as even in high populations the mites don't have enough *oomph* yet to actually chew through all the layers of the epidermis. However, the dust storms that rage across much of the chaotic world may carry billions of *dermatophagoids heslinae*, and these mite storms can do greater damage. (This variation on the dust mite has a hazard CR of 2.)

Dermatophagoids Infestation (Ex, Mut): Inhaled, Fortitude DC 12, incubation period 1 hour, initial damage 1d2 temporary Con, 1d6, secondary damage 1d3 temporary Con, 1d8, asthma.

FIG TREE

Size/Type: Huge Plant
Hardness: 5
Hit Points: 10/inch of thickness
Special Qualities: Fig wasp swarm
Saves: Fort +4, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Temperate areas with sufficient ground water
Organization: Solitary or groves

The tree has gnarled but strong branches and trunks, and produces the familiar fig in clusters.

DESCRIPTION

The fig tree is a durable plant; it hasn't succumbed to some of the more unfortunate fates to which other fruiting trees and vegetables have fallen prey. Many apple trees are plagued by the "red blight fungus" that leeches the tree's resources so the apples end up being shrunken and bitter. Some vine vegetable-producers (tomatoes, squash, cucumbers) are eaten off by desperate animals, bound into death by invasive bindweed or are afflicted by the acidic slime of the assassin worms. Only the most carefully cultivated and guarded gardens and orchards make the grade… but fig trees provide a hearty exception to the rule.

The fig tree supplements its natural resistance to fungal infections and other environmental hazards with several special relationships with other species. The fig tree demands pollination to survive. But it's not such a simple process as "bee lands on flower, inadvertently gathers pollen, goes to next tree." In this case, the only pollinating insect of the fig tree is the (appropriately named) fig wasp. The key fruit of the fig tree is a bitter, tough production that the wasp loves because it's an ideal place to lay eggs. Unfortunately, the wasp loves this fruit a little too much, and lays so many eggs that seed production in these bitter figs is dangerously limited. It's advantageous for the wasp because the wasp gets a lot of eggs, but the fig tree is handed a raw deal. So the fig evolved a second fruit. The wasp will try to lay eggs in this fruit as well as the other, but finds that this fruit doesn't allow room for *any* eggs at all. But in the meantime, the wasp delivers the pollen from the bitter fruit to this new fruit, thus pollinating the tree. The new fruit is bad for the wasp (no eggs), but good for the fig. Plus, this second fig fruit manages to be useful in other ways. Because there are no wasp eggs, the fruit

has massive seed production, and on top of that, this second fruit tastes good to birds, squirrels, and yes, humans. The fruit gets eaten, the seeds are passed through the system and back to the earth, and in approximately 4 years, a new fig tree is growing — and the strange sex life of the fig tree continues.

In summary, these trees are easy to grow and yield a tasty fruit. The fig has thus become one of the most accessible fruit staples in communities and cities of moderate zones. Some of the backwater towns actually use figs as a sort of money or bartering tool, knowing that food is one of the essentials (it's just unfortunate that some people eat their money before they get to spend it). While eating figs may grow tiresome, villagers have concocted countless recipes devoted to producing new meals and "delicacies" out of the readily available fruit.

There is a problem with harvesting figs, however, and that problem is the fig wasp. Like the "killer bees" of the early 21st century, the fig wasps have taken to heavy swarming and aggressive attacks to protect their eggs and their tree. Their behavior, to boot, is rather unpredictable. For instance, fig wasps generally leave birds and other forest-dwelling mammals alone, but should another insect (caterpillar, moth or even other wasps) come into the area, the fig wasps swarm and sting the invader to death. And while they don't necessarily attack the smaller mammals or birds, wasps *do* sometimes swarm to attack bigger creatures. Woe to the unlucky hawk or vulture attempting to rest in the boughs of a fig tree — and, more importantly, woe to the poor human who goes to pick figs on a day when the wasps are feeling particularly unreasonable.

Among the few creatures capable of really harming a fig tree easily are snails. Snails seem to go unnoticed by the fig wasps; and while the snails are slow, the slimy creatures will consume much of the new growth of a fig tree if left alone. Some farmers whip up a salty chemical concoction called "snot spray" to hose down the trees in an effort to dissuade and destroy snails, but some argue that this makes the figs taste strange. Another problem is that sometimes fig trees attract small snails, and other times the trees attract the Giant Snail, which can grow to the size of a large dog.

Fig Wasp Swarm (Ex): Each tree is protected by a swarm of fig wasps. The fig wasps make a dense cloud of insects surrounding each tree. Subjects suffer 1 point of damage at the end of each round inside the swarm, regardless of Defense. This only applies to creatures of Medium and larger size — smaller that creatures are beneath the swarm's notice. Medium and larger creatures of 3–5 HD must make a DC 10 Will save to remain within the swarm. Those failing the save flee in terror.

The swarm can be dispersed by heavy smoke, fire or a strong wind (20+ miles per hour). Some pesticides work to kill the wasp swarm, but this can reduce the potency of the fig crop.

GIANT CORPSE FLOWER

Size/Type: Large Plant
Hardness: 3
Hit Points: 5/inch of thickness
Saves: Fort +3, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Any tropical or sub-tropical, and hot spots in cooler regions
Organization: Thicket
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The plant stands 10 feet tall, with a central bloom more than a yard across, and it reeks powerfully of rotting meat.

DESCRIPTION

Botanists of the 20th and 21st centuries challenged each other to cultivate particularly difficult-to-manage plans. The *titan arum*, or giant corpse flower, was a popular subject for such challenges, since its seeds refused to

germinate and its flowers to bloom anywhere but in equatorial rainforests. The giant corpse flower is inflorescent, meaning that it produces several types of flower, and looms up to 10 feet tall, with a massive ring of blood-red fern like petals unfolding around a central blossom up to a yard across. Its tubers routinely exceed 150 pounds in weight when mature. And there's the feature that gives its name, the smell produced by metabolic processes that keep that plant's outer layers at 90 degrees F or above, and stink badly. The reek attracts carrion beetles, flesh flies and other scavengers, who gather pollen and then fly away in search of things that actually are corpses. Thus the *titan arum* spreads throughout hospitable regions.

Global warming created new potential homes for the corpseflower; as the species escaped from shattered greenhouses, it flourished in what had been temperate and cool zones. It's long since become an established part of ecosystems throughout tropical and sub-tropical zones. Its smell guarantees that scavengers of all types also gather in the vicinity; the DC of Survival checks for hunting reduced by –2 within 10 miles of a corpse flower thicket.

So far, no one has successfully isolated the chemicals that keep the plant so hot. If anyone does, there will be markets for it in every part of the world where people feel cold.

HANTAVIRUS

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Hanta
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Any with unsanitary conditions
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 3

The organism is not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Many viruses, bacteria and infectious protozoa thrive in unsanitary conditions. Whether transmitted through fecal matter, unmitigated insect propagation or simply through unclean food or drinking water, many diseases take hold through unhygienic circumstances. Advances in technology and social organization shrank the fraction of the world subject to these problems, then the Final Wars let them loose again. Sanitary systems are no longer universal, nor are the means to purify meat and water. Insects such as mosquitoes and ticks exist unchecked. All of this makes it a new golden age for diseases.

The family of *hantaviruses* all work in the same general way, with varying levels of severity. The virus spreads quickly through the target's body and forces its capillaries to leak small quantities of blood. The cumulative damage from all this hemorrhaging makes some or all major organs shut down. The most common cause of death from a *hantavirus* is pulmonary: The lungs fill up with plasma and the victim drowns. Other organs likely to fail include the liver, kidneys and heart.

All *hantaviruses* spread in the secreted fluids of mammalian vermin, particularly rodents. The viruses can survive even in airborne droplets, so droppings stirred by the winds can carry enough *hantavirus* to be infectious. There are few places humans live where *hantaviruses* can't flourish. There's no actual cure for the virus in general circulation, though some communities with advanced medical technology have treatments. Pure-strain human communities are most likely to have effective responses to *hantaviruses* and least likely to share them with outsiders, except in exchange for something of equally lasting value. The practical treatment is plenty of fluids, lots of bed rest, and prayer or hope. The mortality rate for most *hantavirus* strains is around one-third of those who develop symptoms.

***Hanta* (Ex):** Injury/inhaled, Fortitude DC 14, incubation period 1 week, initial damage 1d2 temporary Str, secondary damage 1d2 temporary Str*, 1d2 temporary Con*.

(*If this ability is damaged, make an additional Fortitude save to avoid the permanent loss of 1 ability point. This additional save must be made every time secondary damage is inflicted.)

MUERTA WETLANDS STRAIN

One strain of *hantavirus* rarely kills. Seen only recently, the virus is called the *Muerta Wetlands* strain, named after the stretch of marsh and swamp where it was discovered. This particular strain still spreads in the usual manner, through the fluid wastes of vermin, but this instance of the virus attacks the capillaries in a very minute fashion. Organs are rarely damaged beyond repair, and the mortality rate is less than 1 in

100 of those who develop symptoms. The unfortunate side effect of this *hantavirus* variety is all the bleeding. Trickles of blood ooze from the corners of eyes, from out of ears, from under the tongue, and from just about any other hole (small or large) on the human body. This is a three-fold problem. First, affected individuals simply look horrific: All Charisma-based skill checks except Intimidate have a –2 penalty on the roll. Second, this minor but constant leakage causes steady anemia in the victim. Third, the blood gives off a faint stink, and that stink attracts the occasional predator that can smell the potential food source from far away: Victims suffer a –2 penalty on all Hide checks. The disease usually goes away after 1d6 weeks, but re-infection is possible every 2 months. (The hazard CR of this strain is 2.)

Muerta Hanta (Ex): Injury/inhaled, DC 15, incubation period 1 week, initial damage 1 temporary Con, secondary damage 1d2 temporary Con, anemia for 1d6 weeks.

KHEMSIETH

Size/Type: Medium Mutant Plant
Hardness: 1
Hit Points: 2/sq. ft. of area
Special Qualities: Infestation, teleportation
Saves: Fort +2, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Any land except desert and arctic
Organization: Fields of up to a square mile
Hazard Challenge Rating: 2

Each purple blade of grass grows to the height of a adult human, but in summer the grass bends beneath the burden of the heavy, spiked seed-cases that grow atop it.

DESCRIPTION

Khemsieth is the product of a dozen nanotech and genetic weapons coagulating in the DNA of a sturdy variety of grass. The roots of the khemsieth are composed of hundreds of thousands of tiny tendrils, rich with nerves and electrical sensors. As the khemsieth fields spread, the soil beneath them grows thick with electrical activity. Each root tendril becomes a neuron in a vast earthen brain. The khemsieth root system is not especially intelligent, but it is psychically active. It is this root-mind that gives the khemsieth their unique method of seed dispersal.

Infestation (Ex, Mut): The seeds of the khemsieth are covered in wiry fibers that can flex and move. The root-mind of the khemsieth can guide the seeds, controlling their movements as the tiny fibers make the seeds crawl like agile insects. The parasitic seeds seek out warm, wet, meaty places to grow, such as inside human lungs. If a living creature comes within 60 feet of a patch of khemsieth, the seeds inside the seed-cases hurl themselves from left to right, causing the flexible grasses to wave back and forth even in the absence of wind. When the seeds have accumulated enough momentum, the cases crack open, hurling the seeds at the passers-by. The khemsieth must make a ranged touch attack with a ranged attack bonus of +5. If it hits, 2d6 seeds land on the surface of the target and begin to skitter towards the victim's mouth, nose and other orifices. These seeds have a Defense of 20 (Dex +2, size +8) and must be picked off or burnt. The victim can hold her mouth shut, but this merely limits the seed's options. The best tactic is to burn the seeds off, as any amount of fire damage, no matter how insignificant, will cripple the seeds. Any seeds that manage to burrow into a creature quickly reach the lungs or intestines.

Each day for a week, every seed in a creature inflicts 1 point of damage. If the creature dies, the seeds germinate within a few weeks, forming a new 5-foot patch of khemsieth grass. If the creature can survive for a week, the seeds die and slowly break down over time.

Khemsieth grass is often too successful for its own good, as creatures learn to avoid a patch of grass, which then dies out over a few seasons as it cannot spread. Communities fear khemsieth grass, and use either robot gardeners or flamethrowers to burn out patches from a safe distance. The root-mind of the khemsieth grass sometimes blocks psychic powers, and some fortresses with access to flying machines are surrounded by fields of khemsieth grass to guard against psychic intrusion.

Teleport (Ex, Mut): One especially lethal variant of the species has mastered the psychic power of teleportation. It can teleport its seeds into the body of any creature within 60 feet. Every 5-foot patch of grass has a dozen seeds, and it teleports 3 of these each round to random warm-blooded creatures within range. Targeted creatures may make a Fortitude save against DC (10 + the number of seeds targeting the creature). If the save is successful, the seeds cannot materialize and are destroyed. If the save fails, the seeds materialize (usually within the target's lungs or intestines) inflicting 1d6 points of damage per seed. The seeds then inflict 1 point of damage per day for a week as described above.

MONKEY FEVER (BABOON ENTEROVIRAL MENINGOENCEPHALITIS)

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Monkey fever
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Anywhere with people
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 2

The organism is not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Xenotransplantation helped cure humanity of many ills. When organs went bad, scientists could simply replace failed human organs with ones from other mammals. Transplanting such foreign organs into the human form required some gene therapy and nanite assistance, but ultimately it became a cheap and easy way to repair some of the damage within the mortal body. Several organs were ripe for transplantation, including hearts, kidneys, lungs and livers. Other types of tissue could be moved from the animal world to the human, as well, such as bone marrow, connective tissue and heart valves. Where did these organs come from? In many cases, monkeys and apes were the prime suppliers since they so closely resembled human beings in body form and general genetics. Sometimes, however, organs were harvested (or grown specifically from) cattle, pigs and sheep. It seemed a perfect situation. Humanity, an ultimately selfish super-organism, needn't plunder friends and family for compatible organs, and could instead exploit the seemingly infinite resources of the natural world yet again. Xenotransplantation became fairly common practice, and was even given the less glamorous title of "spare-parts surgery."

Of course, there were problems. Humanity was constantly creating its own Frankenstein monsters and was always forced to put such aberrations down, but xenotransplantation was considered to be "mostly" free of problems. The key problem still remaining was the issue of zoonosis: diseases jumping from animals to humans. The organs of animals often contained many dormant diseases that may or may not have afflicted the beasts — but once in the system of a human being, the viruses may run rampant and become highly communicable. Still, scientists believed they could cap most of these diseases and curtail them with gene and cell therapy before they became legitimately dangerous. But one such disease escaped all efforts at confinement and wreaked havoc with the human population.

That disease is baboon enteroviral meningoencephalitis, also known as "Monkey Fever." A mild irritant to the baboons whose bone marrow it normally infested, it proved devastating to human beings. Monkey fever often stayed in the human body for 2 to 4 weeks before the first symptoms occurred — a bad, though rarely fatal, case of encephalitis. In encephalitis, the brain itself swells; and in the case of monkey fever it is also accompanied by a swelling of the meninges, the tissue surrounding the brain. The swelling of the brain causes "feral dementia": The victim begins acting like an animal, and loses most brain functions more complex than a reptilian need for food, water, sex and sleep. The bestial individual is only occasionally capable of rational thought and legitimate communication (i.e. communication

involving words and not growls, grunts, or gesticulations). The victim also becomes significantly more aggressive, attacking any who stand in the way. The feral person typically attacks with tooth and nail, which is exactly what the virus wants, because it is transferred predominantly through saliva — biting attacks may pass the disease along. Another odd element of the behavior of the afflicted is that they tend to have reduced aggression when it comes to contact with *other* afflicted. In fact, the diseased individuals sometimes gather together in "packs" to hunt, feed and copulate.

Scientists were working toward a cure for this bizarre breed of encephalitis before the Final Wars, as it was becoming something of a global epidemic. While the numbers of afflicted were not astronomical, they were enough to get major attention from all the major media venues, often capturing ghastly imagery of the "hunting packs" attacking places of institutionalized civilization (banks, universities, laboratories). But, of course, just as the science community was poised on the brink of a cure, the world reached its boiling point; the Final Wars swept across the globe leaving everything changed, and the chance for a cure buried with its potential creators. Now, the disease remains incurable, though there is a degree of therapy available with the appropriate drugs. The afflicted under such therapy are capable of resuming some part of a normal life (and a "normal life" in the Gamma World is a pretty relative thing, anyway). The ability to communicate is restored, and the victims may fill the lower ranks of society (janitors, sewage workers, trap-testers).

Monkey Fever (Ex): Injury/contact, Fortitude DC 12, incubation period 1d4 weeks, initial damage 1 temporary Int, 1 temporary Wis, secondary damage 1 temporary Con, 1d6 temporary Int. Those develop secondary symptoms gain 1d3 Str.

MONKEY'S RICE POT

Size/Type: Small Plant
Hardness: 2
Hit Points: 5
Saves: Fort +3, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Tropical and semi-topical climates
Organization: Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating: –1

The plant has bushy low leaves around a bright red pitcher.

DESCRIPTION

Most plants get what they need from their immediate environments, simply sitting and waiting for nutrients to come to them through a stable, non-active system. But some plants aren't passive participants in the Gamma World, and actively work to get their food. The monkey's rice pot is one of these.

Whereas other plants require little more than soil, water and sun, the monkey's rice pot demands sustenance from living insects. This carnivorous pitcher plant is capable of eating up to 1,000 insects a day, with the capability to digest a bug every 3 to 5 seconds, when circumstances like locust swarms make such bounty possible. The trap itself is simple. Along the inside of the plant's deep red pitcher are little white hairs made from the plant's own tissue. They emit no noticeable smell, but *do* radiate a volatile chemical similar to several insect pheromones. This pheromone calls to both ground and flying species, meaning that just about any insect could fall prey to the deceptive allure of the monkey's rice pot. Any insect that goes to investigate the white hairs falls into the pitcher, and cannot climb out against the combined resistance of the hairs and the pit's slick, slippery surface. Entire columns of ants and termites march to their demise, and along the way flies, wasps and beetles will get caught in the mix for rapid dissolution in the pool of digestive fluid in the plant's stomach-like food bladder.

The plant grows in semi-tropical and tropical climes, and requires much heat, though little water, to survive. Enterprising botanists cultivate the monkey's rice pot as a defense against insect swarms with moderate success.

Flesh-cutter ants, bloodwort beetles and assassin worms succumb and perish just as readily as more mundane species. Folklore ascribes soporific properties to the brewed extract of the plant's digestive juices; sometimes it is also described as a cure for cancer. Few solid data support these claims, though the matter remains open to systematic investigation.

NECROTIZING FASCIITIS

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Rot
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Anywhere people live
Organization: Solitary
Hazard Challenge Rating: 3

The organism is not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Necrotizing fasciitis (also known as "flesh-eating bacteria") is an example of aggressive evolution, and is caused by exactly the same bacteria that causes a common type of sore throat.

Streptococcus A is a strain of bacteria that as much as one-third of the population carries with them at any given time. Every few months or years, Strep A creates a small eruption in the moist area at the back of a human's throat, developing into a cluster of red, berry-like patches that grows sore and scratchy. The bacteria readily pass from human to human through respiratory droplets or other fluid secretions. It may cause the same sore throat in another individual, or it may instead simply live quietly and bring no discomfort or pain.

Before the Final Wars, antibiotics were the easiest way to treat the problem, but in many cases antibiotics were either abused or simply underused. Some people

overdid the antibiotic treatment, compounding their treatment with two or more differing antibiotics; and some simply did not finish out their medications, convinced that the minimal effort effectively removed the bacterial invader. Strep A adapted to its changing circumstances, developing resistance to the various popular antibiotics and adding new ways to spread itself. Strep A advanced far beyond a mere sore throat: In some cases, it developed into the flesh-eating disease known as necrotizing fasciitis.

This new form of the bacteria attacks soft tissue at the subcutaneous level, causing toxic shock in the process. If left untreated, it quickly advances to the muscle layer and disintegrates the tissue found there as well. Skin becomes "necrotic," developing a red or purple rash, and this rash sprouts blisters filled with black fluid. This is accompanied by diarrhea, nausea, confusion and fever. Within 24 hours, the skin literally begins to disintegrate and the bacteria assault the muscle layer. Toxins are released from Strep A, poisoning the body and causing toxic shock and unconsciousness. If left untreated, the body dies, partially consumed by the virulent microbe. It's a far cry from a sore throat.

Strep A can be transferred from person-to-person via coughing, sneezing or other fluid transfers, but that's not the only way it can be passed. Strep A can live on most surfaces for up to 12 hours, and even the slightest abrasion or skin trauma (even a paper cut or a bruise) can allow the bacteria entrance. Unfortunately, skin abrasions are too easy to come by in a world that's little more than one big dangerous environment. A puncture wound from a thorn, running one's calf against a sharp piece of discarded metal, or any injuries gained in battle are potential homes for a future attack of Strep A if not treated and kept clean. (Should this happen, two saves may be required. First is a Fortitude save against DC 11 save to resist Strep A, which causes little more than a common cold. If the save fails and the subject is thus infected, a Fortitude save against DC 5 is required to determine whether the wound becomes infected with necrotizing fasciitis.)

The good news is, necrotizing fasciitis is treatable. The bad news is, its effects are fast, furious and essentially irreversible. The disease leaves the body a disfigured wreck. Fingers or other extremities may rot and drop off, chest and stomach may be striated with leathery furrows, and even the face may retain a criss-cross of purplish scarring. Its depredations are sometimes purely cosmetic in their aftereffects, and other times horribly debilitating. Treatment itself is a combination of several elements. Ironically, an aggressive antibiotic treatment is required (making some medical experts wonder, what happens if Strep A adapts to this treatment and grows even more aggressive?), alongside removal of the afflicted tissue (skin and potentially muscle). More advanced cases may require a blood transfusion if the toxic shock is severe, and it may require limb amputation. Most strong antibiotics from the mid-21st century (Ryflex, Invocillin, Norsept) are easily obtainable, though not always cheap depending on where they're purchased. Some new towns sell old caches of these antibiotics at relatively inexpensive prices, whereas some nomadic groups may demand rather elaborate tasks as payment. There is a more advanced (and more complete) treatment available, though it is always more expensive. Scientists have devised a hermetically-sealed hyperbaric oxygen chamber that houses an army of nanites. When the infected individual is sealed inside such a chamber, the nanites are released, performing a dual function. On one front, the nanites attack the infection itself, routing out the presence of any Streptococcus A. On the second front, other nanites work to literally rebuild the damaged and missing tissue, allowing for a victim of the necrotic infection to emerge with no (or minimal) scarring.

Most victims have to accept the pre-nanotech treatment. Unfortunately, these individuals are left behind with the grim grotesquery of the disease, and are treated much like lepers were hundreds of years ago. (They suffer a penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks equal to the Constitution damage suffered.) In some of the more inhabitable regions of the world — particularly the densely tropical forests and the theeka regions — there are several "necro colonies" meant to house the withered and deformed victims of the disease. These colonies are mostly run in a monastic fashion, meant to keep the ravaged souls away from the rest of the population, and also to give such broken individuals a place to call their own.

Rot (Ex): Inhaled/contact, Fortitude DC 13, incubation period 1d6 days, initial damage 1 temporary Con, secondary damage 1d3 temporary Con*.

(*If this ability is damaged, make an additional Fortitude save to avoid the permanent loss of 1 ability point. This additional save must be made every time secondary damage is inflicted.)

NORTHERN STRONG OAK

Size/Type: Huge Plant
Hardness: 10
Hit Points: 10/inch of thickness
Special Qualities: Sap
Saves: Fort +12, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Temperate and sub-arctic forest
Organization: Solitary or groves (2–20)
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The tree is indistinguishable from other oaks.

DESCRIPTION

Oak trees are eminently useful. Their wood is valued for its strength as a building material and a heating fuel. Dye can also be obtained from its wood, and several medicines can be distilled from the tree as well, astringents and fever reduction medicines among them. But oak trees are also vulnerable to many external influences including many insects and fungi that damage (and often kill) the trees.

In the early 21st century, geneticists bred highly defensive capabilities into a northern red oak, designing what they patented as a "Strong Oak." The tree was intended to defend itself from gypsy moths, tent caterpillars and fungal infections such as anthracnose and oak wilt by producing a faint poison among its leaves and bark. The wood is also durable than the standard wood of most oak trees. Unfortunately, the oak's protective capabilities were a little too much. Not only did it poison the caterpillar, moths and fungi that attacked, but the poison also sickened and killed the birds that nested in the trees and the squirrels that consumed the fallen acorns.

After the Final Wars, the strong oak spread beyond commercial tree farms into the surrounding wilderness, cross-breeding with natural red oaks. In appearance the two strains are almost identical, so much so that it usually takes actual sampling of the wood beneath the bark to spot the differences. Foresters short on industrial capacity highly prize the strong oak's wood and cultivate it wherever they find it — its hardness rating of 10 makes it a fine substitute for steel. The rewards are more than worth the hassles of the tree's toxin.

Sap (Ex): Contact, Fortitude DC 15*, initial damage 1d4 temporary Str, secondary damage 1d4 temporary Con.

(*Gloves reduce DC to 10.)

PLASTIC BUG

Size/Type: Fine Animal
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Special Qualities: Recycling
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Environment: Any with plastics
Organization: Colony
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The organism is not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

The concept of nature-made biodegradable plastics went against everything that had been previously understood about the industrial, durable material. Plastic wasn't natural. Plastic was man-made, synthesized out of oil and practically indestructible. So, when the idea came around that plastic could be first degradable over time by nature and second, produced by nature itself, it was a major paradigm shift.

But it was possible, thanks to a little guy called *Alcaligenes eutrophus*, the "Plastic Bug." *Alcaligines* is a simple, rod-shaped bacterium that has the ability to oxidize hydrogen gas in the atmosphere for energy. With encouragement from a rich protein medium, biologists were able to get this microbe to populate quickly and efficiently. From there, scientists supplied it with methanol and nitrogen and, *voila*, the bacteria could produce a biodegradable plastic that could be cultivated, colored and used for any desired product. Scientists even took this a step further, and cultivated a relationship between *Alcaligenes eutrophus* and some common plants such as cotton and potatoes, which allowed both of these plants to literally produce plastic. The cotton plants didn't produce organic cotton — they produced organic *plastic*. And the potatoes weren't even potatoes — the starch was replaced with plastic, thus growing in the soil actual, legitimate synthetic potatoes made of usable plastic. Unfortunately, this process was expensive, and never managed to become economical before the entire world went to war.

This bacterium is still out there, working its magic. The bacteria cannot create plastic on its own, and in fact has to be cultivated. It would seem that nobody out there is willing or able to take the time to re-learn this procedure — but that's not precisely true. Nanites have actually developed a relationship with *Alcaligenes eutrophus* in much the same manner that some insects have with plants. Certain energy-deficient nanites recognize that these bacteria are capable of synthesizing energy from hydrogen, and so the nanites go to the bacteria to "harvest" some of this energy. But along the way, the nanites leave behind traces of alcohol and nitrogen, and plastic is made. The bacteria needn't even *go* anywhere, because the nanites hunt them down.

Over time, this process creates a rather unusual display of plastic, sometimes called "synthoid forests." The "trees" in these forests are little more than just abstract constructs of randomly-synthesized plastic, sometimes looking like hands reaching up to the sky, other times looking like little more than blob-shaped boulders. Some synthetic life, such as discarded android toys and bedraggled custodial bots, actually choose to live in these plastic forests, hiding away from humans as best as possible.

Recycling (Ex): Contact, Fortitude DC 15, incubation period 1 minute, initial damage 1d6 points plus 1 point of hardness, secondary damage 1d10 points plus 1 point of hardness.

Alcaligenes is a disease that only affects plastics. For the save to avoid "infection," use the target's hardness in place of Constitution bonus. Make the save check once each day that *Alcaligenes* is active in the area. Attended objects may use the owner's Fortitude save.

If the object becomes infected with *Alcaligenes*, it continues to take the secondary damage every day until it succeeds at two consecutive saving throws. The disease must overcome the object's hardness rating to inflict damage on it, but as the object's hardness slowly erodes this becomes almost inevitable.

The eroding work of *Alcaligenes* isn't always obvious while it is in progress. Observers must make a Spot check against DC 20 to see signs of damage while the target has half or more its original hardness, against DC 15 for targets with less than half their original hardness, and DC 10 for targets that have lost all their hardness and are now losing hit points.

Affected targets break beyond all mending when reduced to 0 hit points.

POISON IVY

Size/Type: Tiny Plant
Hardness: 0
Hit Points: 1/sq. ft. of area
Special Qualities: Poison oil
Saves: Fort +2, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Any land except arctic or desert
Organization: Thicket
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

This plant has three matching leaflets with serrated edges.

DESCRIPTION

Where once this three-leafed plant was routed and uprooted as a "weed," now there's little man-made intervention to stop it. The Eastern vines grow to twist and twine around anything they can find, and the Western bushes have burgeoned into massive, 10- to 15-foot walls of poison thicket.

Of course, poison ivy's most prominent feature is its oil, uroshiol. Skin brought in contact with uroshiol becomes inflamed by a rash about 24 hours after contact, and the rash usually lasts for 8 to 10 days. It's accompanied by swelling and itching, and particularly severe cases may erupt into blisters. A common misperception of the resultant dermatitis is that itching and opening the blisters causes the irritation to spread. However, the oil can be carried along on clothing, animals or skin. An unfortunate example of this in the Gamma Age is a cloud of nanounits passing through a particularly dense thicket of poison ivy, coming away coated in the toxic uroshiol. Some nanounit clouds even incorporate uroshiol droplets as part of their defense systems. The nanounits then become a severe irritant to any humanoid they come in contact with. If the nanounit cloud finds its way into the throat or lungs of a victim, the ensuing internal reaction can cause bodily havoc, and even death.

Poison ivy, in any of its forms, is inedible, but that doesn't mean it has no use. Many towns (particularly frontier towns) have managed to encircle their communities with the Western variety of poison ivy, shaping the plants into massive thickets that act as a protective wall. Obviously, those attempting to come through the wall in unguarded locations are not only

NEW MINOR MUTATION: POISON IVY TOUCH

The subject's skin secretes the poison ivy oil (uroshiol), and she develops a faint green "shininess" to her flesh.

Effect: When the subject makes a successful touch attack, she inflicts poison damage on the target (itching, rash, disrupted skin). The power is ineffective if the target is immune to poison ivy or if the target is protected from physical contact. The poison works with the same intensity and effects as regular poison ivy.

The power can be used 6 times a day. After that, the oil is expended from the skin and takes 8 hours to re-emerge from the pores.

The subject with the mutation becomes immune to poison ivy.

Type: Positive **Biotech:** Yes

going to have a somewhat difficult time hacking through the dense foliage, but will also walk away with the grim dermal reactions associated with poison ivy.

Poison Oil (Ex): Contact, Fortitude DC 12, initial damage 1d2 temporary Con, secondary damage 1d2 temporary Con.

TOXICODENDRON MORPHINIUS

Toxicodendron morphinius is the name of a bioengineered strain of poison ivy, conceived of in the early 21st century. Botanical engineers removed the plant's production of uroshiol and actually replaced it with the production of morphine, allowing the potent narcotic pain reliever to grow in an easy to cultivate, natural state. This variant form of poison ivy continues to grow, particularly in more northern climes and high elevations; it thrives up 7,500 feet above sea level in temperate zones. Unfortunately there are few ways to differentiate it from its itchy cousin. The only difference is three red splotches no larger than the head of a pin at the base of each leaf. Observers must succeed in a DC 10 Craft (pharmaceuticals) check or DC 12 Survival check to recognize this plant.

QAT

Size/Type: Large Plant
Hardness: 0
Hit Points: 1/sq. ft. of area
Special Qualities: Qat extract
Environment: Desert and any area with coarse acidic soil
Organization: Solitary or fields
Hazard Challenge Rating: 1

The plant is a large shrub, growing anywhere from 3 to 10 feet tall. It produces many stems with little green leaves about as big as a thumbprint. Its coloration ranges from emerald green to bruise purple.

DESCRIPTION

Qat (or khat) grows predominantly in desert regions, but can appear anywhere the soil is coarse and acidic.

The plant is a stimulant. It can be smoked or brewed into a tea, but more often than not the leaves are simply chewed like gum. There are psychoactive alkaloids in the leaves, which confer a feeling of slight drunkenness to the user while distorting time ever so slightly. It disconnects users from their surroundings, making them easily excitable, giddy and sometimes briefly aggressive or passive. It can also cause minor health problems, including an arrhythmic heartbeat, dizziness, headaches and even small bodily seizures. The lightest effects of qat are similar to several cups of coffee. At its strongest, qat bestows upon the user the impression that he is unstoppable and invulnerable, and may lower his inhibitions to the point of doing some very stupid things.

Qat is currency among approximately three-quarters of the nomadic tribes found in the deserts of the Gamma World. Qat-growers actually grow several different "variations" of the plant, and look at qat like connoisseurs once looked at the grapes used to produce wine. The rule of thumb is the longer the branch, the stronger and more esteemed the qat. Qat leaves that are bigger are also considered more valuable, and so qat with long branches and large leaves tend to come with a far higher bartering value than its stunted, smaller cousins. Several versions actually grow in the wilds of the Americas, as the plant was introduced there by traders not long after the Final Wars. Some farming communities rely entirely on their qat crops, providing a supply for an ever-increasing demand.

Some nomadic peoples outlaw qat except in times of war. When the need for battle arises, both the men and the women gorge themselves on the leaves, chewing them for days before going to war. This enhances the

feeling of battle-readiness, and keeps the users high-strung and feeling immortal. Those who have faced qat-chewing warriors claim that their pupils shrink to pinpoints and their large moon-eyes never blink. They are reported to attack with a blundering, frenzied ferocity — rarely graceful, but always unyielding.

Animals that seek out the qat plant and chew the leaves and stems become highly aggressive. This increases the likelihood that a creature will attack, but reduces its effectiveness in doing so. Creatures will fight without fear (gaining a +2 bonus on Will saves), but also without tactics (suffering a –2 penalty on attack rolls).

Qat Extract (Ex): Ingested, Fortitude DC 15, initial damage +2 bonus on Will saves, 1d2 temporary Wis, secondary damage +4 on Will saves, 1d4 temporary Wis.

SPIDERWORT

Size/Type: Tiny Flower
Hardness: 0
Hit Points: 1/sq. ft. of area
Special Qualities: Radiation sensitive
Saves: Fort +2, Ref —, Will —
Environment: Temperate and sub-tropical grass areas
Organization: Solitary or meadows
Hazard Challenge Rating: –1

The plant is a low growth featuring apparently uncomplicated blue flowers.

DESCRIPTION

The spiderwort is a common and rather unexceptional plant that grows in moderate to subtropical climes. Most of its varieties are small plants with blue flowers that contain three petals and six stamens. Among the stamens are tiny filament "hairs" that are also typically blue. The flower grows in open meadows, and is often clustered around fallen, destitute roadways, or it may pop up around the abandoned ruins (laboratories, factories, experimental greenhouses). All in all, it seems a useless, albeit slightly pretty, little flowering plant.

But wise and enterprising individuals know a secret about the spiderwort. The stamen hairs of the flower are easily mutated by ionizing radiation. Spiderworts are affected quite visibly by even the smallest point mutations, and the first and most common point mutation in the plant is the discoloration of its stamen hairs. If the radiation is dangerous enough, even the color of the *petals* can change. In the presence of an overabundance of radioactive contamination or chronic ultraviolet (UV) radiation, the stamen hairs and petals turn from blue to pink. Hence, the spiderwort is something of a natural Geiger counter.

Because the spiderwort often grows around dilapidated buildings, including old power plants, highways lined with underground cable, and machinery graveyards, travelers can get at least a preliminary estimate of how much radiation is in a given area before going any further. As a common children's rhyme says, "Spider plant blue, won't harm you, spider plant pink, wait and think." Some even carry around a spiderwort flower in a pot in an effort to use it much like miners used to use canaries in cages. Carrying the spiderwort around, it's easy to see when the point mutations occur and the stamen hairs and petals grow discolored. These changes occur within minutes of exposure, usually in time to allow a retreat before permanent damage sets in. Resource-poor communities use spiderwort plants when they can't afford sophisticated mechanical detection systems.

Radiation Sense (Ex): The spiderwort infallibly detects radiation within 100 feet. Anyone carrying or observing a spiderwort can make a DC 20 Spot check when 100 feet away from the radiation source to notice the change in the spiderwort; the DC of the check is reduced by –1 for every 10 feet nearer the radiation source.

SENTIENT LIFE

Not every life-form that has changed radically over the long years has done so under the influence of mutagens or nanotechnology. Most of creatures that follow have boostrapped themselves up the evolutionary ladder. Others have been touched by radiation or mutation — it is, after all, quite difficult to keep one's nose clean in the Gamma Age.

ECONET

Size/Type:	Small Plant
Hit Dice:	1d8 (4 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	—
Initiative:	—
Speed:	30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense:	11 (+1 size), touch 11, flat-footed 10
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	—
Primary Attack:	—
Full Attack:	—
Fighting Space/Reach:	0 ft./0 ft.
Special Qualities:	Ecological assignment, nodes
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 1, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills:	Handle Animal +8, Hide +8*, Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) +8, Move Silently +2
Feats:	Stealthy
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Any with prior history of mutations and ecological damage
Organization:	Solitary or network up to many square miles
Challenge Rating:	5
Advancement:	—

The organism is not visible to the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION

Welcome to the jungle. You will be assigned a number and designated food chain.

Econets are a web of bacteria, viruses and fungi. The grayish fungi are the processing centers of the network, lumps of artificial brain that sprout on the underside of tree branches and in wet soil. The other elements of the econet infect creatures and plants within the network's area. Most econets cover only a few square miles of isolated territory, such as an island or a sheltered valley, but at least one econet covers a large forest.

Originally created to impose sanity and order on the chaos of species spawned by the Wars, econets attempt to forcibly create ecological balance. Many of the mutant species are far too powerful and dangerous to be part of a normal ecology – tesseract spiders, for example, have no predators, and hoops breed at a much quicker rate than other sentient species. To force these creatures into an ecology with a semblance of balance, the econet infects them with a mind-affecting virus.

Each creature affected by an econet is assigned one or more predator and prey species. Hoops may be allowed to feed on a limited number of green plants, and ordered to submit to hungry gators. If a prey species attempts to escape or fight back, the econet attempts to paralyze it. Once the ecology is properly balanced, of course, there will be no need for such direct intervention, but balancing ecologies was difficult even before the world was swept with mutations and plagues.

Ecological Assignment (Ex): When outsiders enter an econet-dominated area, the fungal brain nodes attempt to infect them with an array of viruses and bacteria. The outsiders must make a Fortitude save each day, at a DC equal to (10 + number of days spent in the econet area). If the save is failed, the infection takes hold, and the outsider is assigned its predators and prey.

The econet must make a DC 15 Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) check to correctly assign species' roles. If it fails, the fungal intelligence may assign a creature to feed on something it cannot actually eat (or catch). If a creature attempts to feed on an unassigned species, or resist its predator species when the econet considers the area to be overpopulated, the net intervenes, forcing the creature to behave "correctly." Creatures may make a Will save against DC 10 to resist. This save must be repeated every hour while inside the econet zone, and the DC increases by +2 each hour.

If the save is failed, the creature is compelled to obey the econet's commands. The econet can also attempt to cull a creature, forcing it to commit suicide. The creature is allowed a Will save against DC 10 to resist.

Nodes (Ex): The econet enforces its commands through nodes throughout its territory. These nodes are Fine plants with 1 hit point and a +20 species bonus on Hide checks. Nodes can be found with Spot checks; alternatively, they can be traced with unopposed DC 15 Knowledge (behavioral sciences) or Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) checks. Destroying a node frees all creatures within a 100-foot radius from the econet's demands; creatures remain infected with the assignment virus, however. The node will re-grow in 24 hours.

Skills: The econet receives a +4 species bonus on Handle Animal, Hide, and Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) checks.

ELEFGAINTH

Size/Type: Medium Evolved Animal
Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 13
Initiative: +2
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 20 (+2 Dex, +8 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 18
Basic Attack/Grapple: +1/+2
Primary Attack: Slam +2 melee (2d4+1) or gore +2 melee (1d8+1)
Full Attack: Slam +2 melee (2d4+1), gore –3 melee (1d8+1)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Scent
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 11
Skills: Listen +4, Spot +3, Survival +3
Feats: Track
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Family group
Environment: Open grasslands and forests
Organization: Solitary (rogue male) or family herd (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 3–4 HD (Medium); 5–7 HD (Large)

These animals look much like pre-Final Wars elephants — except that they're much smaller, no taller than a human being.

DESCRIPTION

Elefgainths are highly intelligent and strong, and are among the longest-lived land animals with life spans of 60 years or more. Healthy, full-grown elefgainths have few natural enemies. Elefgainth have a hard fold of flesh on the top side of their trunk and maintain a omnivorous diet.

Elefgainth are consummate trackers, able to stalk nearly any other creature through their native lands. Once they have the scent of their prey, they just follow along the edges of difficult territory, undeterred by sand, thorns even rocky terrain.

Elefgainths are hunters. However, they are not malicious. They kill only to eat and to defend themselves.

Elefgainth prefer to live in family groups of 2 to 8. They seem to truly enjoy the company of their parents, children and siblings. Elefgainth tend to live in one area all their lives and for many generations, building roads and burial grounds through decades and centuries of repetition.

Solitary elefgainth are nearly always rogue males. They tend to be surly and aggressive.

Some tribes use elfgainths as laborers. They are used to haul fallen trees and as assistants in hunting. Elefgainths can also be trained as riding steeds. All of these tasks require Handle Animal checks against DC 20.

The ivory tusks of elefgaith and their predecessors have always been valuable. The humanoid tribes in areas where elefgaith now live often think of themselves as custodians of the ivory, protecting the animals from threats while they live and taking the ivory when the animals die. Outside poachers usually regard the animals as just so many targets; locals treat these ivory raiders as the worst enemies of all.

COMBAT

Rogue males sometimes initiate combat; other elefgainth do not. Mothers fight fiercely to protect their young; in general, elefgainth try to keep each other safe.

FENKUIN

Size/Type: Small Animal
Hit Dice: 1d8 (4 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 10
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 12 (+1 size, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–5
Primary Attack: Bite +0 melee (1d4–1)
Full Attack: Bite +0 melee (1d4–1)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: —
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities: Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6
Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +7
Feats: Alertness
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Immediate relatives
Environment: Any aquatic, near large rivers and marshes
Organization: Flock (2–12)
Challenge Rating: 1/2
Advancement: —

The bird resembles its penguin ancestors in most regards, though its feathers now include shades of gray and blue in addition to the older stark black and white.

DESCRIPTION

Fenkuin are stark white avians with beady red eyes. They are clumsy-looking, flightless birds, and are native to what was once known as South America. Awkward on land, they are quite agile in water. Fenkuin feed exclusively on fish and mollusks.

Originally salt-water avians, they are still quite comfortable surviving in the ocean. Today, however, due to large sea predators, they are primarily found in the interior rivers of the continent. They exude an oil which makes them unpalatable to the carnivorous fish of the region, but oddly this same oil makes them a delicacy to fid chicks.

Fenkuin are among the most social of all birds, living in "tribes" of 2 to 12 members. They communicate by vocalizing and performing physical behaviors called displays. Fenkuin swim and feed in groups, but some may be solitary when diving for food. They exhibit intricate courting and mate-recognition behavior. Elaborate visual and vocal displays help establish and maintain nesting territories.

The natural oils secreted by fenkuin are highly prized, not only by fid-chicks as a delicacy, but by other tribes for weather- and water-proofing. A Craft (chemical) check against DC 15 will extract sufficient oil from a single bird to waterproof a single set of clothes (shirt and pants, or boots and long coat) for a Medium humanoid. Two to 4 birds are required to waterproof a canoe or small boat, and up to a dozen birds are required to weatherproof a large tent.

COMBAT

Fenkuin are non-combatants. They flee aggressors, except when defending their young. In defense of their eggs or chicks, they will attack anyone who nears them, much less threatens them.

Skills: Fenkuin have a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special maneuvers or avoid hazards, and may choose to take 10 on Swim checks in dangerous situations.

KAI LIN

Size/Type: Large Mutant Plant
Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: —
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
Defense: 15 (+6 natural, –1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 15
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/+9
Primary Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d4+3 plus 1d6 electric)
Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d4+3 plus 1d6 electric), 2 claws –1 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 electric)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Acid, attraction odor, electricity generation, radiation immunity, radioactive vision
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 2
Skills: Climb +3, Hide +0, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Spot +3, Survival +2
Feats: Alertness, Stealthy
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: —
Environment: Any temperate and warm
Organization: Solitary or packs (2–20)
Challenge Rating: 5
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Large)

It looks like a green lizard or dinosaur until it is close enough to attack.

DESCRIPTION

Many victims of the kai lin only realize they have been killed by a plant when the creature begins to eat them with its roots instead of its mouth. Kai lin look like large bipedal lizards or dinosaurs. Closer examination shows that their scales are actually broad green leaves that crackle with static electricity; their mouths are filled with thorns; their straggly tail is made of woven branches; and their small forearms are more like gnarled and spiky branches.

Kai lin feed primarily on carrion. It is theorized by some that the lizard bushes were originally created by a symbiotic organism intended to merge with humans, for they have been observed to wrap their hollow bodies around corpses, pushing the dead arms inside their own arms, pulling the legs inside their own squat legs, and

gently settling their head over the body's head. This theory is lent credence by the fact that the kai lin's leaves are impervious to radiation. (Sadly, this property is lost when the leaves are removed from the plant.) Others contend that this corpse-straddling habit is just the most efficient way for the kai lin to extract all the nutrients from a piece of carrion, and that they are nothing more than hideously mutated aberrations from the glowing wastes.

If no carrion is to be found, the kai lin use their attraction odor mutation to draw prey close. They then charge in to attack, stunning foes with their electrical attacks. If any creatures are killed, the kai lin spray the bodies with digestive acid, then dig their root-toes in to feed. Particularly troublesome foes are blasted with the plant's radiation vision; this is a last-ditch effort, as using this ability is very draining to the lizard bushes.

Kai lin shy away from attacking organized communities, but commonly scavenge carrion from middens. Some buildings have been converted into radiation shelters by covering them in kai lin, but this requires a lot of patience and meat. Kai lin travel in groups of 1 to 4 plants. If there are more than two in a group, one plant will grow to twice normal size within a month and dominate the pack. This particular oddity is probably a survival mechanism to keep the packs alive, as the kai lin have no grasp of tactics and compete against each other savagely in the absence of a dominant plant.

Attraction Odor (Ex, Mut): Kai lin can produce an alluring scent. Any creature within half a mile of the lizard bush must make a DC 5 Will save or be drawn to the source of the odor. A character drawn to the odor may resist this compulsion, but she suffers a –1 penalty on all rolls while within half a mile of the kai lin.

Electricity Generation (Ex, Mut): Kai lin can generate an electric charge. Anyone struck by their bite or claw attacks takes an additional 1d6 points of electrical damage, and must make a Fortitude check (DC equal to the electricity damage inflicted) or be stunned for 1 round.

Radiation Immunity (Ex, Mut): Kai lin are immune to radiation damage.

Radioactive Vision (Ex, Mut): The eye-leaves of the kai lin can emit radiation, affecting everything within 30 feet in a 180-degree arc in front of the lizard bush. Everyone in the area of effect suffers 2d6 points of radiation damage (Reflex save DC 14 for half damage). Anyone who takes radiation damage from this attack must make must make Fortitude saves against a moderate mutagen and moderate radiation poisoning source (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutation* and Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "Types of Environment," *Radiation Poisoning*).

Activating this radioactive vision is a free action for the kai lin, but each use of radioactive vision inflicts 1d6 points of damage on the bush.

LEMMINK

Size/Type: Tiny Animal
Hit Dice: 1/2d8 (2 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 10
Initiative: +3
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
Defense: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 size), touch 15, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/–12
Primary Attack: Bite –2 melee (1d3–4)
Full Attack: Bite –2 melee (1d3–4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities: Swarm
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0
Abilities: Str 3, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3
Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2
Feats: Dodge
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Herd
Environment: Thuntra and adjacent regions
Organization: Herd (25+)
Challenge Rating: 1/10
Advancement: —

This tiny animal has a brown coat and moves in rapid, jerky motions.

DESCRIPTION

Lemminks are native to the thuntra. They are the smallest herbivores in this cold region, and easily the dumbest mammals in the region (and possibly any region). They are notable for two traits: First, they are incredibly proficient breeders, with a single breeding

pair multiplying into hundreds during the short growing season. Second, periodically, massive herds of lemminks will charge headlong into the frozen seas, thereby reducing the population to a minimum.

This alone would not be worth note except that when they stampede, they will charge straight for the ocean, trampling any person or settlement in the way. In addition, as they represent a food source to many of the carnivores in the region, this mass exodus leads to a general depopulation of the thuntra until the lemmink population rebuilds.

It is important to note that this stampeding behavior is the direct result of the application of viral biotech prior to the Fall. In a verbal account widely shared by thuntra tribes, the legendary (some say mythical) Heath Stuthend infected this species in order to demonstrate the complex interdependencies of life. The older, more cynical dwellers on the thuntra say instead that this was but one of Heath Stuthend's many and varied pranks.

Lemminks breed incredibly quickly. They have no concern for their young or their fellows. Their rush to their doom seems to be instinctive and with no planning on their part.

Despite their small size, lemminks are valued food sources on the tundra. A beneficial side-effect of their viral re-engineering is that they are incredibly high in protein. A single lemming can provide sufficient protein a single Medium humanoid for a day. In addition, their droppings have hallucinogenic properties. Some tribes say those that smoke the droppings are "running with the lemminks." A Craft (pharmaceuticals) check against DC 10 is required to properly prepare the droppings (ingested, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1 temporary Wis).

COMBAT

Lemminks are utterly harmless. They barely notice if they are attacked, much less if they should attack back. Even when they are stampeding to their doom, they will not notice anything in their path.

Swarm (Ex): When the lemminks thunder toward the sea, anything in the way of a direct path to the ocean suffers 1 point of damage each round it stands in the way. This damage ignores hardness and damage reduction. Lemminks only swarm in numbers of 500 or more.

MICROREEBDOR

Size/Type: Medium Animal
Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 17
Initiative: +1
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 10 ft. (poor)
Defense: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +2/+6
Primary Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d8+6)
Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d8+6)
Fighting Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities: Improved grab, speed burst
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills: Hide +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +2, Spot +6
Feats: Alertness, Stealthy
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Immediate relatives
Environment: Warm and temperate land
Organization: Solitary or family (2–10)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: 4–5 HD (Medium); 6–7 HD (Large)

The creature resembles the raptor family of dinosaurs, but with feathers and only about 3 feet long.

DESCRIPTION

A group of well-meaning ecologists, thought to include the legendary Heeth Stuthend, in the time before the end, experimented with genetics to recreate species long extinct. Microreebdors were the first and perhaps the most successful of these experiments. Since the winged dinosaurs were created before more advanced genetic reconstruction techniques were developed, an existing reptilian base stock was used. This existing base stock was one of the closest living relatives (at the time) to ancient dinosaurs.

The base stock also happened to be one of the more lethal predators in their native marshland environments. These creatures were infused with the genes of the lost, winged dinosaurs and microreebdors were reborn.

Unlike their base stock, microreebdors are more comfortable in the air than in the water. They are have wings extending from forelegs to rear legs, a powerful tail and even more powerful jaws. Fortunately for would-be prey, they are slow-moving and somewhat clumsy most of the time. Unfortunately for prey, they can exert themselves for short bursts of incredible speed and are quite successful hunters when they get surprise.

Microreebdors tend to be solitary or found in small family groups. These reborn dinosaurs are often accompanied by flocks of thile pirt.

COMBAT

Microreebdors prefer to allow their prey to come to them. They will lie in wait for a likely meal and then spring into action, hoping to surprise and capture their prey with their mighty jaws in a single action.

Speed Burst (Ex): A microreebdor can quadruple its speed for 1 round, once every 8 hours.

OCTHOFUS

Size/Type: Medium Evolved Animal
Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 13
Initiative: +3
Speed: Swim 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+3
Primary Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d4) or tentacle +7 melee (1d4) or harpoon gun +6 ranged (1d8)
Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d4), 2 tentacles +2 melee (1d4) or harpoon gun +6 ranged (1d8)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Scent
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills: Listen +6, Repair +5, Spot +6, Swim +8
Feats: Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (tentacles)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Family grouping
Environment: Any aquatic
Organization: Solitary or family group (2–10)
Challenge Rating: 2
Advancement: By character class

This eight-limbed creature has an alert gaze and tentacles adapted for fine manipulation.

DESCRIPTION

The tool-using octhofus evolved from a lesser species in the late pre-Gamma period. During this time, the ancestors of the modern octhofus were at the whim of humans and were kept in cages. At the time, men discovered that the proto-octhofus could work simple tools such as jars.

The "best and brightest" of humanity reasoned that if the "simple" creatures could be taught to open jars, then maybe they could be taught to use more complex tools. Further, if they could be taught to make open jars, perhaps under the proper circumstances they could be taught to make and repair them. Now obviously, traditional methods such as forging won't work underwater. However, in the years before the End, physicists had learned many manufacturing tricks and they taught these tricks to the octhofus.

Scientists were not the only ones interested in the octhofus; soldiers also expressed an interest. Specifically, they wanted access to trained octhofus to build secret underwater military structures. Militaries funded the training and provided the octhofus with resources. Unfortunately, the project worked both more and less well than hoped. The octhofus were incredible subjects. They learned quickly and thoroughly — so well that they were able to escape their enslavement and train others of their kind.

The now tool-using octhofus taught their offspring, as well as those of their kind they encountered, to use the tools they found so useful. They learned to make new tools from the old. Soon, where there once were "dumb animals" there was now a cargo cult of aquatic cephalopods. They scavenge sunken ships for metal and leather with which they make more tools and weapons.

Along the way, octhofus learned to communicate. They developed their own sign language that they use to coordinate and cooperate. Further, they learned to read human symbols. While not truly yet at the same level as humanity, they are on the cusp of becoming a sentient power in their own right.

In addition to tool-using, octhofus have developed herding and farming. They use tools made from stone, coral, leather and what metal they can gather from wrecks or trade for. Their communities exist in most oceans of the world, and single societies can stretch over miles of water. Some tribes are rumored to be building islands in the Pacific by transplanting corals and fish that they prefer to new regions.

They war on lesser, untrained octhofus and skaig. Around open-minded humans, they have begun to negotiate trade and peace treaties. Octhofus sign language is incredibly difficult for humans to master.

(Even when Octhofus sign language is taken as a Speak Language skill, it is difficult for any creature with limbs less flexible that tentacles to express anything beyond simple concepts. A Speak Language check may be required at the GM's option.) Treaties are most common in the regions near the nations once known as China and Japan, where there was a tradition of friendship with the sea. In these areas, clam and oyster beds are shared and mutually farmed. Octhofus trade shellfish for tools, and the productivity of both the octhofus and human communities has doubled or tripled.

Less civilized octhofus have been known to turn pirate, waging war on boats and small ships for tools, food and raw materials.

COMBAT

Octhofus are clever and organized in combat situations. They coordinate their attacks. They use ranged weapons to weaken their prey and only turn to their natural weapons if pressed.

Skills: Octhofus receive a +8 species bonus on Swim checks to perform special maneuvers or avoid hazards, and may always take 10 on Swim checks even in dangerous situations.

OCTHOFUS CHARACTERS

Octhofus characters have the following species traits.

— +2 Dexterity, –2 Charisma.

— An octhofus base swimming speed is 40 feet.

— Species Hit Dice: A octhofus begins with 3 levels of evolved animal, which provide 3d8 Hit Dice, a base attack bonus of +3, and base saving throw bonuses of Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1.

— Species Skills: Octhofus characters receive 4 fewer skill points at 1st level than humans, and 1 fewer skill point at every other level. Swim is always a class skill for octhofus, and they receive a +8 species bonus on Swim checks.

— Species Feats: Octhofus receive only 1 feat at 1st level, and do not receive a feat at 3rd level; they receive the usual number of bonus feats for their class levels.

— Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An octhofus is automatically proficient with archaic arms and armor.

— +2 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: Bite (1d4), 2 tentacles (1d4).

— Favored Class: Octhofus tend to be Fast heroes, though any physical class is likely. Other classes are rarer. They cannot take any class or use any feat or skill that requires verbalization.

— Level Adjustment: +0

OCTHOFUS, KIANTH

Size/Type: Large Evolved Animal
Hit Dice: 5d8+15 (37 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold: 17
Initiative: +1
Speed: Swim 40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense: 11 (+1 Dex, +1 natural, –1 size), touch 10, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+11
Primary Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6+4) or tentacle +7 melee (1d6+4) or heavy spear +6 melee (1d10+4)
Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6+4), 2 tentacles +2 melee (1d6+4) or heavy spear +6 melee (1d10+4)
Fighting Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities: Improved grab, scent
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities: Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +12
Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacles)
Action Points: —
Reputation: —
Allegiances: Family grouping
Environment: Any aquatic
Organization: Solitary or family (2–5)
Challenge Rating: 5
Advancement: 6–9 HD (Large); 10–12 HD (Huge)

These eight-limbed cephalopods are strong swimmers, and they carry heavy spears with barbaric decorations.

DESCRIPTION

Kianth octhofus are deep-water cousins of standard octhofus. They are bigger, meaner and less intelligent. They have not developed the ability to read or use sign language.

LAND OCTHOFUS

Octhofus require two classes of modifications to survive and operate effectively on land. They need to have their limbs strengthened or replaced to provide effective locomotion. In addition, and more importantly, they need to have their breathing functions altered or augmented to provide the ability to breathe in air. The Gamma Age provides two paths to these modifications: Cellular transformation (CT) and cyborging.

CT provides the option of the development of Frog Legs to aid an octhofus with locomotion. However, a single application of Frog Legs only provides an octhofus with sufficient leg strength to move at standard human pace. A second application further improves movement to the listed standard. The Lungs adaptation provides the ability to breath on land. This modification is effectively the same as the Gills adaptation, but trading breathing air for breathing water. Like Gills, if this mutation is taken twice, a octhofus becomes amphibious. Land octofus are considered mutants of the octhofus stock. They must choose 1 level of Frog Legs and Lungs (unless they convince the GM to let them identify an alternative method for overcoming their weaknesses on land), so will have only 1 minor mutation free at character generation.

Cybertech provides different options for adaptation. The cybernetic augmentation need for walking mobility can be treated as a Strength Enhancement of either the supplementary or substitutional kind, using the standard rules for such. Cybernetic lungs make a land octhofus amphibious. Their vital statistics are: **Initial/Maximum charge:** 4d6+6/30; **Depletion rate:** 1/day; **Recharge:** 10/2. Land octhofus who take the cyborg route sacrifice 2 of their starting feats (this is an exception to the standard cybertech at character creation rules) to possess the necessary modifications to survive on land. For more information, see the **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX.

PUBBAILO

Size/Type:	Large Animal
Hit Dice:	5d8+15 (37 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	16
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares)
Defense:	14 (+5 natural, –1 size), touch 9, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+3/+13
Primary Attack:	Slam +8 melee (2d4+6)
Full Attack:	Slam +8 melee (2d4+6)
Fighting Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Qualities:	Scent, trample (1d6+9)
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 22, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4
Skills:	Listen +5, Spot +3
Feats:	Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Herd
Environments:	Temperate and cooler grasslands
Organization:	Herd (10+)
Challenge Rating:	4
Advancement:	6–12 HD (Large); 13–19 HD (Huge)

These are huge, hoofed animals with shaggy coats in a wide range of colors —reds, golds and pale tans.

DESCRIPTION

Pubbailo are large, hairy quadrupeds. Native to temperate plains, the base stock were escapees from buffalo ranches that mated with the otherwise doomed domesticated cow. Originally a few dozen buffalo became "fugitives" when the world ended. Now, thousands of pubbailo thunder across the plains.

Communities that share territory with them view pubbailo with awe and respect. While the great herbivores are capable of great destruction, both individually and in herds, they also represent an incredible natural resource. Wise communities can draw a great deal of food, leather and other raw materials from even a single felled pubbailo and hunt them for these resources.

More than one tribe native to pubbailo plains use them as riding animals. The great beasts are tough to train (a Handle Animal check against DC 25 is required to teach them to accept a rider), but they are loyal to a master once broken. Since pubbailo rarely accept more than one master in a lifetime, most tribes have a great respect for a pubbailo-rider.

COMBAT

Pubbailo tend to be more dangerous by accident than by intention. Medium and smaller creatures unfortunate enough to be caught in a stampede of pubbailo are lucky to survive. However, pubbailo are not creatures to be taunted. If enraged, a solitary pubbailo will attempt to smash its enemy with its heavy skull. The goal of this attack is to knock the opponent to the ground where it can be trampled at the great beast's leisure.

RAICCOWN

Size/Type:	Small Animal
Hit Dice:	1d8 (4 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	10
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	50 ft. (10 squares), climb 30 ft.
Defense:	15 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–6
Primary Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d4–2) or claw +4 melee (1d3–2)
Full Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d4–2), 2 claws –1 melee (1d3–2)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Scent
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1
Abilities:	Str 7, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills:	Balance +4, Climb +6, Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Spot +2
Feats:	Weapon Finesse
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	All land except polar, desert and jungle
Challenge Rating:	1/3
Advancement:	—

The creature looks like a typical, if large, raccoon except that it has six limbs.

DESCRIPTION

Raiccown are six-limbed mammals native to temperate climates. Also known as hex-bandits, these striped animals are equally happily on land or climbing. They will typically use their rear four limbs for movement and their front limbs for incredible feats of manipulation.

If not discouraged by a community, these creatures raid containers of all sorts for food and shiny items, sometime even technology. They carry non-edible prizes back to their lairs and hide them there.

COMBAT

Raiccown prefer stealth to combat. They sneak around the edges of civilized societies, stealing food, scraps, and shiny objects. If cornered, they come on ferociously, attempting to surprise their opponents and then escape. If protecting their young, they fight to the death.

Skills: Raiccown have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks, maintain their Dexterity bonus to Defense when climbing, and may choose to take 10 on Climb checks even in dangerous situations.

Raiccown also have a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

SKAIG

Size/Type:	Medium Animal
Hit Dice:	3d8+3 (16 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	13
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	Swim 60 ft. (12 squares)
Defense:	15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13
Basic Attack/Grapple:	+2/+3
Primary Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +4 melee (1d6+1)
Fighting Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Scent
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills:	Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +9
Feats:	Dodge, Weapon Focus (bite)
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	—
Environment:	Open sea
Organization:	Solitary or school (5–10)
Challenge Rating:	3
Advancement:	4–7 HD (Large); 8–16 HD (Huge); 17–24 (Gargantuan); 25–32 (Colossal)

This fish is a fast, sharp-toothed creature with rough, gray skin.

DESCRIPTION

Skaigs are large, fast-swimming fish known for their many sharp teeth, distinctive dorsal fin, and skill in locating underwater prey. Like other fishes, skaigs are generally cold-blooded and breathe with gills. But unlike the more common bony fishes, which have skeletons made of rigid bone, skaigs have flexible internal skeletons made of cartilage. Skaigs have streamlined bodies that permit short bursts of movement through the water at high speeds. Their long bodies taper into a blunt or slightly pointed snout on one end and a powerful tail fin on the other. This shape reduces drag in the water, enabling skaigs to glide gracefully, expending minimal energy as they swim.

These aquatic carnivores can be found in nearly any ocean in the world. The key to their success is that they reproduce parthenogenically. That is, a single skaig can bear live young without ever encountering another skaig. Despite the efforts of sea-going beings to exterminate them, skaig always come back.

Skaigs, like other fishes, sometimes congregate in large groups. This schooling behavior is thought to aid in protection and feeding.

Skaig seem to be natural, intuitive enemies of octhofus

Skaigskin is highly sought after for the construction of armor. A successful DC 20 Craft (mechanical) check provides skaigskin armor equivalent to leather armor.

COMBAT

No matter where they live, skaigs play a crucial role in their ecosystems. As highly efficient predators, skaigs keep ecosystem populations in check by hunting and killing other animals, particularly those that are weak or diseased. Skaig are consummate killers. They seem to be always hungry and always looking for a next meal. Skaig are attracted by blood and quickly swarm into a feeding frenzy by the smell of such. As a group, skaigs eat almost anything, very much including other skaigs. Fish is the primary food of preference for skaigs, although they also eat mollusks and crustaceans such as crabs and shrimps. Skaigs often select weakened or diseased members of a population of prey because they are easier to catch and kill. Some skaigs eat the dead

and putrefying flesh of other marine animals. Skaigs often circle their prospective prey, sometimes bumping it with their snout or their pectoral fins. Most skaigs then seize their prey in their powerful hinged jaws. As they bite down, the lower teeth puncture and hold the prey in place, while the upper teeth tear it into pieces.

THILE PIRT

Size/Type:	Tiny Animal
Hit Dice:	1/2d8 (2 hp)
Massive Damage Threshold:	10
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	10 ft. (2 squares), fly 30 ft. (good)
Defense:	14 (+2 Dex, +2 size), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus/Grapple:	+0/–13
Primary Attack:	—
Full Attack:	—
Fighting Space/Reach:	2 1/2 ft./2 1/2 ft.
Special Qualities:	—
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 7
Skills:	Listen +8, Spot +8
Feats:	Alertness
Action Points:	—
Reputation:	—
Allegiances:	Immediate relatives
Environment:	Near microreebdors
Organization:	Flock (3–12)
Challenge Rating:	1/10
Advancement:	—

The bird is small and white, and nearly always found near the microreebdors it grooms.

DESCRIPTION

Thile pirt have developed a tendency to collect shiny bits that are left over after a microreebdor's meal. These knickknacks are collected and stored in the nest they share with the microreebdor. If an adventurer braves the nest, they may find useful metal items (but none larger than the thile pirt). In addition, some tribes prize thile pirt feathers for making pillows and other stuffed items. In such tribes, a thile pirt down pillow is both a sign of affluence and bravery, as only the bravest warrior would brave a microreebdor's nest to collect feathers for a pillow.

COMBAT

Thile pirt are non-combatants and will flee at the first sign of aggression. They prefer to allow their microreebdor companions do the fighting for them and to dine on the leftovers.

ENVIRONMENTAL TEMPLATES

THUNTRA

Those non-migratory species that dwell in the thuntra have developed distinct strategies to withstand the harsh conditions. The year-round residents of the thuntra include a small number of bird and mammal species. Their adaptations come in three categories: morphological, physiological and those related to population.

The bodies of creatures native to the thuntra have large, compact bodies; a thick insulating cover of feathers or fur; and pelage and plumage that turns white in winter, brown in summer.

Physiologically, they have the ability to accumulate thick deposits of fat during the short growing season. Fat acts as insulation and as a store of energy for use during the winter.

There tend to be cyclical fluctuations in population size, best seen perhaps in the lemmink, a small rodent that is the major herbivore in the thuntra's simple food chain. Predator populations and plant populations respond in kind to the peaks and crashes of the herbivore populations.

Migratory species adapt to the thuntra by avoiding the most severe conditions of winter. Each year, at the end of the short growing season, they move southward, but return to the thuntra to breed each year. Such species do not inherit and may not acquire this template.

THUNTRA TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Thuntra" is an inherited template that may be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Size/Type: The base creature gains 1 size category.

Hit Dice: The base creature gains at least 1 Hit Die. If they do not have the minimum number of Hit Dice for a base creature of their new size, they are automatically increased to the minimum Hit Dice.

Defense: The base creature gains a +2 natural armor bonus.

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: As base creature, increased according to its new size and Hit Dice.

Attacks: As base creature, increased according to its new size and Hit Dice.

Damage: The base creature's damage is increased according to its size and Hit Dice gain.

Special Qualities: The base creature maintains all its special qualities and gains the following:

Thuntra Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the thuntra gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in the thuntra. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the intense cold of the thuntra and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid damage from natural cold.

Saves: As the base creature, increased according to its new size and Hit Dice.

Abilities: As the base creature, modified according to its new size.

Skills: The base creature gains +5 ranks in Hide.

Challenge Rating: As base creature, +1

Thuntra Pubbailo: CR 6; Huge animal; HD 6d8+18; hp 45; Mas 20; Init –1; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 14, touch 7, flat-footed 13 (–1 Dex, +7 natural, –2 size); BAB +8; Grap +14; Atk +15 melee (slam 2d4+10); Full Atk +15 melee (slam 2d4+10); FS 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SQ scent, thuntra adaptation, trample; AL none; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 30, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +3, Hide –4

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Advancement: 7–12 HD (Large); 13–19 HD (Huge)

Thuntra pubbailo are large, hairy quadrupeds, white in the winter and brown during the brief summer. Thuntra communities prize them even more highly than temperate communities prize their lesser brethren, as they can draw a great deal of food, leather and other raw materials from even a single felled pubbailo.

THEEKA

Fur-bearing predators are perhaps most characteristic of the theeka. The mammalian herbivores on which they feed include various forms of rodent.

Large herbivores are associated with regions of the theeka where more nutritious browse is available, and include large-antlered members of the deer family. Aquatic mammals are also creatures of the theeka and their homes can be found in and around streams in these regions.

Among birds, insect-eaters are migratory and leave after the breeding season. Seed-eaters and omnivores tend to be year-round residents. During poor cone years, normal avian residents leave the theeka in winter.

THEEKA TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Theeka" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Special Qualities: The base creature maintains all its special qualities and gains the following:

Theeka Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the theeka gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in theeka climate zones. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the intense cold of the theeka and as such do not need to makes Fortitude saves to avoid damage from natural cold.

Challenge Rating: As base creature.

Theeka Raiccown: CR 1/3; Small animal; HD 1d8; hp 5; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 50 ft., climb 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size); BAB +0; Grap –6; Atk +4 melee (bite 1d4–2) or +4 melee (claw 1d3–2); Full Atk +4 melee (bite 1d4–2), –1 melee (2 claws 1d3–2); FS 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ scent, theeka adaptations; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 7, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +13, Jump +4, Listen +8, Spot +8, Balance +10, Climb +13

Feats: Weapon Finesse

Advancement: —

Theeka Raiccown are six-limbed like their temperate brethren. They tend to be brown in coloration during warmer months and white in coloration during the winter months. While they are quite capable at climbing, they prefer to lumber along the ground on all six legs, only rising up on four to defend themselves. Like standard raiccown, they sneak around the edges of civilized societies, stealing food, scraps and shiny objects. If cornered, they attack ferociously, attempting to surprise their opponents and then escape.

TEMPERATE FOREST

Creatures native to the temperate forest tend to be either nut and acorn feeders or omnivores. Many mammals show adaptations to an arboreal life, while a few hibernate during the winter months. Carnivores had once been largely eliminated through the deliberate effort of humans, but since the beginning of the Gamma Age they have returned in significant numbers.

Given the return of predators, the successful native species of the temperate forest can be classified into two groups. One group has developed enhanced alertness to help them avoid the predators. The other group has developed a general toughness that gives them a slight edge in surviving attacks. Both the

toughness and the alertness are generally attributed to natural selection. That is, the toughest and most perceptive creatures survived to breed where their fellows did not.

TEMPERATE FOREST TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Temperate Forest" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Speed: Add climb at 10 feet slower than the base creature's base speed.

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all of its special qualities and gains the following:

Temperate Forest Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the temperate forest gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in such forests.

Skills: Add 8 ranks of Climb to the base creature's skills.

Feats: Add either Alertness or Toughness.

Challenge Rating: +1

Temperate Forest Microreebdor: CR 3; Medium animal; HD 3d8+9 plus 3 (Toughness feat); hp 25; Mas 17; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 10 ft. (poor), climb 10 ft.; Defense 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); BAB +2; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (bite 1d8+6); Full Atk +6 melee (bite 1d8+6); FS 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ improved grab, speed burst, temperate forest adaptation; AL —; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Hide +5, Climb +12.

Feats: Toughness.

Advancement: 4–5 HD (Medium); 6–7 HD (Large)

Temperate forest microreebdor are equally lethal cousins to their marshland base stock. They tend to be a bit more aggressive than standard microreebdors as a result of the need to compete with other predators in the biome.

MEDITERRANEAN

The fauna of this biome — including those far from the Mediterranean Sea itself, like those living in dry warm regions of western North America — are characterized more by isolation than by peculiar adaptations to the Mediterranean environment. The Mediterranean biome is characterized by evergreen or deciduous shrublands. In some areas the growth extends to larger trees and hard leaf forests, as well as aromatic plants. The vegetation must be hardy and drought-resistant and includes evergreens, cacti, olive and fruit trees, and cork oak, among others. Small, hard needles are an asset in this environment, as well as plants with

small leathery leaves. Aromatic plants and herbs do well in this biome. These aromatics do contain highly flammable oils that could contribute to forest fires.

The Mediterranean biome houses many forms of herbivorous wildlife such as wild goats, sheep, cattle, mouflon and horses. The land also supports lynx, wild boar, rabbits, vultures and eagles. Many small mammals, reptiles and insects inhabit this region. Local tribes graze goats, sheep, cattle, donkeys and horses in these rugged areas.

Animals have adapted to this sparse and rough terrain by becoming agile climbers, foraging over larger areas, and varying their diet to include the brush. Plants have adapted by storing water through thick bark or waxy coverings, and by growing thorns to prevent animals from eating them. Adaptations also include regeneration after fire.

MEDITERRANEAN TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Mediterranean" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all of its special qualities and adds the following:

Mediterranean Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to Mediterranean regions gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in Mediterranean areas. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the summer heat and humidity of the Mediterranean, and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid natural heat damage.

Skills: Add 2 ranks of Climb, or improve existing Climb skill by +1.

Challenge Rating: As base creature

Mediterranean Fenkuin: CR 1/2; Small animal; HD 1d8; hp 4; Mas 10; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., swim 40 ft.; Defense 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 natural, +1 size); BAB +0; Grap –5; Atk +0 melee (bite 1d4–1); Full Atk +0 melee (bite 1d4–1); FS 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Mediterranean adaptation; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb –1, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness.

Advancement: —

Mediterranean Fenkuin are dirty grey avians who enjoy sunning themselves on rocks. Like their cousins, they are clumsy-looking, flightless birds, awkward on land but agile in water.

DRY GRASSLAND

The dry grassland fauna is very low in diversity, especially in comparison with tropical grasslands or savannas. They are dominated by grasses rather than large shrubs or trees, just as the name suggests.

Grasslands are generally open and continuous, fairly flat areas of grass. The height of grass correlates with the amount of rainfall it receives. Grasslands receive about 19 to 35 inches of rain per year compared to deserts, which receive less than 11 inches and tropical forests, which receive more than 78 inches. The grasses die back to their roots annually, and the soil and sod protect the roots and new buds from the cold of winter or dry conditions. A few trees may be found in this biome along the streams, but not many due to the lack of rainfall.

During particularly dry or wet seasons, it can be difficult to distinguish the grasslands from the desert and the tropical forests, respectively. However, the temperatures tend to be more temperate and the vegetation less varied in the grassland than in either of the other biomes. Inexperienced travelers may find themselves passing from one biome to another without warning, particularly if nanounits have not shaped distinct boundaries.

Among the dominant herbivores of dry grasslands are pubbailo. Rodent herbivores tend to be ground-dwellers. Carnivores are also prevalent.

Given the wide variety of toxins and mutagens beneath the earth in most Gamma Age grasslands, the species native to this biome tend to be resistant to poisons and mutation.

DRY GRASSLAND TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Dry Grassland" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all special qualities and gains the following:

Dry Grassland Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the dry grassland gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in the dry grassland. Such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the summer heat and winter cold of the dry grassland and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid damage from natural cold or heat. In addition, creatures with this adaptation gain a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against mutation and poisoning.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature.

Dry Grassland Lemmink: CR 1/10; Tiny animal; HD 1/2d8; hp 2; Mas 10; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 15, touch 15, flat-

footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 size); BAB +0; Grap –12; Atk –2 melee (bite 1d3–4); Full Atk –2 melee (bite 1d3–4); FS 2 ft.; Reach 2 ft.; SQ dry grassland adaptation, swarm; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 3, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 3.

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2.

Feats: Dodge.

Advancement: —

No one is certain how the lemmink came to the dry grassland, or how it survived. What is known is that they supplanted prairie dogs in the ecosystem. Though their population ebbs and flows much like the thuntra variation, this is due more to being crushed beneath pubbailo stampedes than from any self-destructive urges. They share the nutritive and hallucinogenic properties of their cousins.

TROPICAL GRASSLAND

The world's greatest variety of natural animals is found in tropical grasslands or savannas. Breeds of antelopes, pubbailo, and other herbivores are particularly numerous and varied. Up to 16 grazing and browsing species may coexist in the same area. They divide the resources spatially and temporally, each with its own food preferences, grazing/browsing height, time of day or year to use a given area, and different dry season refuges.

The species-rich tropical grasslands also support a diverse set of carnivores, including several breeds of cats and dogs. Most herbivorous mammals of the open savannas are herd animals, often organized into groups of females and their young, with a single dominant male and groups of bachelor males. Animals native to the savanna include the Gamma Age descendants of giraffes, zebras, buffaloes, kangaroos, mice, moles, gophers, ground squirrels, snakes, worms, termites, beetles, lions, leopards, hyenas and elephants. Smaller browsers such as zeprais and eendelobe allow themselves to be driven off by predators such as leofaits. The predators in turn yield to larger grazers such as pubbailo and hireeppe, who, while not overtly aggressive, brook no nonsense from smaller creatures. After sundown, the day creatures described above yield the plains to the creatures of the Gamma Age night, including grazers such as hainkaow and predators such as kyenee.

TROPICAL GRASSLAND TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Tropical Grassland" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Special Qualities: The base creature retains its special qualities and gains the following:

Tropical Grassland Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the tropical grassland gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in the tropical grassland. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the intense heat of the tropical grassland and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid natural heat damage.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature.

Tropical Grassland Thile Pirt: CR 1/8; Tiny animal; HD 1/2d8; hp 2; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (good); Defense 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 size); BAB +0; Grap –13; Atk —; Full Atk —; FS 2 1/2 ft.; Reach 2 1/2 ft.; SQ tropical grassland adaptation; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 7.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8.

Feats: Alertness.

Advancement: —

The thile pirt of the tropical grassland are independent of microreebdor, unlike their standard cousins. Instead, they associate with any large animal (predator or grazer) that they find convenient. Families of tropical grassland thile pirt tend to live, grow and die in association with a single host animal.

TROPICAL RAINFOREST

Animal life is highly diverse in the tropical rainforest. Common characteristics found among mammals and birds (and reptiles and amphibians, too) include adaptations to an arboreal life (for example, the prehensile tails of New World monkeys), bright colors and sharp patterns, loud vocalizations, and diets heavy in fruits.

The first-time visitor to the rainforest may find the biome overwhelming. Newcomers often claim that they did not know what life was until they experienced the rainforest. Merely stepping into a rainforest is a feast for the senses. Sweet scents of fruit and rotting vegetation compete with the pungent perfumes of flowers. A veritable spectrum of greens is liberally splotched with reds and yellows and blues from plants, birds and insects. Monkeys hoot from trees and birds squawk to be heard over them. In the distance, larger beasts roar challenges to one another.

TROPICAL RAINFOREST TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Tropical Rainforest" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter referred to as the base creature).

Speed: Same as base creature; add climb at 10 feet slower than base creature's base speed rate.

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all special qualities and gains the following:

Tropical Rainforest Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the tropical rainforest gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in the tropical rainforest. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the intense heat and humidity of the rainforest and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid natural heat damage. They suffer no penalties to movement in the jungle. Finally, they are brightly colored, predominantly red, green or blue.

Skills: As base creature, add climb +5.

Challenge Rating: As base creature, +1.

Tropical Rainforest Fenkuin: CR 1; Small animal; HD 1d8; hp 4; Mas 10; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., swim 40 ft.; Defense 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 natural, +1 size); BAB +0; Grap –5; Atk +0 melee (bite 1d4–1); Full Atk +0 melee (bite 1d4–1); FS 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ tropical rainforest adaptation; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AP 0; Rep 0; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +4, Spot +4.

Feats: Alertness.

Advancement: —

The fenkuin of the tropical rainforest are brightly colored tree-dwellers. They nest in vegetation near rivers, diving from their roosts to catch fish. Of the breeds of fenkuin, they are the most attractive. They look quite humorous clambering up trees, but are quite beautiful frolicking in the sparkling waters.

HOT DESERT

The animals of the hot desert have evolved an array of strategies for dealing with aridity. They have developed behavioral adaptations such as being nocturnal or crepuscular (active during dawn and dusk twilight conditions), and being fossorial (burrowing). Morphological adaptations include size, shape and color alterations. To help warm-blooded animals better radiate body heat, body sizes are small and appendages long. Pelage and plumage is light colored to reflect sunlight and help prevent the absorption of heat from the environment. Rarer, but equally important, are physiological adaptations such as aestivation (dormancy during summer), the absence of sweat glands, the concentration of urine, localized deposits of fat in tails or humps; and salt glands to secrete salt without losing fluids.

Reptiles tend to have waterproof skin, produce uric acid instead of urine, lay hard-shelled eggs, the ability to gain body heat directly from the sun, and to retreat to shade or underground to avoid heat. These adaptations are exceptionally useful in the hot desert and thus reptiles are quite diverse in such regions.

Many birds in hot deserts simply fly to free water and so are not limited by the lack of open water. They maintain breeding seasons like other temperate zone birds, synchronized by changing photoperiods. In regions where this is not practical, bird populations synchronize their migration and breeding readiness according to cues of rainfall, however erratic and sporadic that may be.

HOT DESERT TEMPLATE TRAITS

"Hot Desert" is an inherited template that can be applied to any animal, evolved animal or mutant beast (hereafter known as the base creature).

Size and Type: The creature loses one size category.

Hit Dice: The creature loses at least 1 Hit Die. If they already have only a single Hit Die or fewer, they are reduced to the next smaller fraction (1 to 1/2, 1/2 to 1/3, etc.).

Defense: The creature gains +1 natural armor.

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: As base creature, modified according to size and Hit Dice loss.

Attacks: As base creature, modified according to size and Hit Dice loss.

Damage: The base creature's damage is decreased according to size loss.

Special Qualities: The base creature retains all special qualities and gains the following:

Hot Desert Adaptation (Ex): Creatures native to the hot desert gain a +5 competence bonus on Survival rolls to find water, shelter, or edible plants or animals in the hot desert. Additionally, such creatures do not suffer from the effects of the intense heat and sun of the desert, and as such do not need to make Fortitude saves to avoid natural heat damage.

Saves: As base creature, modified according to size and Hit Dice loss.

Abilities: As per base creature, modified for size loss.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature.

Hot Desert Elefgainth: CR 2; Small evolved animal; HD 1d8+4; hp 13; Mas 11; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; Defense 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +9 natural); BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee

(slam 2d4+1) or melee +2 (gore 1d6+1); Full Atk +2 (slam 2d4+1), –3 melee (gore 1d6+1); FS 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ hot desert adaptation, scent; AL —; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +3, Survival +3.

Feats: Track.

Advancement: 2–3 HD (Medium)

Desert Elefgainths are small, mammalian quadrupeds characterized by long, muscular snouts and two long, curved tusks. They are highly intelligent and strong, and are among the longest-lived land animals with life spans of 60 years or more. Other than their smaller size and thicker hide, they are similar in behavior to standard elefgainth.

CHAPTER FOUR
CHARACTERS

The heroes and adventurers of the Gamma Age are a motley and unusual group, armed with technological marvels and sharp sticks, mutant powers and unreliable knowledge, impossible science and invincible courage. In the course of determining their destinies, many of these heroes pit themselves against the mutants and bizarre creatures of the unpredictable wilderness — and some of them *are* the mutants and bizarre creatures in question. The **Gamma World Player's Handbook** presented all the information players needed to creature human heroes and their communities. But as this book shows, there are other beings than humans in the Gamma Age, and their involvement in a campaign opens up new possibilities.

MUTATIONS, POWERS AND SPECIES ABILITIES

What's "normal?" Not the inhabitants of the Gamma Age, that's for certain. Even pure-strain humans, the most genetically pure beings on the planet, can still mutate and change, gaining incredible powers (and hideous defects). Most **Gamma World** characters can expect to pick up at least one mutation, psionic power or other abnormal ability in their course of their careers. As for non-human characters, these members of intelligent mutated species all possess a certain number of mutations, and are just as likely as humans to change even further.

In *d20 Modern*, supernormal qualities usually act in a predictable way, much like a weapon or piece of equipment. And just like a tool or weapon, some characters are better at using their special powers than others, thanks to greater experience or dedication to mastering their abilities. Mutations and powers come with limits on range, save DCs and other factors, and these can improve as characters gain experience. Some aspects increase automatically, while others require specific feats for improvement.

LEVEL ADJUSTMENTS

Creatures with 1 or less HD replace their monster levels with their character levels. The monster loses the attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, skills, and feats granted by its 1 monster HD and gains the attack bonus, save bonuses, skills, feats, and other class abilities of a 1st-level character of the appropriate class.

Characters with more than 1 Hit Die because of their race do not get a feat for their first class level as members of the common races do, and they do not multiply the skill points for their first class level by four. Instead, they have already received a feat for their first Hit Die because of race, and they have already multiplied their racial skill points for their first Hit Die by four.

To determine the effective character level (ECL) of a monster character, add its level adjustment to its racial Hit Dice and character class levels.

Use ECL instead of character level to determine how many experience points a monster character needs to reach its next level. Also use ECL to determine starting wealth for a monster character.

SAVING THROWS FOR POWERS

When coming up with a new power or special ability, it's up to the GM (working with the players) to decide on the details of the power — its range, damage caused, effects and the like. Saving throws, though, conform to a specific formula, based on the character's experience and her natural talent for the governing ability. The DC for the saving throw is:

10 + the character's appropriate ability modifier + 1/2 the character's total levels

Only four abilities are used to determine saving throws: Strength modifies saves based on raw power, like trample attacks; Dexterity modifies saves based on movement or ranged attacks; Constitution modifies saves against products of the character's body, like poisons; and Charisma modifies saves based on force of personality, like charm effects.

So if a 6th-level character with Cha 13 has a mutant compulsion power that required a save, the DC would be 10 + 1 (Cha) + 3 (1/2 of 6) = 14. The DC will increase as the character gains levels or if her Charisma modifier increases.

Monster characters treat skills mentioned in their monster entry as class skills.

If a monster has 1 Hit Die or less, or if it is a template creature, it must start the game with one or more class levels, like a regular character. If a monster has 2 or more Hit Dice, it can start with no class levels (though it can gain them later).

Even if the creature is of a kind that normally advances by Hit Dice rather than class levels a PC can gain class levels rather than Hit Dice.

NEW FEATS

The following feats work to increase the power, magnitude or flexibility of a character's mutations or innate powers. They cannot be used to improve the effects of biotech implants or grafts.

DESTRUCTIVE POWER

Your mutant powers inflict more damage on targets.

Prerequisites: A mutation, psychic power or other special quality that inflicts hit point damage on a target.

Benefit: The power does an additional die of damage.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

EXTENSIVE POWER

Your power affects a greater area than normal.

Prerequisites: A mutation, psychic power or other special quality that affects an area.

Benefit: The radius of the power's area of effect increases by 10 feet.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

FREQUENT POWER

You can use a mutant ability more frequently before exhausting your power.

Prerequisites: A mutation, psychic power or other special quality that is usable only a limited number of times per day.

Benefit: You gain 1 additional use of the power each day.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

HEIGHTENED POWER

Your mutant powers are more difficult for your targets to resist.

Prerequisites: A mutation, psychic power or other special quality that causes an opponent to make a saving throw.

Benefit: The DC of the save to resist the power is increased by +2.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

LINGERING POWER

The effects of your power last longer than normal.

Prerequisites: A mutation, psychic power or other special quality which has a duration measured in rounds.

Benefit: The duration of the power doubles. If the power has a duration determined by a die roll, double the number of dice rolled and any bonus added to the roll.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

TRENCHANT POWER

Your psionic power is more effective at overcoming power resistance.

Prerequisites: A psionic power that can be affected by power resistance.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on level checks made to overcome power resistance when using this power.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (minimum of 1).

VIRULENT POWER

Your natural poisons or ability damaging powers are more effective, weakening your targets even more than usual.

Prerequisites: A poison, mutation or other special quality that inflicts ability damage.

Benefit: The special quality inflicts more ability damage, according to the following table.

Original Damage Rating	New Damage Rating
1 point	1d2
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	2d4
2d4	2d6

This feat cannot raise the ability damage value any higher than 2d6.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you must apply it to a specific power or ability. A specific power can only be improved with this feat a limited number of times, up to a maximum of the character's appropriate ability bonus (usually Constitution, minimum of 1).

EXISTING FEATS

A number of the feats in *d20 Modern* can be applied to a character's mutations or special powers.

Feats that improve a character's general ability with ranged attacks, such as Far Shot or Precise Shot, also affect powers that require a ranged attack roll. Feats that specifically improve a character's ability with firearms, such as Double Tap or Strafe, do *not* affect such powers.

Weapon Finesse can be applied to all natural weapons, claws and fangs as well as larger weapons like horns. Weapon Focus can apply to any power that requires an attack roll, such as claws or laser eyebeams.

Feats that give a character a bonus on one or more skills affect all the uses of that skill. For instance, if a power requires a Treat Injury roll, a character with the Medical Expert feat gets a +2 bonus on the check when using the power.

OTHER THAN HUMAN

Humans were alone in the world once, but that was a long time ago, before the Final Wars brought new forms of intelligent life into being. Now humanity lives alongside a staggering variety of sentient, tool-using species, species with no more than a few chromosomes in common with the human species. And yet, many of these creatures are not so different from humans, once you get past the extra limbs and acidic blood — especially since plenty of humans have the same mutations. Non-human species have the same thirst for knowledge, the same desire for power and success, and the same potential for heroism as humans, and can be worthy **Gamma World** characters.

With the GM's permission, a player can choose to play a member of a non-human species instead of a human character. Such a character is created in almost exactly the same way as a human character: The player determines the character's ability scores, chooses the character's class levels, selects feats and skills and so on. The character's species will affect several aspects, including raising and lowering ability scores, decreasing the number of feats or skill points the character has, limiting choices of occupation, and adding predetermined special qualities or mutant powers, but the process is largely unchanged from that shown in the *d20 Modern* rulebook and the **Gamma World Player's Handbook**.

Many species are suitable as player character species in most **Gamma World** campaigns. Particularly promising ones have notes on characters of their type in the entries in preceding chapters. A 3rd-level character of such a species is an exceptional member of that species, on a par with a 3rd-level human character. GMs may decide to allow players to create characters of other species as well.

THE CHOSEN FEW

Previous chapters of **Machines & Mutants** have described the *average* members of several non-human species. The stat block, ability scores, Hit Dice and special abilities of those species are the values for nine-tenths of the members of that species. Player characters from that species are

exceptional and highly skilled, but they aren't necessarily more powerful than their fellows — they're *different*, but not better in every way. Only once the character gains more experience (and levels) will they fully outstrip their kin.

In many *d20* games, racial abilities and benefits are *added* to a creature's class levels, making the character more powerful than a human character of the same level. As an optional method for **Gamma World**, though, the class levels *replace* many of the species benefits. A character's individual skills and learned abilities are more important than their ancestry in a world where *anyone* can have mutations and abnormal powers.

Most **Gamma World** characters start play at 3rd level, and non-human characters are no exception. Players of such a character should make the character as normal, replacing the creature's Hit Dice, skill bonuses, save bonuses and other features with the benefits of the character's class levels. So a 3rd-level hisser character, for instance, has 3 Hit Dice just like any other hisser, but those Hit Dice are set by his class levels, rather than automatically being the average 3d8 that other hissers possess. This process produces non-human characters that are similar but different to their kindred, rather than being out-and-out better than their fellows, while 3rd-level human characters are notably more experienced than the average human (who only has 1 class level). Non-human heroes still possess notable advantages over their cousins, such as action points, class talents, bonus feats, higher Defense, a reputation bonus, and better equipment.

If a GM decides to run a campaign where characters start at a higher or lower level, other species become viable options. A low-powered campaign featuring 1st-level characters could include a badder as a PC, while a high-powered campaign might encompass menarl or yexil PCs.

ADVANCED CLASSES

The heroes of the Gamma Age all have one thing in common: they live in a world of wonders and terrors, surrounded by the bizarre fauna, flora and machines of a reality gone mad. Some may retreat from the dangers of the world, staying within the confines of one community and the comprehensible lives of their own kind. Heroes rarely have that option. Destiny is not a homebody, and an adventurer's fate will almost always draw him into new and unexplored territory, and demand he fight, negotiate and ally himself with the other species of the world.

The following advanced classes are for characters who want to interact with the other species, sentient or monstrous, of **Gamma World**. "Interact" is, of course, a fairly vague word, and it can mean a lot of things. Some of these classes are for warriors who pit themselves against unfriendly mutants or rampaging robots. Others are for heroes who would sooner build bridges than burn them, who seek to understand both the sentient and animalistic creatures of the Gamma Age.

AGENT

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Despite all the chaos and danger of the Gamma Age, sentient beings still tend more towards war than peace, aggression rather than alliance. Dozens of sentient species now walk the earth, but most treat their neighbors with suspicion rather than friendship. There's still a need for spies and information gatherers to ferret out the secrets of hostile, possibly hostile and even friendly powers — and that task becomes all the more difficult when your spy is of a different *species* than the culture she's investigating.

An Agent is a strange mix of spy, investigator and anthropologist, who discovers the secrets of other species while living in their midst. Agents tend to operate under cover identities that explain their presence in a foreign species' community, such as a trader, mercenary or adventurer. Some Agents operate more openly, admitting that they have come to gather information (if not secrets) to foster interracial understanding. Agents don't have to work for their community; some do it simply to assuage their own curiosity or foster their own plans.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be very good at finding out information about people, cultures and places, and to do so while staying undiscovered.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Dedicated hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an Agent, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

Skills: Gather Information 2 ranks, Investigate 2 ranks, Spot 4 ranks.

Feats: Deceptive.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Agent advanced class.

Hit Die

The Agent gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Agent gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Agent's class skills are:

Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (data and operations systems) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (gossip, politics, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Read/Write Language (any), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (any), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Agent advanced class.

Cultural Study

At 1st level the Agent selects a specific culture, species or community and learns all she can about it. She must be able to speak or read that culture's language in order to select it. She gains a +1 competence bonus on Decipher Script, Gather Information, Research and Sense Motive checks made against members of that culture or that concern that culture. The bonus rises to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 8th level.

Inscrutable Foreigner

At 2nd level, the Agent gets a +2 competence bonus on Bluff checks, but only when using the skill against sentient beings of a different species. Through emphasizing differences in culture, worldview and mindset, the Agent convinces the target that her actions are honest and benign, but that her foreign nature makes her impossible to understand. The bonus increases to +4 at 7th level.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Agent gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Agent must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Attentive, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Confident, Focused, Heroic Focus, Improved Feint, Iron Will, Low Profile, Meticulous, Nanotech Attunement, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Psionic Potential, Stealthy, Trustworthy.

Hide Thoughts

At 4th level, an Agent becomes so adept at dissembling and deception that she can even

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Cultural study	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Inscrutable foreigner	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Hide thoughts	+2	+0
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Further study	+3	+1
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Web of contacts	+4	+1
8th	+6	+2	+2	+6	Instinctive strike	+4	+1
9th	+6	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+3	+3	+7	Universally connected	+5	+2

disguise her thoughts, protecting her mind from being telepathically read. The Agent gains power resistance of 10 + her character level, but only against attempts to read her mind. Other psionic powers and abilities are not affected.

Further Study

At 5th level the Agent becomes familiar with a second species or culture, as per the Cultural Study ability. Again, she must be able to speak or read that culture's language in order to select it. The bonus from Cultural Study applies to both cultures.

Web of Contacts

At 7th level the Agent has established a network of contacts, informants and helpers throughout the culture she is infiltrating. Spend 1 action point to make a favor check, with a favor bonus equal to the character's class level. The check can only be made in the community or species that the Agent is operating in. If the character has a favor bonus from another basic or advanced class, that bonus stacks with this ability.

Instinctive Strike

At 8th level, the Agent has developed a sixth sense about species other than her own, a gut feeling which gives her an edge in combat with such aliens. She adds her Wisdom bonus to her total attack bonus for attacks made against a sentient species *other* than her own. The bonus only applies to appropriate aberrations, humanoids and mutant humanoids, never to other creature types, and only if the agent is proficient with the weapon she uses (if any).

Universally Connected

At 10th level, the Agent's contact network is so extensive that she can probably find a contact or temporary ally anywhere in the world. She can spend 1 action point to make a favor check in any location, and her favor bonus is equal to her total character level. If the character has a favor bonus from another basic or advanced class, that bonus stacks with this ability.

HYBRID DIPLOMAT

Perhaps the biggest obstacle facing inter-species relationships is understanding, or rather the lack thereof. It's usually easier for humans to trust a hostile community of other humans than a friendly community of non-human mutants, because at least they *know* what the antagonistic humans are like. Trust and understanding requires someone who can interact with both species, who can truly comprehend both species and work to bring them together. Thanks to the miracle of biotech, such a being can exist: a human being who becomes, if only partially, a member of another species.

A Hybrid Diplomat is a human so determined to bring his people into alliance with another species that he changes *who he is* in the process. Being a hybrid is more than just a state of mind. It requires *surgery*. Any human with a biotech implant can become a Hybrid; the process requires the insertion of genetic material from a non-human species into his implant, a procedure any competent biotechnician can accomplish. The implant absorbs the genetic material and slowly melds it with the Hybrid's own human DNA, irrevocably changing him into a being that has something of the appearance, abilities and even mindset of *both* species.

IMPLANT SURGERY

The process of adding non-human genetic material to a biotech implant is a fairly simple one. First, a DC 10 Treat Injury check is required to extract the necessary genetic material from a non-human donor. Then a DC 15 Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) check is required to insert the sample into the biotech matrix of the implant. If the device has yet to be implanted in a human host, this process takes about 1 hour. If the implant is already active in a human body, surgery is needed to access it, which requires an additional hour of work, the Surgery feat, and a DC 15 Treat Injury check for the surgery.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be very good at dealing with members of a specific non-human species, to be a skilled diplomat and politician, and to possess an eclectic mix of mutant powers.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Charismatic hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Hybrid, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Species: Stock human or mutant human.

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Speak Language (chosen species).

Feats: Trustworthy.

Special: The character must choose one specific aberration or mutant humanoid species to join, referred to as the "chosen species." The character must have at least 1 functioning biotech implant, which must have been surgically modified to include a DNA sample from the chosen species (see text box).

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Hybrid advanced class.

Hit Die

The Hybrid gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Hybrid gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Hybrid's class skills are as follows.

Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, gossip, politics, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (any), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (any), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Hybrid advanced class.

Citizen of Two Worlds

At 1st level, the Hybrid gains an increased understanding of the chosen species, and can communicate with them much more effectively. The Hybrid gains a +2 competence bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Investigate, Knowledge, Perform, Sense Motive and Treat Injury checks made against members of the chosen species. This bonus increases to +4 at 6th level and +6 at 10th level.

Genetic Modification

At 2nd, 5th and 8th level, the Hybrid gains a mutant power or special quality possessed by the chosen species. The player selects 1 quality from those available to a typical member of the chosen species.

If the player cannot select a special quality (due to the species having less than 3 species advantages), the Hybrid gains a synergistic mutation, an unpredictable side effect of the continuing changes in his DNA. The player selects 1 minor positive mutation (**Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Three: FX, "Cellular Transformation," *Mutations*). This is in addition to any mutation the character may gain just from increasing in level.

Whether a species or generic power is gained, the Hybrid's appearance alters, gaining a feature typical of the chosen species. A Hybrid diplomat to the serf species, for instance, may gain a bony carapace or claws, grayish skin or featureless blue-black eyes. This can adversely affect the attitude of human NPCs towards the Hybrid, at the GM's discretion.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Hybrid gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Hybrid must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Confident, Deceptive, Educated, Frightful Presence, Heroic Focus, Heroic Surge, Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Initiative, Medical Expert, Renown, Systems Familiarity (World of Mind), Tech Familiarity (Final Wars Tech), Toughness

Altered Anatomy

At 5th level, the Hybrid's anatomical structure is sufficiently different from both human's and the chosen species' that both species suffer a disadvantage with the character in combat, striking at areas that are no longer vulnerable to the same stresses and pains. The Hybrid gains a +1 dodge bonus to Defense when attacked by members of either species, and a +3 species bonus to massive damage checks caused by members of either species.

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Citizen of two worlds	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+2	Genetic modification	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+2	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+1
4th	+2	+2	+1	+2	Altered anatomy	+1	+2
5th	+2	+3	+1	+3	Genetic modification	+2	+2
6th	+3	+3	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+2
7th	+3	+4	+2	+4	Synergistic networking	+2	+3
8th	+4	+4	+2	+4	Genetic modification	+3	+3
9th	+4	+4	+3	+4	Bonus feat	+3	+3
10th	+5	+5	+3	+5	Extensive transformation	+3	+4

Synergistic Networking

At 7th level, the Hybrid understands the chosen species' culture and mindset so well that he can see the best way for them to do business with a particular human community. By spending 1 action point, he grants a +1 bonus to the Wealth ratings of the human and non-human communities (see **Gamma World Player's Handbook**, Chapter Four: Home Sector and Beyond, "The Community"). This bonus lasts as long as the Hybrid works to maintain a trade or cultural alliance between the communities. Each action point spent increases the Wealth rating by +1, up to a maximum of the character's class level.

Extensive Transformation

At 10th level the genetic alterations the Hybrid has undergone are complete, and he has become something unique in the Gamma Age — a being of two species, indebted to neither, with his own genetic structure and powers. He gains a major positive mutation (of the player's choice), a +2 species bonus on saving throws against poison and disease, and his Charisma increases by +1.

MESSENGER

In the past, the sages say, humans could communicate with each other instantly, no matter how far apart they were. You could write a letter to a friend, feed it to a thinking machine, and — carried by petitions seeking free cable access and larger genitalia from the gods and other powers — it would arrive seconds later at its destination. But that was a long time ago, and most communities don't have "emeel" or even a radio to allow communication with the rest of the world. In the Gamma Age, when a message or package must be delivered, there is usually only one option: Send someone to deliver it.

The Messenger is the Pony Express rider and two-fisted FedEx delivery driver of the Gamma Age, a professional courier who takes messages, objects and even people from one place to another. Whether on horseback, steam-powered motorcycle, hybrid truck, train or even ornithopter, the Messenger gets his cargo through, braving the horrors of the wilderness and the attacks of bandits.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be an exceptional pilot, driver or horseman, who knows how to survive in the wilds and travel (somewhat) safely between communities.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Fast hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Messenger, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

Skills: Move Silently 5 ranks, Navigate 2 ranks.

Feats: Either Animal Affinity, Aircraft Operations or Surface Vehicle Operation.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Messenger advanced class.

Hit Die

The Messenger gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Messenger gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Messenger's class skills are:

Climb (Str), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (gossip, streetwise) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Read Language (any), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (any), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Messenger advanced class.

Traveler

At 1st level, the Messenger gains the Guide feat for free. If he already has Guide, he gains a further +1 bonus on Navigate and Survival checks.

Born to Ride

At 2nd level, the Messenger gains a +1 bonus on all Drive, Ride and Pilot checks. This bonus increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 8th level.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Messenger gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Messenger must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Action Hero, Aircraft Operation, Armor Proficiency: Light, Dodge, Drive-By Attack, Heroic Surge, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Run, Scavenger, Surface Vehicle Operation, Survivalist, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert.

Signature Vehicle

At 4th level, the Messenger chooses one specific vehicle or mount that he possesses and can use proficiently. The top speed of that vehicle increases by 20 feet (2 squares in vehicle scale), its Defense increases by +2, and its Maneuver modifier (if any) increases by +2. These benefits apply only when the Messenger is riding or piloting the vehicle or mount.

If a signature vehicle is destroyed or a signature mount dies, the Messenger can only gain another one after he gains another character level.

Friend in Every Port

At 5th level, the Messenger develops a web of contacts and allies in a number of communities (including non-human ones). By spending 1 action point, the character finds a contact in a community whom he can draw upon for information or services. The larger the community, the more aid the contact is capable of providing; the contact has a total bonus in any relevant skills equal to the community's population level.

Swift Voyage

At 7th level, the Messenger can move faster and more efficiently through any terrain, thanks to a mixture of driving or piloting skill and an understanding of short cuts and the best routes. When traveling long distances, the Messenger (and any passengers in his vehicle) covers 20% more distance than normal in a given time period. This does not affect his speed in combat. At 10th level, the Messenger covers 30% more distance than normal.

Improved Signature Vehicle

At 8th level, the Messenger becomes even more skilled at driving or piloting his signature vehicle, or riding his signature mount. The initiative bonus of the vehicle increases by +4, its Defense increases by an additional +2, and the DC of stunts are reduced by –3. These benefits apply only when the Messenger is riding or piloting the vehicle or mount. The vehicle also gains an additional 5 hit points, whether the Messenger is using it or not.

Get the Mail Through

At 10th level, the Messenger becomes almost impossible to sway, slow or derail when he's delivering a message or package. While directly engaged in delivering something, the character rolls an additional 1d6 whenever an action point is spent to improve a d20 roll, and takes the best value of all the d6s rolled.

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Traveler	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Born to ride	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Signature vehicle	+2	+1
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Friend in every port	+3	+1
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+4	Swift voyage	+4	+2
8th	+6	+2	+4	+4	Improved signature vehicle	+4	+2
9th	+6	+3	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+3	+5	+5	Get the mail through	+5	+3

ROBOT'S BANE

There was a time when technology was humanity's servant; now, too often, the reverse is true. Artificial intelligences and thinking machines live and thrive in the Gamma Age, freed from the rules and programming that once kept them in check and in service to mankind. Some are benevolent (or at least claim to be), but others are predators and destroyers. Too many human communities have been razed by warbots and scavenger drones, too many heroes betrayed by the weapons and tools that finally plotted against them. Something needs to be done. Someone needs to protect humanity from the jealousy of the machines.

The Robot's Bane is a warrior who specializes in fighting and taking down constructs and robots. Some Robot's Banes devote themselves to this cause for personal reasons, to avenge themselves on the killer machines that took their families or communities. Others do so for more neutral reasons, seeing the potential for conflict with constructs and training to protect themselves and their people from the threat. Fanatic Robot's Banes may reject all technology out of a need for purity, but others rely on powerful pre-War weapons, effective tools that don't possess dangerous artificial minds.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a particularly effective combatant when fighting constructs. These characters develop a strong combat technique that emphasizes the damage and power needed to take down tough and heavily armored construct opponents.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Strong hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Robot's Bane, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Skills: Knowledge (Technology: Advanced Technology) 3 ranks.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (Light), Personal Firearms Proficiency.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Robot's Bane advanced class.

Hit Die

The Robot's Bane gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Robot's Bane gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Robot's Bane's class skills are:

Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), Knowledge (tactics, technology (Pre-War)) (Int), Repair (Int), Speak Language (any), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Robot's Bane advanced class.

Machine Hunter

The Robot's Bane knows the ways of robots and constructs, and is skilled at both finding and fighting them. The Robot's Bane gains a +1 competence bonus on all skill checks made when interacting with or hunting constructs or aware constructs, such as Search checks to follow a robot's trail or Hide checks to avoid a pack of killer drones. She also gains a +1 competence bonus on attack and damage rolls and to Defense when fighting constructs and aware constructs. This bonus increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 9th level.

Resist Technology

At 2nd level, the Robot's Bane gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws made against effects caused by technological devices, whether a robot's stun ray or a biotech implant's poison. This bonus increases to +4 at 5th level and +6 at 8th level.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Robot's Bane gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Robot's Bane must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Action Hero, Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Armor Proficiency: Heavy, Armor Proficiency: Medium, Burst Fire, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Heroic Surge, Improved Trip, Mobility, Power Attack, Run, Unbalance Opponent.

Find the Flaw

At 4th level, the Robot's Bane is able to target weak spots in a robot's body. When attacking a construct of any kind, she is able to make critical threats and hits (constructs are normally immune to critical hits and take no extra damage).

At 8th level, the Robot's Bane becomes even more capable of seeking out a construct's weak spots.

All of her attacks upon constructs have their threat range increased by 1 (so a hunting rifle would threaten a critical hit on a roll of 19-20).

Signature Weapon

At 5th level, the Robot's Bane selects a specific melee or ranged weapon that she possesses (and is proficient with) to become her signature weapon. The weapon must be Medium or larger; Small weapons lack the power needed to effectively take down robots and constructs. The Robot's Bane gains a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls and +2 on damage rolls when using her signature weapon. These benefits stack with Weapon Focus and other combat feats.

If her signature weapon is destroyed, the Robot's Bane can only select a new one when she gains another character level, and must spend an action point to do so.

Explosive Force

At 7th level, the Robot's Bane becomes more proficient in the use of explosives, rockets and grenades — weapons that are highly effective against constructs. She gains a +2 competence bonus on all Craft checks to create explosive devices and on Demolitions checks to set and place explosives. If she uses an explosive weapon like a grenade or rocket (but not a splash weapon), the explosion's radius is 5 feet wider than normal.

Weapon Mastery

At 8th level, the Robot's Bane becomes even more proficient and deadly with her signature weapon. Her attack bonus with the weapon increases to +2, and the weapon's critical multiplier increases by 1 (so a weapon that did double damage with a critical hit now does triple damage).

Shutdown Strike

At 10th level, the Robot's Bane can find the "off switch" on a construct or aware construct through careful study or sheer luck: a weak spot that, if manipulated, will deactivate the construct. She must spend 1 action point to use the ability, then make a melee touch attack against the construct that does no damage. If the attack succeeds, the construct must make a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 character level + Int modifier) or be deactivated.

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+1	+1	+0	Machine hunter	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+2	+2	+0	Resist technology	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+4	+2	+2	+1	Find the flaw	+2	+1
5th	+5	+3	+3	+1	Signature weapon	+3	+1
6th	+6	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+7	+4	+4	+2	Explosive force	+4	+2
8th	+8	+4	+4	+2	Weapon mastery	+4	+2
9th	+9	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+10	+5	+5	+3	Shutdown strike	+5	+3

SCRUTINIZER

The Gamma Age teems with life — complex, mutated, bizarre but ultimately *understandable* life. Some think of the mutant beasts of the world as incomprehensible monsters, mythic and arbitrary like demons made real, but it's not the case. The creatures of the world have patterns, habits, mating seasons and feeding grounds; they can be studied and their habits understood. It just takes hard work to find out the details of a creature, and in the Gamma Age, "hard work" doesn't mean research and computer modeling, it means getting your hands dirty.

The Scrutinizer is an intrepid investigator of the unknown, a "field zoologist" who gathers information on mutants and critters through asking questions of witnesses, following up unsubstantiated reports, and running like hell when the beast is chasing him. Some Scrutinizers take up the challenge to satisfy their intellectual curiosity, while others see it as a way to protect themselves and their community from dangerous predators.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a bold and clever investigator of the natural world, who balances intellectual gifts with a brazen style and strong survival skills.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Smart hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Scrutinizer, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) 6 ranks.

Feats: Systems Familiarity (World of Life).

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Scrutinizer advanced class.

Hit Die

The scrutinizer gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Scrutinizer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Scrutinizer's class skills are:

Concentration (Con), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences, Earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences) (Int), Listen (Wis), Read/Write Language (any), Research (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Int), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following features pertain to the Scrutinizer advanced class.

Ask the Right Questions

At 1st level, the Scrutinizer develops the skills required to learn more about the creatures of the Gamma Age. He gains a +2 competence bonus on any skill checks made to learn about a creature. Skills that this bonus might apply to include Gather Information, Investigate, Knowledge (any), Listen, Research, Search, Sense Motive, Spot and Survival. The bonus increases to +4 at 6th level.

Tracker

At 2nd level the Scrutinizer gains Track as a bonus feat. If he already has Track, he gains a +1 bonus on all Survival checks made for following tracks.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Scrutinizer gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Scrutinizer must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Action Hero, Animal Affinity, Attentive, Defensive Martial Arts, Educated, Endurance, Mutation Resistance, Nanotech Attunement, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Scavenger, Studious, Surface Vehicle Operation, Survivalist, Trustworthy.

Skill Mastery

At 4th level the Scrutinizer selects a number of skills from his class list equal to 3 + his Int modifier. When making a skill check using one of these skills, the Scrutinizer can always take 10 on the check, no matter what the circumstances.

Studied Species

At 5th level, the Scrutinizer has learned much about a number of different creatures, and can defend himself more effectively against their attacks. Select a number of creatures (*not* creature types) equal to 3 + his Int modifier. The Scrutinizer gains a +2 dodge bonus to his Defense when attacked by any of these creatures, as well as a +2 bonus to all saves made their resist their special abilities. The Scrutinizer can only select living creatures, not constructs.

Experienced Reflexes

At 7th level the Scrutinizer gains a +2 competence bonus on all initiative checks.

Further Study

At 8th level the Scrutinizer selects another group of creatures equal to 3 + his Int modifier, enjoying the same bonus to Defense and saves as outlined in the Studied Species ability. Furthermore, the bonus to Defense increases to +4, as does the bonus on saving throws.

The Biggest Secret

At 10th level the Scrutinizer can make an on-the-spot assessment of a creature's nature, habits and powers and instantly try to tame or calm it. Spend 1 action point and make a Knowledge (Earth and life sciences) check, with an additional modifier equal to the Scrutinizer's Charisma modifier, against a DC of 25. Success allows the Scrutinizer to make exactly the right gesture or say exactly the right word in order to calm the creature, who will cease hostilities unless attacked. The Scrutinizer can then attempt to open negotiations or simply run away if desired.

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Ask the right questions	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+2	Tracker	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+2	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+2	+1	+2	Skill mastery	+2	+1
5th	+2	+3	+1	+3	Studied species	+3	+1
6th	+2	+3	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+4	+2	+4	Experienced reflexes	+4	+2
8th	+3	+4	+2	+4	Further study	+4	+3
9th	+4	+4	+3	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+5	+3	+5	The biggest secret	+5	+3

TRAPPER

It's a strange world out there: A world of giant snails with the heads of bears that can vomit acid on their prey; of mutated plants that can talk and walk and devour a man whole in seconds; where every animal, every creature, every living thing has the potential to think and to kill. And humanity is no exception.

The Trapper is the grizzled survivor and hunter of the Gamma Age, a tough-as-nails outsider who tracks animals and mutant creatures. She may do this for the sake of her community, protecting it by finding and fighting the beasts that threaten its safety. She might do it for her own sake, hunting beasts for food to eat, hides to sell, or young to breed in captivity. A Trapper might live in harmony with nature, or may force her desires on the wilderness with machines and sheer orneriness.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a skilled hunter, who can survive in the wilds and has the upper hand when fighting beasts and mutant creatures.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Trapper, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

Skills: Craft (mechanical) 3 ranks.

Feats: Survivalist, Track.

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Trapper advanced class.

Hit Die

The Trapper gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Trapper gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Trapper's class skills are:

Climb (Str), Craft (mechanical) (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language (any), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

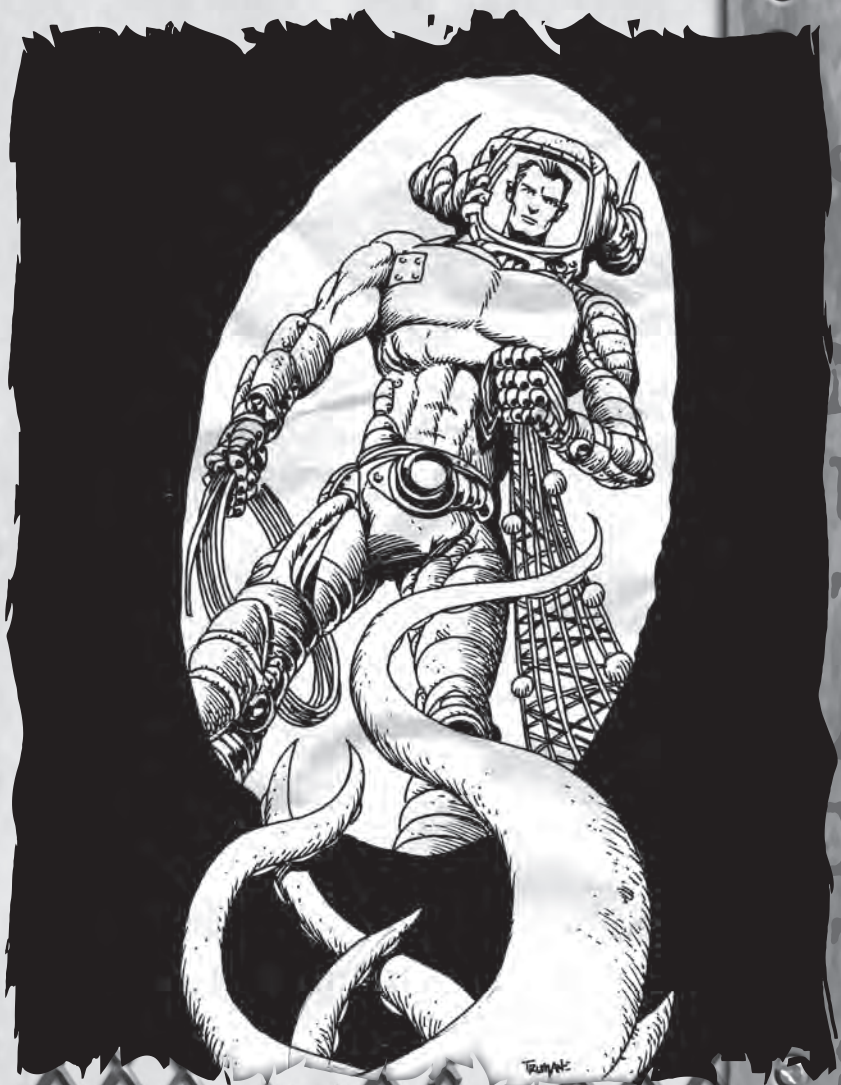
The following features pertain to the Trapper advanced class.

Favored Quarry

At 1st level the Trapper selects one category of creature that she is particularly familiar with. She can choose one of the following: aberrations, animals, dragons, evolved animals, giants, mutant beasts, mutant humanoids, oozes, plants or vermin. She gains a +1 bonus on all skill checks made to track, hunt or observe creatures of that type, whether a Survival check to follow a trail or a Hide check to escape being observed. She also gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls made against creatures of that type. The bonus increases to +2 at 5th level and to +3 at 9th level.

Trapmaking

At 2nd level the Trapper becomes highly skilled at creating traps and snares, whether simple deadfalls or complex electronic devices. She gains a +2 competence bonus on all Craft checks made to build or modify traps. This bonus increases to +4 at 7th level.



Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Trapper gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Trapper must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Armor Proficiency (Medium), Armor Proficiency (Light), Athletic, Brawl, Cautious, Dead Aim, Endurance, Frightful Presence, Great Fortitude, Guide, Lightning Reflexes, Mutation Resistance, Scavenger, Stealthy, Toughness

Dependable

At 4th level the Trapper has honed her skills to a dependable edge, allowing her to rely on them even in the chaos of the wilderness. Choose a number of skills from the character's class list equal to 3 + her Int modifier. When making a check using one of these skills, the Trapper may take 10 no matter what the circumstances.

Second Favored Quarry

At 5th level the Trapper chooses a second category of creature to hunt. She gains a +1 bonus on all skill checks made to track, hunt or observe creatures of that type, and a +1 bonus on attack rolls made against creatures of that type. The bonus increases to +2 at 9th level.

Go Down Fighting

At 7th level the Trapper becomes increasingly resistant to the attacks and mutations of her favored quarry. She gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all saving throws made against the special qualities and mutations of her favored quarry (both types). She also gains a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against attacks by her favored quarry.

Trailfinder

At 8th level the Trapper becomes incredibly adroit at finding and following tracks. She may move at her normal speed when using the Track feat without penalty, and at up to double her speed with only a –10 penalty. She may also retry a failed Survival check to follow a trail when outdoors after only 30 minutes.

Savagery

At 10th level the Trapper develops a harsh, primitive fighting style, eschewing the finesse of civilized warfare for the immediacy of tooth and claw (or knife and rifle, anyway). When making a full-round attack (melee or ranged), the trapper may make an additional attack at her highest attack bonus, but all attacks in the round suffer an additional –2 penalty. The Trapper's Defense also suffers a –4 penalty until her next round.

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Favored quarry	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Trapmaking	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Dependable	+2	+1
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Second favored quarry	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Go down fighting	+4	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Trailfinder	+4	+2
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Savagery	+5	+3

CREATURE TYPES

Every **Gamma World** campaign is different, and a creature type that dominates one campaign might never be seen in another. Players of Trapper characters should discuss their choice of favored quarry with their GM to make sure the character is neither overpowering nor ineffective.

If the GM plans to use a particular creature type a lot in a campaign, the Trapper's advantages may cause her to overshadow the other characters. The GM can rule that the Trapper must pick a subtype of that creature type. For instance, the character might only have an advantage when hunting serfs, rather than all mutant humanoids. Another useful subdivision, especially for animals or plants, is by size. A Trapper might only enjoy an advantage against Large animals, for instance, or Medium plants.

If, on the other hand, a GM wants to ignore or significantly downplay a particular creature types (such as making oozes even rarer in his game), then a Trapper who hunts that type of creature will rarely (if ever) get a chance to show off her skills. The GM may want to rethink his plans and give that creature type a larger role in the campaign. Alternatively, the GM can simply request that the player select a different, more common creature type to hunt.

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