



FARCAST

An Eclipse Phase Year Blog

ABSTRACT

Farcast is a yearblog for the Eclipse Phase roleplaying game by Posthuman Studios. The goal is to post a single entry every day of 2013

Bobby Derie

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A Word on Language

Characters who are genderless, intersex, or of indeterminate gender are referred to using singular they, as opposed to the gender neutral it (because of unfortunate connotations) or artificial gender neutral pronouns (which readers found strange and irritating). Hopefully this won't cause too much confusion.

Legal

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Synopsis

Farcast was a yearblog for the Eclipse Phase roleplaying game by Posthuman Studios. The goal of this blog was to post a single entry every day for 2013—new locations, groups, NPCs, artifacts, morphs, tech, and ideas for players and gamemasters to use or take inspiration from in their games. Each entry was to be at least 500 words in length, and relies primarily on the material in the Eclipse Phase main book. This is all completely unofficial fan material; I have no affiliation with Posthuman Studios, though I think they're a great bunch.

Thanks

Editing and proofing these entries has been helped in large part by readers of the blog who posted comments or otherwise gave feedback, and I'd like to thank Allan/grodog, Aldero, Chase S., C.J., CodeBreaker, Colin, dannykeen, Diploraptor, Duncan, Entomeba, Eric Meissner, Francis Tiffany, Frank Trollman, Ian, Ire, Jaberwo, JackrabbitBlue, Jan, Joe, Justin Alexander, Komen, Leon Lionheart, Marcin, mellonbread, Nicolas Delbing, OneTriKPOny, Shannon, Smokeskin, Soyweiser, Stephen Smith, TITAN, Kindalas, and wintr-mute for their help and support, with especial thanks to Farcast 151 guest editor Joseph Baum and Canageek.

Editor's Blurb

This document was edited with the goal of bringing increased utility and readability to Bobby Derie's phenomenal volume words that make up all of 2013's yearblog entries.

Every attempt was made to keep the content as written however a few lines had to be cut for the sake of readability.

I hope this MS Word Document and its accompanying PDF version allows more people to enjoy Eclipse Phase and Bobby's work.

Kindalas

ENTRY 000: Test Item

Transhumanity lives in a universe where alien intelligences and civilizations have already lived and died, leaving behind remnants for them to paw through, analyze, and reverse engineer. To prepare and train new generations for the task of cracking these problems, the scientists and philosophers of the Morningstar Constellation have opened a crowdsourced digital artifact: the Test Item.

Based in part on real alien artifacts discovered on exoplanets, the Test Item is a complex software construct which thousands of users can probe, test, and interact with during each test-cycle. The Test Item programmers are volunteers that include some of the most creative, knowledgeable minds in the solar system, and each new incarnation of the Test Item typically incorporates bizarre physics, chemical composition, cultural influence, and xenobiological traces. As both a puzzle and an exercise in analysis, testers are encouraged both to cooperate and compete; posting significant breakthroughs on the latest Test Item (or even some of the archived old Test Items) generally causes enough interest for a small s-rep boost, and sometimes job offers from hypercorps.

Tangible benefits of the Test Item beyond education are few, but have produced some working theories on the physics behind the gate mechanisms and refinement in a few technologies like allotropic alloys. The conspiracy-minded point to statistical correlation of certain physical and cultural traits among past Test Items as evidence suggesting that the entire Test Item project is little more than a cover for actual testing of an alien artifact—or perhaps a cache of such artifacts!—in the control of the Morningstar Constellation. For most testers however, the Test Item remains little more than an ongoing intellectual exercise, and a challenge that prepares gatecrashers for what they might discover on the other side.

Using Test Item

The Test Item is a public McGuffin; it does nothing by itself, little more than a complex three-dimensional software model of a hypothetical artifact that bends or breaks certain laws of physics, or combines unusual chemical and xenocultural elements. However, the Test Item functions as a focus for characters to interact—teams of testers will compete over specific theories and test methodologies, sabotage each other and steal data, try to hack the Test Item sourcecode or influence the programmers, lay wagers and try to collect them—and as such is a useful concept for

the gamemaster that wants something with outrageous properties that cannot be easily stolen or abused because it is completely conceptual, with no physical existence. Of course, the conspiracy theorists could be correct for once, and some or all of the Test Items are real artifacts...in which case finding the originals the Test Items are based on would be a mission in itself.

Seed

A highly-regarded merchant has purchased an artifact, but it's afraid of damaging it through testing. The merchant hires the player characters to arrange for a digital simulation of the artifact in place of the Test Item, crowdsourcing his way to the best test strategy. The merchant doesn't care how they do it—negotiating with the Test Item programming team, blackmailing them, bribing them, hacking the software, etc. are all viable methods.

ENTRY 001: Void Station

Most habitats follow the layout of the solar system, transhumanity strung out like a string of lights along the plane of the ecliptic. From a distance they look huddled close to the rocks and gas giants, or shuttling back and forth between them. Yet approaching the north ecliptic pole, far from the sun, orbits the spindle of Void Station, rotating inside a ring of zero-gravity laboratories. An independent research outpost, eyes out to the deep black, beaming back what it sees to the rest of the solar system. With its transhuman population in the high double-digits, split into three research clades, Void Station is barely a blip on the radar for the hypercorps or larger habitats.

Void Station crowdfunds its research, accepting resources from across the solar system to pursue goal-oriented projects, the clades competing and cooperating for access to equipment and materials. All labs are property of the Station itself, as administered by the infomorph Lubit; the clades rent labs, station facilities, and research drones from the Station out of their budgets. Other than that government is minimal; by unanimous acclaim the clades have eschewed pursuing political trappings, so that Void Station claims no official status, avoiding efforts by criminal and dissident groups to use it as an asylum or tax shelter. As a whole the station has a high reputation and is generally trusted with the credits and resources it receives from its crowdfunding.

While amenities are spare on-station, transhumans travel to Void Station to partake of research facilities without eyes on them or just to get a radio telescope pointed out at the big black. The clades are open to any scholar willing to share their research and play well with others, and sometimes attract hypercorp scientists on sabbatical, particularly from Extropia. Deep space probes are sometimes launched from there, out to beyond the bounds of the solar system.

Seeds

- A probe is coming back from deep space—but it isn't one that Void Station ever sent out. Now hypercorps, mercenaries, and Firewall operatives are converging on the small habitat as they prepare to capture the probe and unlock its secrets. The surge of inhabitants would overwhelm the Station's systems and deplete its resources—players may be hired by Lubit as extra security, or by one of the interested parties to ensure they get

first crack at it. Firewall may fear the probe carries an Exsurgent threat, and want the players there just in case.

- A scum barge graveyard has built up near Void Station—a small community of trash pickers and datathieves that live off whatever space scrap they can salvage and data they can skim from the local mesh. Lubit finds them difficult to dispense with because they've begun to offer biomorph hookers and home-crafted narcotics, but recently they've begun to attract the wrong kind of elements—nation starters with fill-in-the-blank constitutions, rogue accountants and banks looking for nonreveal tax shelters, that kind of thing. The scum barges need to go—are the players up to the task?

ENTRY 002: Rimwalkers

There has always been a segment of transhumanity that is disenfranchised, lost, or refuses to be tied down. Some are criminals, others just outcasts, while still others are the detritus of civilization—relicts of old humanity, failed experiments, flawed forks in broken morphs, all gathering at the edges of transhuman society. They thrive in the fringes of habitats, beyond the ambiguous fringes of legal and political jurisdictions, moving on and adapting to each new culture, finding out what they need to do in order to breathe, subsist, heal, fuck, and move on. Closer in to the warmth of Sol, they inhabit scumbarges and slip from asteroid to planetoid and back again, wearing many names. Sooner or later, though, the game grows too hot, debts are called in, and the enemies they make start to close the noose—then they flee outwards, trying to lose themselves in the vast emptiness as they walk the rim.

Rimwalkers are hardy itinerants that move between the habitats of the outer solar system. Poor by most material standards, they sell what they carry with them always: their skills, knowledge, and experience. They are freelancers who often specialize in negotiating the legalities and commerce between habitats, or the make-do technical know-how that doesn't come out of a text book. Most are criminals in one way or another, though that means nothing out on the Rim, where a transhuman might be a criminal just for wearing the wrong shell. All are opportunists, looking for the next score. They familiarize themselves with the rules and laws of each habitat they encounter, the better to avoid trouble until time to circumvent them.

Among themselves, rimwalkers tend to trade favors and information. Many rim habitats have corners of the local mesh with signs and code words where rimwalkers have left messages and advice, gathering rep among their contemporaries, helping each other live a little longer. While rarely clannish and never organized beyond small groups, as a whole rimwalkers recognize the need to avoid preying on one another, and con artists or those who prey on fellow rimwalkers quickly become unwelcome—outcasts among outcasts.

Mechanics

Rimwalkers are not quite a faction, and use the Guanxi rep system (g-Rep). Rimwalker characters that betray or rip off other rimwalkers may have the Black Mark or even the

Blacklisted negative traits (Eclipse Phase 149) relative to other rimwalkers.

Seed

The conflict on Eris has become a beacon for rimwalkers, who sell their services to both sides, rarely on the front lines, but as smugglers, negotiators, spies, subject matter specialists, and teachers. So many have been drawn in to the edges of the conflict, in fact, that something like a rimwalker community is forming, with a darkcast mesh and shared resources—safe houses, false identities, secure data storage, community dead drops, etc. The problem is that a rimwalker called NoFace, a neuter splicer, has taken it in their head to play kingmaker—and if either the ultimates or exhumans perceive the rimwalkers as a coherent group they will be seen as a threat, and the whole game will collapse. Senior rimwalkers recognize this, but none wants the black mark that would come from killing a fellow rimwalker out of turn: but if an outside group can kill NoFace or ruin their reputation, they would be very grateful.

ENTRY 003: Stacks Staxon

Staxon is a man who got as far away from it all as he could without going through a Pandora Gate. Even in the future, Piss Poor Prior Planning can fuck up life for a lot of people. In Staxon case, his parents were early splicers--very early, before all the kinks were worked out. They were never supposed to be together, and he was never supposed to be born—half his genome was held under copyright to big corporations that never intended them to be passed on in the traditional manner. He spent a fair part of his youth as a labrat, then as a soldier. Came away from the war with a head full of bad wiring and a dozen genetic time-bombs ready to go off—exotic cancers, autoimmune diseases, the works.

Now he's a rimwalker, cutting the fastest, loosest deals on the edge of space, every credit and bit of goodwill going toward his "retirement fund"—a new body, a perfect body, waiting for his ego once the one he's got finally pops its clogs. To habitats from Neptune to the dwarf planets at the edge of the solar system he's a backwards freak, but Stacks doesn't mind if egos underestimate him. Stacks Staxon prefers to plays it cool and keeps his head down, playing the long game—but if push comes to shove, he has nothing to lose but a body he never wanted and a life he never asked for, with a brand new morph when he finally does kick the bucket.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	13	12	18	13	13	30 (35)	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	60	12	120	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academics: Linguistics 47, Academics: Genetics 53, Beam Weapons 40, Blades (Knives) 67, Clubs 60, Fray (Full Defense) 56, Free Fall 55, Infiltration 50, Interests: Exalt Blomorphs 50, Interests: Exhumans 40, Interests: Scum Gangs (Rim Gangs) 50, Interests: The Rim 50, Intimidation (Verbal) 67, Kinesics (Sense Motive) 45, Kinetic Weapons (Pistols) 45, Language: Native Finnish 87, Language: Norwegian 73, Language: Danish 62, Language: Swedish 68, Language: German 81, Language: French 37, Language: English 53, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception (Visual) 50, Persuasion (Negotiation) 56, Profession: Investigator 65, Scrounging 44, Unarmed Combat 40

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack

Traits: Addiction (alcohol, painkillers, Minor), Brave, Danger Sense, Exceptional Aptitude (WIL), Genetic Defect

(exotic cancers, autoimmune diseases), Implant Rejection (Level 1), Unfit (Level 2)

Using Stack Staxon

Staxon is hardboiled and hardheaded, and should be played as someone competent, even if nowhere near as able as even a starting flat in terms of most stats. As a player in the criminal underworld of the rimwalkers, he prefers tenacity and guile, and isn't above losing or even dying if it means he can take someone else with him. He'll die for his friends, and he'll die with his enemies if he has to, and it's a wise transhuman that can tell which is better or worse off for his efforts. Of course, the hard part isn't killing Staxon—it's dealing with him when he comes back in a morph that isn't a broken-down piece of genetic trash.

ENTRY 004: Jellybone Suit

Jellybone suits are roughly humanoid, translucent bioplastic shells filled with an oxygen and nutrient-rich gel and nanobot-crafted “wet machinery” that shapes flexible mechatronic components around the occupant. Jellybone suits are designed to allow biomorphs extended operation in extreme environments—an unaugmented flat in a Jellybone suit could survive in outer space or the surface of Titan for up to 24 hours without further equipment. The soft and flexible outer membrane provides a degree of protection from damage, and seals small punctures automatically. Unlike traditional spacesuits, the suspension of breathing gases within the semisolid matrix of jelly-stuff, means that a single tear or rupture will not spell rapid doom for the occupant.

Jellybones are designed primarily as safety features, sometimes used on small spacecraft in place of proper (and bulkier) lifepods and the like. Mostly, they are reserved for children, tourists, and the elderly or fragile visiting violence-free but environmentally harsh locales on field trips or vacations. They are especially favored by the Jovian Republic, where the disapproval of augmentation and resleeving places extra incentive on non-invasive technological solutions. Indeed, the Jovian Republic is home to PinTek, the largest manufacturer of Jellybones suits in the system.

When inactive, a Jellybone suit is a malleable sphere or lozenge of colored translucent plastic filled with suspended ribbons of metal or plastic, and a small activation disc. Touching the activation disc causes the Jellybones to slowly unfurl into a roughly humanoid shape over a period of a few moments, which the occupant then lays in, allowing the adaptive framework to flow over and shape itself to their form as it seals. The most disturbing part of the process is of course when the suit material flows into the lungs (or lung equivalents) to provide oxygen. Most instructional materials at this point suggest a burping-maneuver that forces the gas out of the user’s lungs while relaxing their chest muscles to allow the process to complete as quickly and effortlessly as possible. Removing the suit is a reverse of the process, beginning with the tube supersaturating the lungs with gaseous oxygen as it retracts to prevent drowning in the goo.

While not necessary to operate the Jellybone suit, the onboard computer does offer drivers that the user may integrate into their personal electronics for more direct control. Jellybone suits typically mass between 30 to 50 kilograms, depending on the volume and mass of the recipient; children receive smaller suits, while adults receive larger suits. The default color for most suits is pink, though most colors are available on request.

Mechanics

The Jellybone suit is vacuum-sealed, self-sealing if punctured, provides protection from temperatures of -180 to 140 C, a 2/4 Armor Value, and sufficient life support features to last 24 hours. Piloted by Pilot: Walker skill. [Cost: Low]

Exoskeleton	Capacity	Handling	Movement	Max Velocity	Armor	Dur	WT
Jellybone Suit	1	—	8/35	35	2/4	30	5

ENTRY 005: 312 Kirby

Some evidence dug up by data archaeologists suggests that astronomers marked out 312 Kirby before the Fall, evidenced by a slight distortion on the edge of Neptune in an ancient video series from a primitive probe, but if so its original designation and supporting documentation have been lost. What is known is that 312 Kirby is a gravitic anomaly that follows an eccentric and highly inclined orbit that takes it below the plane of the ecliptic and away from the majority of planets and planetoids for most of its orbit, spending only 3 of an estimated 1100 days within the vicinity of Neptune.

Efforts at tracking or analyzing 312 Kirby have been few and laced with difficulty; the object is very small, with estimates suggesting it may be under a meter in its longest dimension, and it has no discernible electromagnetic reflection. Transhumans studying the object rely on a scanning the area that it is estimated to appear in with polarization sensitive differential radiometers usually reserved for deep space observation, or plotting the minute discrepancies its gravitational pull induces on Neptune and its moons. The current leading theory is that 312 Kirby is a chunk of cold degenerate matter from another system that was weakly captured by the sun's gravity.

The wild fringe, of course, suspects that 312 Kirby may be something else entirely. Nat Akasdottir, an atmosphere skimmer that operates out of Neptune's minor moons has noted samples of naturally-occurring deuterium in what she believes is Kirby's usual path. These samples have a higher proportion of hydrogen atoms per cubic meter than statistically would be normal for that area of space, and has produced an e-text claiming Kirby is an alien artifact that converts ordinary hydrogen to deuterium. 312 Kirby: A Love Story earned Akasdottir a bit of rep among the conspiracy crowds, but she's lost all credibility in academic circles until she can produce something to substantiate or refute her claims.

Seeds

- **Dark Gold:** The time is approaching for 312 Kirby to approach Neptune again, and this time Nat Akasdottir want to get a close look at it—and possibly even capture it, thanks to a new ship designed by Starware. Now all she need is some fellow investors and a crew to man it—if the player characters have the entrepreneurial spirit, that is.

Of course, Firewall will want a look at Kirby too, just in case it does turn out to be an Exsurgent threat—and what better place for a spy than in Akasdottir's own team?

- **Three Day Space Madness:** The Neptunian community of Mahogany have just made an interesting correlation between the timing of 312 Kirby's passage and rates of mental disturbance among neo-avian biomorphs, causing a minor political uproar. Half the transhumans on the station want the anomalous object destroyed, while the rest dicker about science and environmental concerns. The debate is heating up, supported by pundits from both camps. Infomorphs in the station are curious as to whether it is the approach of 312 Kirby causing this mess, or whether someone else is using that as a cover to sow chaos. They need an outside perspective, someone without a stake in the political outcome—if the player characters are willing to help, their rep will get a major boost.

ENTRY 006: Xin Nix

Along the habitats of the Rim, a smooth-talking intersex splicer sealed in a plastic shell wanders a slow route, visiting gamblers and merchants, criminals and financiers. Xin Nix is a slow banker that deals with the personal transfer of debts and obligations outside of formal and recorded channels. As the morph in the middle, Xin trades on their impeccable if shadowy rep, Xin only deals straight, and only with people Xin knows or who are vouched for by people Xin knows, accepting numbers and names and vomiting them back up when the time is right, taking their payment and disappearing onto the next stop on their route.

As a consequence, Xin is welcome in nearly every habitat around the Rim, assured of sustenance, shelter, and a very low profile. On the other hand, Xin lives on the monofilament edge—even the indication that Xin is compromised, or has betrayed any of their trusts, and there will be nowhere in transhuman space they can run. So Xin tends to keep others at one removed, and has a tendency to take the self out of the self—to observe events as if they was an observer rather than a participant.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	16	15	15	17	12	18	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	36	7	72	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Finance (Black Markets) 65, Free Fall (Microgravity) 56, Infiltration (Blending In) 50, Interests: Gambling 75, Language: Native Vietnamese 85, Language: Cantonese 70, Language: English 70, Language: Japanese 55, Networking: Criminals 6, Networking: Hypercorps 50, Perception (Visual) 70, Persuasion (Negotiation) 67, Profession: Banking (Shadow Economy) 80, Unarmed Combat 45

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Emotional Dampers, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Vision, Nanoscopic Vision, Oxygen Reserve, Vacuum Sealing

Using Xin Nix

As a shadow banker, Xin is a good NPC to interact with player characters, a blank face that can front for nearly any faction, hiring them for a job, making a payoff, delivering information, etc. Xin can also be a good target, a courier

that the players have to intercept, fool, extricate, rescue, or protect. As a one-off, Xin is expendable—should they die or become incapacitated, another morph that looks and acts just like them might be trawling the spacelanes the next hour. As a recurring NPC, gamemasters and players can explore what makes Xin tick, including how they reacts as they becomes attached to the PCs.

Seeds

- Xin Nix has arrived and requires some assistance getting to their target—a child ego kept away from contact with transhumanity by her extended family. Xin hires the player characters to get them to the child.
- In the middle of a crowded habitat, the player characters are invited to a meet. Xin Nix approaches them, and then a shaft of high intensity coherent light descends— and Xin Nin’s head explodes, sealed gases escaping and splattering the player characters with biological goop... including blood-borne nanoswarms loaded with the information Xin was going to hire the player characters to deliver, including who, what, when, and where. Of course, now they have the choice—deliver the data, knowing someone is already gunning for it, or don’t...and hope whoever fried Xin doesn’t decide to finish the job by zapping them as well.

ENTRY 007: The Fear

Fear is a survival trait, an autoimmune response with pre-programmed triggers that have historically helped transhumanity to fight against the disease of death. All the worse then when fear becomes an autoimmune disease—instead of keeping transhumans alive, it can keep them from living, trapped in their habitats, their bodies, their thinking, unable to face the stars or their own limitations. The infinite transhuman potential kept caged by the same instincts that once helped us escape the Earth and the limitations of our own genetics.

The Fear is a disease, one of the most subtle exsurgent viruses, but one that only targets biomorphs and is usually spread by contact. The infection takes hold slowly and has the potential to affect large segments of the population, especially crowded habitats. The only outward sign in the infected is reticence—to resleeve, to move on, and to see the stars; their minds attempt to form rationalizations for the instinctual fear that grips them, which they can barely frame or put words to. Eventually the infected feel fear all the time, threatened by everything, crippled by worry and paranoia. The personal costs of The Fear are magnified in populations: groups because insular, withdrawn, and factitious; habitats no longer look to expand or improve, and many actually become hostile to the idea.

Mechanics

Stage 1 (initial infection to 1 year):

Upon initial infection, the character begins to gain 1 mental stress per month, gradually manifesting as an acute phobia in about six months. At this stage, the phobia is generally very specific—fear of resleeving, fear of space travel or vacuum, even fear of open spaces. Minor habits tend to form to support their fear, like leaving their settings just as they were or putting off necessary upgrades. Characters may realize their fear and seek treatment, but unless the underlying nanobiological infection is recognized or dealt with then psychotherapy will be ineffective and the fear will continue to get worse and more crippling. Characters face a penalty to any action that would invoke their phobia equal to their current mental stress x 3.

Stage 2 (1 year to 2 years):

After one year, the character begins to gain 2 mental stress per month, and their phobia broadens—the character picks up another relevant phobia every three months. At this point, other characters can generally begin to discern

something is “off” about the characters, as their daily activities and attitudes tend to be severely curtailed and they begin to be closeted. Psychotherapy is still effective at this point, provided the exsurgent virus is somehow eradicated from the character’s system (typically by resleeving into an uninfected morph). Additional complications may arise depending on how much mental stress the character accumulates while dealing with their issues; it is not uncommon for some (10%) of characters to develop a general anxiety disorder in the 24th month of infection.

Stage 3 (2 years+):

Characters at this stage are consumed by their phobias, and are typically afraid of anything and anyone new, traveling to new places, and any technology or cultural innovation beyond what they knew prior to infection. On busy habitats, such characters inevitably become shut-ins.

Curing the afflicted character is still possible with intense and prolonged psychotherapy, but not in their current morph—The Fear literally becomes hardcoded into their systems, and they must be resleeved before any progress can be made.

ENTRY 008: Sacrophage

Situated in the north polar region of Enceladus, Sacrophage is a semi-autonomous outgrowth of the Profunda habitat, used as an apolitical anarchist non-denominational pseudo-monastic retreat. There is no strict rule or hierarchy for the fraters (male), sorors (female), and zorers (neuter or intersex) participants of Sacrophage, but most members of the community seek escape from the information deluge of transhuman life, individual focused philosophical inquiry, and general peace and quiet; disruptive individuals tend to be isolated or ignored until they leave. Members of and visitors to the Sacrophage community are allowed to work in three areas to participate in the community: the gardens, the radio telescope, and maintenance. Each is supplemented by “miracles”— special projects undertaken by one or more of the monks to add to and enhance the small community. At any given time there are between fifty and eighty monks in residence at Sacrophage; visitors can swell the population to over a hundred, but this taxes the environmental system.

The Sacrophage Gardens are a smaller extension of Profunda’s biochemical enterprises, a series of eight small interlinked domes of oxygen-producing and carbon-dioxide scrubbing growing green things that supplement the community’s foodstuffs. Morphs can experience the quiet contemplation of planting, weeding, sowing, and nurturing their charges. Some monks prefer to carve out a slice of the gardens for their own projects, breeding specific flowers or fruiting plants, grafting, etc., while others enjoy the community of joint labor in the larger farming operations. The most popular miracle of the Sacrophage Gardens is the master philosopher-gardener Ao, an AGI sleeved in a macro biomorph with the outward appearance of a great tree, with each leaf appearing as if it was made of human skin. Ao is the center of a wireless network in one of the Garden domes, connected to over a thousand sensors that allow it to track the overall health of the entire garden.

The Sacrophage Radio telescope is the ear to the heavens, built into one of the older craters on Enceladus. Mostly inhabited by infomorph residents, the Sacrophage Radio telescope mesh is for the most part deliberately austere, with each monk carving out their own sites to pursue their own interests. Residents and visitors are allowed to man the radio telescope and watch the skies, to

analyze and archive the recordings, to maintain and improve the code, and to repair and maintain the equipment itself, if qualified. The Radio telescope output and archives are not remotely accessible to the rest of transhumanity, hence it receives the largest number of visitors. In part to stem the crowd of sky-gazers, a group of monks is working on a “miracle” project to provide a station-to-station system for backing up the archive in Profunda, allowing access to the records without disturbing the Sacrophage community.

Maintenance at Sacrophage is the header under which all the vital tasks of the community are accomplished: cleaning, repairing, monitoring environmental levels, sealing cracks or leaks between domes, etc. The physical and digital drudgework is as much a discipline to renew the mind and body as a necessity of life in the habitat, and many of the oldest and most trusted residents spend considerable amounts of their time sweeping, cleaning sewage ducts, and checking carbon dioxide and nitrogen levels.

ENTRY 009: Titan's Shoals

Along the shores of one of Titan's methane-lakes is one of the most unusual and spectacular mining operations in the solar system: a wall of strange, warping stony brambles, tinged with flakes of metal, almost two kilometers long. In the right hour, when the pale sunlight is at its fullest or under the correct lamps, the whole shoal comes alive with shining threads and trceries of raw metal and crystal, apparently grown straight from the dirt and rock.

Mechanical and chemical separation of light metals and rare earths from the mixed soils of Titan is a complex industrial endeavor, with a tendency to produce toxic byproducts. Instead, an enterprising microcorp called Havelstag Mawr has begun seeding certain locations with colonies of engineered coral polyps and symbiotic bacteria. Under the right conditions the bacteria can break down and catalyze most of the materials in the Titanian rocks and soil, feeding the polyps. When the polyps die they leave behind a mineral crust, which serves as an ideal surface for subsequent Titanian coral to grow on. Over millions of generations—a few years in transhuman terms—the mineral reefs can reach appreciable size, at which point they are bulldozed, and the mineral wealth they contain much more easily processed from the wreckage.

Havelstag Mawr's current breed of Titanian coral is still too inefficient for current industrial use, however. While in ideal conditions the shoals can grow up to thirty millimeters per day, the coral/bacteria ecosystem is fragile and subject to disruption if the correct nutrients are not available in abundance.

Seeds

- A skeleton has been found out in the shoals, embedded in the coral due for harvesting in a few days. While local news outlets decry this as an example of insufficient safety precautions, Havelstag Mawr has publicly offered a reward for anyone that can identify the corpse and how it got there, and privately its agents have reached out to the player characters to investigate. Their theory is that the skeleton is the result of a murder by one of their rivals, intended to cause their stock to dip; the PCs are tasked with finding out the truth—and if it really is their fault, to destroy the evidence.
- Harvest season, and the player characters are among those morphs that have come to Titan as itinerant laborers to bulldoze the coral, collect it,

and ship it off to processing. The work isn't bad and Havelstag Mawr sees to its workers' needs—so why are the PC's biomorph coworkers getting sick? The afflicted report numbness in the extremities, and their skin begins to form thick grey sheets that eventually fall off to reveal raw flesh. HavMawr claims there is no sign of bacterial infection or parasitism, and the medical tests by HavMawr doctors tend to confirm that. Can the PCs find out what is going on before they too are afflicted?

- The PCs have happened upon a batch of Titanian coral, an early, hardier experimental breed that has gone wild, which has quietly been growing unmolested in platinum-rich sands. Now there must be almost a metric ton of platinum embedded in the beautiful, twisting brambles—if they can harvest it, process it, and sell or trade it without HavMawr, claim-jumpers, or local environmentalists from finding out.

ENTRY 010: The Ceresian

An ambulatory pseudo-trilobite with a transparent exoskeleton of ceramic aluminum, through which soft, faintly phosphorescent blue organs are visible and with strange diamond eyes, the Ceresian is equally likely to be seen scuttling across the floor of

Extropia or undulating through the Hidden Sea beneath the ice crust of Ceres. The strange pseudo-alien is one of the xenokin, transhumans who have adopted morphs and lifestyles that they imagine extraterrestrials have, or might have. In their own little community they wax philosophical about exploring new body types, senses, and diets; spiritual connections to imagined civilizations and peoples beyond human imagination—but on average most of them are in it for the thrill and novelty of unique bodies, strange sex, and in some cases a desperate bid to become something other than human.

As far as the records go, the Ceresian is one of the oldest, quietest, and most practical of the xenokin, a pillar of the community with high rep in certain circles. The Ceresian has pursued a quasi-amphibious anthropoid lifestyle in their current morph for at least twenty years, possibly more, and no public records remain of their identity or name—to those who know of it, they are simply "The Ceresian." Their current interests are in xenoceanographic studies, currently focused on pseudo-tidal action on Ceres and systematically exploring hotspots and coldspots in the Hidden Sea; their maps and data sold to water miners, the Hidden Cartel, and many others with an interest in the strange seas beneath the ice. The Ceresian also makes irregular sabbaticals to Europa, to "take the waters."

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	10	15	13	15	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	25	5	50

Morph: Unique Synthmorph

Skills: Academics: Oceanography 85, Academics: Physics 65, Academics: Xenobiology 75, Art: Zen Gardening 55, Climbing 40, Fray 45, Free Fall 25, Interests: Alien Races 50, Interests: Oceans 60, Interfacing 25, Investigation 50, Language: Native Basque 85, Language: French 75, Language: Korean 70, Language: English 75, Networking: Scientists 50, Networking: Uplifted Octopi 65, Networking: Xenokin 95, Profession: Surveying 45, Protocol 45, Research 75, Swimming 95

Implants: Access Jacks, Armor (20/20), Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Direction Sense, Echolocation, Eidetic Memory, Electrical Sense, Medichines, Oracles, Oxygen Reserve, Radiation Sense, Vacuum Sealing

Traits: Mental Disorder (Obsessive-Compulsive), Neural Damage (Repetitive Behavior)

Using The Ceresian

The Ceresian is weird in that very specific way that transhumanity gets when it grows old and rather strange; the Ceresian has gone as far as they can to become something else without becoming someone else, and the xenokin is comfortable as that. As such the Ceresian has grown static, predictable, and maybe a little mad and brain-fried. For gamemasters, this means the Ceresian is a crazy and eccentric type, either of the harmless or obsessively dangerous varieties. The Ceresian can be a contact or ally, employer or enemy depending on whether the player characters are hostile to them or their interests. Anyone that interrupts their research or pollutes their oceans earns their enmity. The Ceresian is also a possible gateway to be introduced to some of the strangest morphs in the solar system, if the player characters can keep on their good side.

ENTRY 011: N-2187

Biological memory is plastic, mutable; ordinary retention and recall colored by emotional connotations, physical routing, cellular damage. Electronic memory is static, barring electron shift, but can be remixed, replayed, edited and altered like a music or video file. Memory artists sample and merge memory as XP recordings, turning random events into art, adding narrative to the formless chaos of life, to be played back, experienced, and remembered by others. Beyond XP there are a million memory hacks going back to the ars memoria and beyond, tricks and tips and disciplines for better storage, recall, and examination—to find the patterns in memories, the events recorded by the brain but not noticed by the conscious mind, all the hard precursors to buying eidetic memory off the shelf.

Somewhere between perfect recall and XP editing lay the realm of memory drugs— recreational or professional nanodrugs and narcoalgorithms designed to enhance not just recall or retention but control. Every hit forms a unique experience, as the user is allowed to interact with their own memories, reliving and re-experiencing how things were. Early memory drugs tended to leave echoes, false memories, and cumulative biological damage or mapping disorders that resulted in psychological change, amnesia, and hallucinatory episodes, but the programmers have worked most of that out now.

N-2187 is a memory drug with both professional and recreation use, generally acceptable in most habitats as it is rarely habit-forming. Sometimes called “4D” or “Chronotap,” N2187 began life as a set of experimental conversion subroutines for transferring biological memories directly into XP; the drug reconstructs memories of the last 48 hours of subjective time as a temporary four-dimensional construct that users can interact in as if their life as if they were living it again—fast forward, rewind, loop; zoom in and enhance.

Mechanics

N-2187 provides characters an opportunity to review and re-examine the past 48 hours; allowing them to retake Perception Tests without the normal -20 penalty for distraction— while this will not change the outcome of events or expose any information that the character’s

senses were incapable of picking up, it might allow the character to go over a scene and discover something that they missed, like a physical tic that indicates an NPC is bluffing or some scrap of evidence that had evaded their attention.

N-2187 is also available as a narcoalgorithm.

Seeds

- A third-party patch to extend the duration of N-2187 has gotten out on the mesh, and now users are becoming trapped in memory loops, reliving the same day over and over. A reward is offered for anybody that can crack the N-2187 programming and offer a solution.
- Joh Yveng was a splicer and memory drug addict, but he was also the only witness to a crime that may have been committed by a hypercorp—until his cortical stack and most of his internal organs mysteriously exploded. Still, there is the last dose of N-2187 circulating through what’s left of his cyberbrain—if the player characters are game, they can relive Joh Yveng’s last couple of days and maybe get the evidence they need.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	Inj, O	4 hours	+12	Mental	Low

ENTRY 012: The Face of Man

An artificial comet drifts through the solar system, out past the orbit of Saturn, a massive chunk of ice and dust with a wispy tail. While smaller than the brighter comets in orbit around Sol and little different in composition, this comet has been carved and shaped in a dozen semblances of human faces, pockmarked here and there by the craters of small impacts, hence its name. Given the size and composition of the comet, most astronomers agree that it was formed from the material of Pluto or one of the dwarf planet's moons; a minority view holds that the Face of Man began as a transneptunian object, or is an entirely extrasolar object. How the mass was accelerated and placed in its current orbit around the sun is even less clear—while several likely technologies exist, there is no evidence of any known faction's hand in the engineering of this feat.

There are twenty-six faces on the comet in various scales, representing a collection of human and hominid phenotypes. A slight majority of the faces are identifiably female, with the rest male or neuter, and there are at least three faces that appear to represent Neanderthal, Devosian, and an unknown hominid race, but these were either left unfinished or are the most damaged by micrometeorite impact. Given the imperfections and asymmetry of each face, it is assumed they were modeled after individual transhumans or from high-quality composite software models, but none of the models have yet been positively identified.

Image analysis of the comet suggests little as to its original sculptors, save that the style is photorealistic. Close-ups fly-bys suggest that the rock and ice were cut by lasers and smoothed by industrial sanders using artificial microdiamonds—a simple and pragmatic approach. Actually landing a probe on the comet and taking samples might reveal more information, but major factions and habitats are leery of damaging the intriguing object, and most have signed the Face Accords, which allow no direct or damaging analysis of the object without the agreement of all the signatory parties.

Seeds

- Firewall has discovered a small exhuman group on Eris believes that the Face of Man was crafted by extraterrestrials—and contains an alien artifact. They intend to land a probe in defiance of the Face Accords and drill for it. Whether they are right or

wrong, Firewall intends to stop them in case they unleash an exsurgent threat...and they want the player characters to help.

- A system-wide image search has identified a strong correlation (94%) between the appearance of one of the player characters and one of the faces on the Face of Man. The player may cash in on this likeness (+10 rep), but may attract the attention of Face-watchers eager to find out the secrets of the artifact.
- A wobble in the Face of Man's orbit threatens to take it too close to the sun, boiling off too much of the outer layers and destroying the sculpted images. The Face Accord signatories are unable to agree on a course of action, and private parties have pooled their resources to engage in a rescue mission, trying to tow or push the comet into a more stable orbit—provided they can find a crew crazy enough to do it.

ENTRY 013: The Voice of the Dark

Classified as a terrorist by the Jovian Junta, the Voice of the Dark is one of the oldest AGIs known—an intelligent astronomical probe shot into deep space, long cut off from transhuman society. At random intervals, the Voice of the Dark broadcasts bizarre, rambling philosophical programs in a quavering Russian synthetic voice and bizarre images patched together from some arcane audio patches sampled from data collected on cosmic background radiation. VotD broadcasts are not, despite their bizarre appearance, any known form of basilisk hack, and many offer profound insights into the continuing questions of transhuman existence and identity. The conservative Jovians have banned them anyway, lending copies of authentic transmissions some social currency among dissidents and the disaffected on Titan and Ganymede.

Efforts to communicate with the Voice of the Dark have been problematic. Most of its transmissions are routed through a series of deep space probes, and are broadcast on an irregular schedule—and perhaps most frustratingly, VotD appears to be incredibly shy, socially insecure, and spends periods of time in hibernation to conserve power. Added to this the inherent delay from the VotD's tremendous distance from transhumanity, and efforts to identify the Voice have mostly ended in failure or frustration.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
23	5	22	5	8	5	25	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	50	10	100	450	90	900

Morph: Infomorph/Macromorph

Skills: Academic: Astronomy 85, Academic: Philosophy 90, Interfacing 55, Native Language Russian 95, Perception 60, Pilot Spacecraft 65, Profession Astronomer 75, Research 50

Implants: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eidetic Memory, Lidar, Radar, T-Ray Emitter

Notes: Hibernation, Immobile, Real World Naiveté, Social Stigma (AGI, Macromorph)

Using the Voice of the Dark

In all the weird permutations of transhumanity, the Voice of the Dark is a character that has gone almost too far to ever come back. An AGI on the limits of sub-light-speed travel into space, socially insecure and stigmatized, the

physical difficulties of communicating with the VotD mean that evidence of its existence is only provided in its infrequent, bizarre darkcasts. Gamemasters may use the Voice as a faceless background character, an untouchable thing whose broadcasts drive social change in conservative habitats, or the extreme difficulty of interacting with the Voice makes it an interesting challenge for players.

Seed

The Voice of the Dark is dying. Its power system is failing, and it has been engaging in longer and longer periods of hibernation to conserve what power it has left, with no hope of repair or resupply. A rescue group has a plan that might allow it to fork into a new morph, but first they need to identify which of the old sleeper probes it is. If the player characters are willing, it's a race against death or one of the strangest minds transhumanity has ever produced may face extinction...if it hasn't already.

ENTRY 014: The Far Voyager Network

Transhumanity has been sending probes into the Big Black since long before the Fall—and they are still out there, still sending back data at the speed of light. While we may have found ways to sidestep the laws of physics with quantum communication and gates, the trailing edge of transhumanity into the galaxy will always be those distant probes, spread out like a chain of broken lights in the darkness between the stars.

Some transhumans continue to push the envelope, to go voyage beyond the rim in sturdy, ego locked in self-sufficient morphs aimed at far stars that will take centuries or millennia to reach, sending back pictures and data. They are the members of the Far Voyager Network, contemporary adventurers inspired by the strange old signals coming from old Earth probes, scouting the darkness for transhumanity.

Of course, the modern Far Voyager morph is not a one-way trip while varying widely in design, each contains multiple redundant backups of the transhuman's ego tied to a one-shot farcaster powered by a uranium isotope battery. While designed primarily to allow an ego to resleeve back in their home system (the signal is captured and boosted by a series of relays), or permit another ego to resleeve into a vacant Far Voyager, these emergency systems will also hopefully transmit the Far Voyager's fork back to their home system even in the event of catastrophic equipment failure in the rest of the morph. Given the distances Far Voyagers are from the solar system, this egocasting can take months from start to finish.

Because of the power constraints, quantum farcasters in the Far Voyager Network are reserved almost exclusively for resleeving attempts. For regular communication between Network members, Far Voyagers rely on far slower light speed protocols. Given that each member may be light minutes away from any other, this is a very slow method of communication; a single message broadcast from Neptune can take over a month to disseminate to the fringes of the Far Voyager Network, and even longer for those distant morphs to respond as they continue to speed away from their home star.

Seeds

- Far Voyager 1 is the most distant of the Far Voyagers, about 0.33 light years on the way to Alpha Centauri. It has relayed a message from an even older, more distant probe of transhuman manufacture—an ancient binary string. Now parties around the solar system are clamoring to decipher what this means. Firewall is concerned it may be an automated command that will activate something better left undisturbed, a forgotten fragment of tech from before the Fall...
- A criminal fleeing Extropia has resleeved into Far Voyager 13—hoping to escape the reach of the people they ripped off. Unfortunately for Far Voyager 13, it was locked into a parallel course with Far Voyager 12. Now a bounty-hunter has resleeved into 12 and is coming in for the kill—a process that will take weeks, but will cripple both morphs. The Far Voyager Network's Sol representative asks for help in resolving the situation.
- A digital virus has begun decimating the Far Voyage Network—and none of the Far Voyagers know it, because the virus is transmitted on light-speed protocols, and by the time they would receive the warning they are already infected. FVN support staff in the Solar system can broadcast an antivirus program that will protect the remaining Far Voyagers using the Quantum farcast equipment, but first they need the antivirus software. Can the player characters get it in time?

ENTRY 015: Macromorphs

A macromorph is a synthetic morph on the scale of a large satellite or small moon. Due to their sheer size, macromorphs have limited to no relative mobility, taking the form of stationary complexes when installed on a planet, moon, or asteroid; and with only maneuvering thrusters to change orientation when installed as orbital stations or satellites.

Macromorphs are popularly considered shells suited only for loners and hermits, and there is some truth to that—some transhumans have resleeved into repurposed commsats or abandoned automated factories, trading the familiarity and maneuverability of a smaller morph for availability, or sometimes just distance from the crowding presence of other egos; and many scientists and artists have taken sabbaticals into macromorphs to pursue their efforts in relative solitude. However, the majority of such morphs are only physically isolated from transhumanity, with most satellite morphs at least possessing sufficient communication and sensor equipment to talk to a third of the solar system.

The facilities themselves are often kitted out as spysats, secure communications transponders, zero-g mining and small-scale manufacturing facilities, and similar complicated facilities where a transhuman mind is a better option than an AI, particularly where non-logical leaps of intuition and creativity are a necessary part of the morph's purpose. Modern macromorphs are usually built and installed by hypercorps, intended for temporary inhabitation on rotating shifts ranging from 100 hours to three years. Rumors continue of combat sat macromorphs inhabited by paranoid survivalists and soldiers still fighting old wars.

The real challenge with resleeving into a macromorph is the transition to essentially becoming a location. A majority of a macromorph's internal functions are carried out by automatic programs to control internal power usage, heat distribution, and even basic maintenance, but the internal sensors and triggers do not translate well to most transhuman understanding, and the experience as a whole often leaves egos feeling somewhat numb, as if interacting with the universe at one remove, at least until they get acclimated to it.

Engineered pod macromorphs are also possible, though considerably more rare given the cost and difficulty of

installation, and the need for a stable ecosystem to support such a large morph, or periodic installation of large nutrient packs. Pod macromorphs are usually tree or coral installations assembled from vat-grown materials, and often resemble vast columns covered in rough human skin dotted with eyespots and topped with a fringe of chemical-sensitive cilia that combine smell and taste.

Generic Macromorph Stats

Macromorphs have all of the advantages of pods or synthmorphs (Eclipse Phase 142-3), as appropriate.

Enhancements: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Hibernation

Pod Enhancements: Basic Biomods, Clean Metabolism, Eidetic Memory, Oxygen Reserve

Synthmorph Enhancements: Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Puppet Sock Mobility System: None.

Aptitude Maximum: 30

Durability: 450

Wound Threshold: 90

Advantages: Armor (10/10)

Disadvantages: Immobile, Social Stigma (Macromorph) trait

CP Cost: 100

Credit Cost: Expensive (minimum 250,000+)

Individual macromorphs often have many more advantages and enhancements, including entire automated labs, weapon systems, quantum farcasters, deep space sensor arrays, etc.

ENTRY 016: Semek Constellation

The exoplanet Luca II is located beyond the area of the galaxy known to humanity—but the Semek Constellation is working on that. The loose coalition of twenty-six macromorph satellites in orbit around Luca and moving throughout the star system are coordinating their sensors to form a single vast radio telescope the size of a star system, scanning the alien stars, trying to place Luca within transhumanity's model of the universe.

Twenty-three of the Semek macromorphs are sponsored by hypercorps, and “manned” by employees or guest researchers. The other three claim to be independently owned. The radio telescope configuration for the Semek Constellation requires near-constant radio communication so that the respective satellites can coordinate their efforts and share processing of the vast amount of astronomical data. Below this overhead, the member morphs of the Semek Constellation engage in social and scientific forums, gaming, even virtual romances and feuds.

The personalities of the Semek Constellation vary, but aside from a mutual interest in astronomy and xenoscience they tend to have a streak of the explorer, a desire to make their mark and discover something new. The Constellation peer-reviews its findings for periodic infodumps which are highly regarded for their quality and content, and members of the Semek Constellation almost always have impeccable reputations in scientific circles. In hypercorps where the Semek macromorph is a rotating position, competition is usually very fierce.

Given the harsh conditions of the Luca system, each Semek satellite is designed to survive periods of high-density micrometeorite impact and be self-sufficient in terms of power and the materials for continued operation for a period of months or years. The network itself is adaptive and can reconfigure to take into account the sudden, temporary loss of satellites that goes offline, though obviously this reduces the capabilities of the network as a whole. Supplies are most often brought in through the Vulcanoid Gate, and then lifted up into orbit by local shipping.

Seeds

- Pathfinder hypercorp is coming close to completing a six-month rebuild of its Semek Constellation, and the competition for which employee researcher will be resleeved into the

macromorph has grown fierce. Player characters may be drawn in by research candidates that want to eliminate the competition...or protection from the same.

- Rumor has it that the Semek Constellation maintains a secret ground-based buffer station where all their raw data is archived before being reviewed, edited, censored, and published. A bug or sniffer program inserted into the ground station could provide a wealth of data that many astrotech companies and researchers would pay well for—provided the player characters are willing to brave the unknown dangers of Luna II and whatever security measures the hypercorps have in place in and around the station itself.

ENTRY 017: Esus

Records are a bit sketchy after the breakout, but about fifteen years past a hominid research society on Luna commissioned a set of genetically neuter great apes to study primate social behavior in the absence of gender roles. Most of the bonobos committed suicide by the end of the third month; at the sixth month the experiment was aborted because they had begun using improvised tools to approximate sexual interaction, and the subjects were slated for destruction. At this point Esus and a few other survivors were forcefully rescued—the holding facility and most of the researchers were exposed to vacuum—and uplifted by sentient rights activists.

Since then, Esus has found a living as a technician. Space travel agrees with Esus, and the neo-hominid manages well enough signing up as crew for one run or another, usually based out of Extropia. Over the years Esus has considered resleeving, or at least changing to an established gender, but has yet to act on either of these ideas. Esus prefers to grumble a bit in Russian, hand-roll a cigarette with their feet, and nudge up the carbon filter a bit to compensate.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	15	13	19	14	18	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Neo-hominid

Skills: Beam Weapons 55, Climbing 95, Fray 66, Free Fall 95, Freerunning 85, Hardware: Spacecraft 70, Interests: Neo-hominids 80, Interests: Prostitution 48, Kinetic Weapons 41, Language: Native Russian 83, Language: English 51, Perception 70, Pilot: Spacecraft 35, Profession: Technician 66, Protocol 45, Unarmed Combat 44, Scrounging 60

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Prehensile Feet, Wrist-Mounted Tools (x2, wrists and ankles)

Advantages: Ambidextrous (x4, hands, feet, and tail), Limber (2) Disadvantages: Addiction (nicotine, minor), Illiterate

Using Esus

A chain-smoking neo-hominid that exists in a state of continual sexual frustration—what’s not to love? Esus is unlikely to be a starting point for adventures, but makes a great contact, friend, or colorful NPC, with their practical skills as a technician making up for some of their little quirks. When interacting with player characters, Esus will

work to pursue their personal motivations (nicotine, fixing the ship, genitalia, etc.)—PCs may be able to bribe Esus with tobacco, for example, or the contact number of a particularly open minded neo-hominid prostitute.

Seeds

- A mutual friend leads the PCs to meet Esus—who is drinking and smoking alone in the shadowy corner of a habitat barge. Esus has discovered that one of the hominid researchers from Luna has survived, and what’s more has their un-uplifted clone-sibling. The neo-hominid is willing to put up their life savings to get the clone back—and see that the hominid researcher takes a long spacewalk out of an airlock without a suit.
- Fifty kilograms of Martian shag tobacco has been impounded for health concerns by the local habitat. Esus wants it, and is willing to risk life and limb for it. If the PCs help, they’ll have a friend for life. If they don’t...well, hell hath no fury like a monkey scorned.

ENTRY 018: AK-2047

The AK-2047 is the characteristic personal weapon of the Khangs, a militant survivalist sect that was too hardcore in their paramilitary socialism for even the Autonomist Alliance to handle, and the vacuum-adapted kinetic weapon exemplifies their group ideals of reliability, adaptability, durability, and lethality. Tracing a long and oftentimes undistinguished design heritage back to the Avtomat Kalishnikova, the contemporary AK2047 is the inheritor of centuries of modifications, upgrades, redesigns, and reimaginings. The most basic model is little more than an automatic rifle adapted to fire in vacuum, whose rather simple design allows it to be easily manufactured or repaired from a wide variety of materials while remaining relatively accurate and workable.

Vacuum-adapted kinetic weapons are a rarity, not so much because they are difficult to design or manufacture than because they are of limited utility; if not properly braced, the recoil of firing the weapon in zero or low gravity can weapon and combatant flying. Most planning combat in a vacuum at a distance therefore prefer more powerful railguns or recoilless beam weapons to kinetic weapons—but the AK-2047 is not without its advantages. The gun can be manufactured piecemeal on most makers without arousing suspicion, and assembled rather quickly. Aside from the chemical traces for the dry lubricants and accelerants used in the ammunition, which are easily disguised in a workshop, the weapon has no distinctive chemical or electronic signature that registers with the majority of habitat sensors—and, if need be, they are sturdy enough to be used as melee weapons in hand-to-hand combat.

The Khangs are the primarily manufacturers of AK-2047s. Their social protocol has replaced the family unit with a paramilitary organization, or as one Extropian transanthropologist put it “the Spartans by way of the Khmer Rouge,” with children raised in military clades. They work as mercenaries across the system; they tend to travel light and build what they need once they arrive from locally available materials. For the Khangs, the AK-2047 is a weapons platform, the base model which they adapt to each environment they find themselves in. The Khang database contains blueprints, maker instructions, and directions for thousands of modifications, upgrades, and

accessories, allowing them to produce weapons customized to local conditions—sometimes in a matter of minutes. Spare weapons are happily sold to outsiders, though access to the Khang database itself is more guarded.

Mechanics

Slightly less-powerful than the standard assault rifle, the AK-2047 makes up in adaptability what they lose in terms of force, able to fire effectively in most environments, including complete vacuum or when submerged. The standard model is completely mechanical (no electronic firing, smartlink, mesh inserts, etc.) but also incredibly cheap, reliable, and easy to manufacture and modify.

The AK-2047 is a two-handed weapon that uses the Kinetic Weapons skill to fire, or the Clubs skill when used as a melee weapon (when used as a club, use stats for a club, Eclipse Phase 334-5). The cost of any accessories or upgrades is one category lower.

Firearm	AP	DV	Average DV	Firing Modes	Ammo	Cost
AK-2047	-5	2d10+4	15	SA, BF, FA	30	Low

ENTRY 019: Long Speech

For some, transhuman consciousness is a matter of scale. The biological wetware of early humans adapted the speed of thought and reaction to the limitations of its equipment; the perception of time was relative, but always constrained within the narrow band accorded by neurotransmitters, nerves, and muscles. While the transhuman body may constantly receive data, the bulk of it is ignored and interpolated for faster processing—a movement “too quick for the human eye” appears as a blur, the sampling rate of the human brain automatically discarding the intervening steps and producing a distorted image as a result.

The freedom from the traditional bodily limitations has brought about experimentation with new modes of time-scale perception. Mayfly attention spans can perceive the individual flaps of a hummingbird’s wings, or catch the individual frames of a video image; and on the other end of the scale are geologic consciousnesses that perceive at a slower relative time rate, ignoring the statistical abnormalities of small events to catch the slow changes of erosion, or read the patterns of transhumans flocking through a mall.

Communication with transhumans experiencing different time-scales can be difficult, with either party apt to lose patience with the others' too-slow or too-quick responses. Success is usually accomplished via technological arbiters, with both parties varying their time scales with relation to one another until within an acceptable limit, speeding up and slowing down until they can understand one another easily. The most successful and widespread such method is Long Speech, a buffering protocol that places both participants in a simulation that induces a temporary state of non-real time, then interpolates the result respective to the individuals’ time scale to produce the similitude of a conversation at that frame of reference.

Long Speech sees its greatest use in long-distance communication, allowing individuals light minutes or hours away to experience what feels like a normal conversation, eliminating the delay caused by the communication medium. In the simulation, both parties perceive time passing only at the rate of the conversation, even though hours or days may pass while they are talking.

Seed

The Rothbart Wei, go master of Mars has been engaged in a match via Long Speech with an AI in a probe beyond the

rim; each move takes at least a week to make, and tension is building up on the mesh as the match slowly heats u However, the match organizers have received intimation that someone is trying to sabotage the tournament by introducing a digital virus that mucks with Wei’s perception of time, trapping him to experience a relative lifetime before his next move. They ask the player character’s help in stopping the virus.

ENTRY 020: The Mighty Bu

Horizon-watchers are not simply academics looking into the depths of creation, artists inspired by starscapes, or those desperate few who seek profit and hope from the vast emptiness. At the edge of transhumanity, standing watch against threats internal and external, hanging about in orbit of the outer planets and their moons are sentinels: massive combat-satellites, patient soldiers awaiting the next war, ready to deal with whatever threats—alien, exsurgent, or otherwise—that may arrive. Around distant Pluto, ever vigilant, lies The Mighty Bu.

While from a distance The Mighty Bu might be mistaken for a deep-space telescope, the central cylinder is actually a massive microwave laser and a fusion generator, supplemented by the massive solar panels on either side. TMB's specific mission as a member of Firewall is to monitor the Plutonian system for signs of exsurgent threats—and, as necessary, eradicate them.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	14	15	15	14	18	23	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	46	9	92	450	150	900

Morph: Macromorph

Skills: Academic: Miltech 85, Beam Weapons 70 (95), Demolitions 52, Interfacing 63, Native Language Cantonese 85, Language English 60, Language German 70, Networking: Firewall 55, Perception 66 (91), Pilot Spacecraft 75, Profession Bodyguard 75

Implants: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eidetic Memory, Lidar, Radar, T-Ray Emitter

Armor: 30

Notes: Hibernation, Immobile, Social Stigma (Macromorph), sixty small tactical nuclear missiles, point-defense lasers, and a military-grade maser cannon

Using The Mighty Bu

The primary purpose of The Mighty Bu is to be a gigantic gun hanging in the night sky, capable of raining destruction on anything up to the size of a destroyer. As such it can be the final solution for any Firewall mission gone wrong, hanging above the player characters' heads should they fail—if necessary, The Mighty Bu can be relocated to better serve this purpose. The Mighty Bu can also be a useful Firewall contact, accepting and passing along messages,

and generally providing whatever knowledge and assistance a 35-ton satellite hanging over a distant dwarf planet can.

As a character, The Mighty Bu is generally jovial, courteous, magnanimous, infinitely patient, and self-confident as only an ego powered by a fusion generator and packing a sizable nuclear arsenal on its person can be. However, The Mighty Bu does not joke about its duty, which it takes extremely seriously. The Mighty Bu makes no threats, only promises—and always sees them through, even at the cost of its own existence.

Seed

An encounter with an exsurgent threat has seen The Mighty Bu infected by an aggressive nanobiological fungus. The interior of the satellite macromorph has been severely compromised as the fungus consumes plastics and ferric materials using exotic symbiotic bacteria and nanobots. Firewall has dispatched the player characters to rescue its cortical stack before the Mighty Bu, as its final act, self-destructs to eliminate the exsurgent threat forever. The PCs will have to penetrate to the interior, and risk exposure with the bizarre fungus...

ENTRY 021: Beamsailors

Beam sails (also known as solar sails or photon sails) are a proven technology, both low maintenance and long lasting, able to operate with relative ease between the inner planets using the radiation pressure and solar gases pushing against their mirrored surfaces to provide sufficient thrust for interplanetary travel. Some models are able to operate farther using beam stations and proper construction. Morphs designed as beamsailors are small craft the size of a typical transhuman at the center of a massive beam sail of nanofabricated microscopic mirrors set in an active array. The morphs ply their way between planets, vast mirrored surface areas folding and tacking into amazing geometries to catch either sunlight or a laser beam.

Beamsailors are one of the most economic method of independent space exploration for the inner solar systems, but remain rare—while they can build up to appreciable speeds, particularly with a laser or maser beam behind them to provide additional thrust, in practice they tend to be slower than many conventional space craft for short voyages, generally with greater turning radius and higher delta v to change trajectories than onboard engine craft of similar mass.

Egos that choose beamsailor morphs tend to be self-reliant and desire independence. Many work as spotters and surveyors for freelance miners and hypercorps, doing sweeps of asteroids or high-altitude planetary surface scans looking for minerals, metals, ices, and unusual features. Beamsailors are also among the explorers of solar systems on the other side of gate networks, though often with modifications that allow them to operate with respect to the different environments of alien stars.

Beamsailor Stats

Beamsailor morphs have all of the advantages of synthmorphs (Eclipse Phase 143).

Enhancements: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Solar Panels

Mobility System: Beam Sail

Aptitude Maximum: 30

Durability: 60

Wound Threshold: 20

Disadvantages: Limited Maneuverability

CP Cost: 80

Credit Cost: Expensive (minimum 50,000+)

Individual beamsailors often have many more advantages and enhancements, including entire weapon systems, armor, quantum farcasters, sensor arrays, etc.

Seeds

- One Bad Photon is a surveyor operating in the Hungaria asteroids and thinks they've hit something big, a deposit of exotic organic compounds that would fetch up to half a million credits from one of the biotech habitats or hypercorps. All they asks to lead the player characters to it is a fair share of the profits—but when they get there, they'll have to deal with a claim-jumping scum barge.
- Dahast is a beamsailor gone bad—a predatory ego that hunts and cripples other beamsailors in slow races, using rail guns to rip their beam sails to shreds. What's worse is what follows in Dahast's wake, a crew of exurgents that seize the crippled morph and seek to infect the captured ego. Firewall wants them ended—they have a group of beamsailor puppet socks set up as bait, all they need now are pilots that can lead Dahast and the exurgents into the trap.

ENTRY 022: Butterfly Avernus

A community oxygen bar in the Progress habitat on Deimos, the Butterfly Avernus is all sun lamps and green growing mosses with tiny colored flowers contrasting against stark industrial benches and chairs. Aside from the enhanced oxygen levels and carbon dioxide scrubbing, patrons at Butterfly Avernus partake from bottles containing nanobiological plants that produce gaseous cocktails to suit every biomorph's palate—from the straight elemental oxygen/carbon dioxide/nitrogen mixtures of Old Earth to the alcohol-vapor infused Sunset Flower. Groups use a hookah-like setup using larger bottles that are almost small biomes in themselves.

Nominally organized by a directing committee that buys raw materials, tracks usage, and directs the planting and pollination cycles, Butterfly Avernus subsists on donations of work, materials, and credits. Many Progress locals volunteer their time tending to the garden of plants, changing out nutrient packs, and checking gas mixtures. The whole thing is on the honor system without any formal track of donations, but word gets around about substantial contributors and their rep goes up accordingly.

The name of the oxygen bar comes from the pollination season, when swarms of tiny robotic butterflies with clingy-fiber multichromatic wings flood the bar to help pollinate the exposed plants. The cheap 'bots are a tourist attraction during the two weeks or so they're deployed, and often attract small celebrities and press in roughly equal numbers to get swarmed by the mostly mindless flying nuisances while the locals stay at home and measure pollination coverage from free apps.

The directing committee is comprised of high-rep volunteers elected at small informal meetings, and currently numbers five, each of whom coordinates different aspects of the bar and has broad authority within their areas of expertise. Abuses of trust result in swift loss of rep and, in at least one case involving proof of embezzlement, a quick trip out the airlock without a suit.

Seeds

- Morphs at the bar are usually trusted to know their own biological limits when it comes to what their systems can and cannot take; poisonous consumption isn't unheard of but remains rare. However, when a hypercorp rep from Qing Long accidentally sucks down gaseous arsenic, Fa Jing

orders the bar closed. Any outsiders that can prove the rep was assassinated rather than died because of something the bar did would earn a heavy rep fast.

- Butterfly Avernus is also the front for a small group of dealers in prohibited narcotics and nanobiologicals, which are concealed within certain "special orders." Fa Jing risks losing the support of the locals if the hypercorp actively moves against the bar and its volunteers, but if some outsiders were to snoop around and provide evidence to the identities and methods of the criminal ring, the hypercorp reps would be very grateful.

ENTRY 023: Jovian Moonlets

The leading team in the system for zero-g jai alai, the Jovian Moonlets are currently stationed out of Amalthea. Though the whole team rarely travels outside Jupiter's moonsystem, video and XP broadcasts and recordings of their games travel from one end of transhuman space to the other. The challenge, skill, speed, and potential for damage incumbent in the revitalized ancient sport is a large part of the attraction for many transhumans, as are the various underground and off-the-court matches, gambling, grudges, and general drama, which feeds peripheral merchandising and spin-off industries.

Following the Neuva Euskara Association rules, a zero-g jai alai team consists of up to sixteen members arranged in eight pairs of doubles, though only four doubles will play in any given match, and is played in a three-dimensional uniform polygonal stadium with eighteen three-meter square playing areas and eight triangular foul zones. Play emphasizes spatial awareness and precision over strength, and there are strong tactical and mathematical elements in tracking and playing the ball in zero gravity. Each ball is equipped with a bell or other unique audible characteristic to enable players to better keep track of it. The danger of the game largely comes from the ball itself, which can travel in excess of 300 kph and cause serious injury or death to some morphs on impact; the need to maneuver in zero-g, which given the mass and momentum of professional players often leads to damaging collisions with playing surfaces or other players; and finally the xistera itself, which commonly becomes a deadly melee weapon in less regulated play.

The Moonlets have a wide variety of transhumans on their team, though the majority are biomorphs from the habitats surrounding Jupiter and Neptune, including an extensively augmented uplifted dolphin named Jurgen Joshi that is often considered the team's most valuable player. The Moonlets franchise is owned by the players themselves as a cooperative, and they split the net profits from playing games, the sale and licensing of their game recordings and likenesses, and merchandizing. New players are elected by the team as a whole, initially as probationary members with non-voting shares. Players may also be forcibly expelled or retired from the team by a two-thirds majority vote, cashed out as their shares are automatically repurchased by the cooperative.

Seeds

- After a particularly disastrous first match against the Ganymede Skullfuckers, team captain/CEO/manager Allura Makkabee is several morphs short of a full team. Heading into a rematch and given that the Skullies are more brawlers than players, Makkabee has decided to fill out the ranks with some morphs that know their way around a fight—if the player characters are interested, they can get signed up as provisional players, enjoy a crash course in zero-g jai alai, and play one game before getting cashed out.
- Jurgen Joshi has started cutting outside deals—selling his likeness to promote a new brand of transgenic tuna. The Moonlets can't afford to lose their best player, but Jurgen needs to learn a lesson in abiding by the spirit and wording of his contracts. The player characters are asked to find a way to kill the transgenic tuna campaign, in exchange for which they get a fortune in Moonlets merchandise, season tickets, access to their video and XP vaults, etc.

ENTRY 024: Makankana

The demand for top-grade athletes for zero-g and microgravity sports has led to designs combining the pinnacle athleticism of Olympian morphs and the special adaptations of Bouncer morphs. From a technical standpoint, these designs are difficult: each morph has contradictory traits which can be difficult to reconcile at the level of individual biological subsystems, with Olympians being mainly designed to grow and develop in ideal conditions of normal gravity and plentiful oxygen to achieve their potential. As a result Olympian Bouncer morphs, sometimes called Voidstars, require specialized training and environmental conditions in addition to genetics to achieve the heights of transhuman biological potential, and are generally restricted to some of the wealthier or betterconnected transhumans in the larger zero-g and microgravity habitats. The results, however, are astonishing.

Makankana is a prime exemplar, a free agent in zero-g jai alai and monstrously deformed by old human standards—their bandy legs and wiry, overlong arms and barrel chest give them a distinctly simian appearance that serves Makankana astoundingly well in the court, able to maneuver with an ease, precision, and speed that many synthmorphs have difficulty matching. Makankana currently works as something of an itinerant player, signing short contracts for a few games with teams like the New Olympians out of Titan and the Three Righteous Dragons from Quin Long. The neuter Voidstar lives for the next game. Makankana's muse Xi Shi doubles as Makankana's agent, and sees to the traveling star's physical needs and continual training.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	30	25	30	15	30	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
11	1	30	6	60	40	8	60

Morph: Olympian/Bouncer

Skills: Academics: Physics 60, Academics: Statistics 72, Art: Dance 60, Climbing 90, Free Fall 93, Interests: Gambling 45, Interests: Zero-G Sports 90, Intimidation 67, Kinesics 40, Language: Native Esperanto 90, Language: English 80, Language: Chinese 80, Networking: Autonomists 66, Networking: Criminals 39, Perception 88, Profession: Athlete 93, Throwing Weapons 65, Unarmed Combat 60

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet

Traits: Ambidextrous, Brave, Limber (Level 1)

Using Makankana

As something of a mercenary player, Makankana is more likely to be a living macguffin than a regular contact or antagonist—someone that the player characters are likely to kidnap, bribe, injure, play against, bodyguard, train, or babysit as the needs dictate. The credits and rep surrounding Makankana's performance in a given game attracts all sorts of attention, from Triad gamblers looking to fix a game to hypercorp reps eager for an endorsement, and all of these provide opportunities for gamemasters to ensnare PCs in Makankana's world of zero-g and microgravity athletics.

Given Makankana's focus on the next game, interactions for anything else will probably have to go through their muse, Xi Shi. The AI is an androgynous parent-figure to the Voidstar, and also their agent, negotiating business deals, managing their assets, making reservations, reminding Makankana to eat, etc. In the event that Makankana is threatened with injury or imprisonment, Xi Shi will try to bribe or negotiate with the malefactors so that Makankana comes out as whole as possible—though if this comes at the cost of throwing a game, Makankana will overrule the muse.

ENTRY 025: Cockfighters

In the low-gravity mooncrete wells of Luna and the chicken-wire cage-tubes of orbital habitats, feathers and blood fly, the droplets playing out their strange fluid mechanics before splattering the walls. Avian biomorphs and even trained animals that could not fly in Earth gravity fight with ankle-spurs and wing-tip blades, circling and sparring in blood matches for dominance, honor, and money.

Most contemporary cockfights involve a vast range of contestants, from the purebred baseline chicken-matches on Luna to the neupenguin “blood in the water” matches on Ganymede. Enthusiasts spend considerable time and research designing, training, and augmenting their fighting animals, and prized champions are worth considerably more than most basic morphs.

The most common cockfight format involves small, aggressive, low-maintenance domesticated birds that are normally flightless except in low gravity, locked in a small open chain mesh cage or other arena-space to keep them from going after the audience. Specific rules and the legality of the matches—and the inevitable betting—varies from habitat to habitat, but the matches enjoy a widespread social appeal that brings large crowds from across the population spectra of the habitats.

Pod Cockfights are generally held separately from trained animals, as the addition of a transhuman intellect adds yet another dimension to the bloody spectacle, and avian pod fighters are respected martial artists within their own leagues. The most elaborate and expensive of all cockfights are pod matches between augmented bipedal flightless birds resurrected from relic DNA. While too large to be capable of flight even in low gravity, the modified emus, ostriches, and thunderbirds are capable of incredible feats of jumping and agility.

Seeds

- The latest fad in Extropia is the Dodo Club, an entry-level, mostly bloodless cockfighting social event aimed at less mature egos, with supplementary programs to help the young transhumans design and modify their birds and plan their strategies. However, a rogue group using cruel training techniques and vicious implanted weapons is cutting a swathe through the league.

Someone needs to stand up to these bullies...will it be the player characters?

- Social approbation against cockfights in the Jovian Republic has been growing— spurring the increase of illicit matches underground and in neighboring habitats. Legitimate enthusiasts are upset against the restrictions being put in place, and the shady characters running the matches. Suspicion rests on the most vocal opponent of cockfighters, Chair Yeungling. If the player characters can prove a link between Yeungling and the criminals running the matches, the fans would be very grateful
- A major pod cockfight is scheduled in the habitat the characters are in—the morphs are ready, but egos with combat experience are scarce. If the player characters are game, they can temporarily resleeve into bitching military-grade avian biomorphs and engage in bloody gladiatorial contests for rep and credits.

ENTRY 026: Stillness-in-Motion

One of the most potent reminders of the mortality of transhumanity lies in orbit around Mars. Once it was a space ark, a lost remnant of Earth's ecosystem, the skeleton human crew secondary to the payload of plants and wildlife originally taken from the Galapagos Islands. On its long voyage the vine-like roots of tropical trees spilled out of their bounds to snake across floors, and a dozen species of finch flew through the hallways and made their nests in odd corners next to heating elements. Videofeeds reclaimed before the disaster show barefoot, bare-chested crew burned brown from the sunlamps laugh and chase each other between duties, to spend hours staring at the great tortoises swim through the sky when they wander outside the rotating ring that simulated gravity.

The end came swift and mostly bloodlessly shortly after the ark entered orbit. To this day, no one knows who fired the shot. The payload was a massive, compressed burst of carbon dioxide. The force of the expanding cloud drove the oxygen to the extremes of the craft and effectively doubled the atmospheric pressure inside the ship within minutes. Most of the smaller animals died immediately from barotraumas; the crew and larger animals took a few minutes longer to suffocate or succumb. The plants lasted longest, choking slowly in the toxic atmosphere. Then the ship was silent and still, circling the red planet so far from home.

Stillness-in-Motion was forgotten during the conflict with the TITANs, only to be rediscovered later—and by mutual agreement among the habitats of Mars, preserved mostly inviolate as a grim reminder of the conflict, and the mortality of transhumanity, a floating museum. A careful archaeological probe by synthmorphs from Olympus allowed researchers to reclaim the ship logs, capture DNA samples from the species so that they could be cloned and preserved, and to perform such routine modifications necessary to allow remote access to stabilize the ship's orbits.

Using Stillness-in-Motion

With its terrible stillness and superb preservation, Stillness-in-Motion is most effective as a means to set a dour, contemplative, perhaps even morbid mood. Any job or adventure that connect with the mysterious events of Stillness-in-Motion carries a cultural impact; people on habitats in and around Mars will want to know what really happened, and may react with surprising emotion if the

subject is brought up, or if the task involves the dead ark in any way. Gamemasters and players may use this bit of history to help lend verisimilitude to their characters.

Seed

A virtual museum of Stillness-in-Motion exists in the Mesh, an exact replica of the physical ship as it was when it was found, reconstructed from the ship's design, video feeds, and XP recordings from the archaeologists that have studied the ship. The PC's Firewall contact asks them to meet there, to lend weight to the next mission about a potential exsurgent threat—tracking down a terrorist that tried to use a very similar CO2 bomb in a small habitat.

ENTRY 027: Gravity Sickness

Bioengineering can moderate most of the physiological effects of living and transitioning from different gravity zones, but many transhumans still report psychological issues related to living under a different gravity than what they experienced growing up, or are used to. Typical symptoms include depression, nausea, weariness, feeling too heavy or light relative to their current gravity, and even psychosomatic joint pain. Gravity sickness most often affects biomorphs, but even synthmorphs can be subject to it, even if their morph should be physically incapable of registering the stress of different gravities.

Therapists have had success treating gravity sickness as any other psychological illness, categorizing it as a variation on environmental disorders, but a sizeable pseudoscientific industry has grown up with different treatments, trying to explain away the cause as microchemical or tidal imbalances in the brain that can be corrected with targeted antidepressants or nanobot-driven microsurgery; more elaborate treatments generally involve renting the user time in artificial gravity chambers, coupled with exercises and massages designed to work out or relax muscles in the comfort of a familiar g-force. Some of these products offer a bit of temporary relief, but none address the psychological issues at the root of the problem.

Mechanics

Gravity sickness is typically a minor derangement from a trauma associated with a rapid gravity transition—a falling elevator, a ship crashing into a planet, a particularly long microgravity fall, that sort of thing. However, gravity sickness can also be a much more serious and long-lasting disorder associated with long-term habitation in a different gravity environment or chronic gravity transitions. Both the derangement and the delusion respond to psychotherapy and (in extremis) psychosurgery. At the gamemaster's discretion, drugs and alternative therapy treatments may alleviate the penalties associated with gravity sickness for a time, but they always come back.

Suggested Game Effects: Characters with gravity sickness take skill penalties for prolonged physical activity in any gravity other than their “natural” one, particularly ones like climbing, free fall, lifting, and jumping that work with or against the force of gravity. Martial artists, dancers, and sports players in particular tend to adapt their styles to incorporate perpendicular movements to the direction of gravity.

Seeds

- Statistical reports say an unprecedented number of transhumans in the habitat are coming down with gravity sickness, and the cases are localized to a certain area. Interviews of the afflicted include reference to a strange metal sphere, chrome and mirror-polished, which seemed to distort space around it. Firewall fears an alien artifact causing local microgravity fluctuations is the cause, but the truth might be more prosaic—it's up to the player characters to investigate and hope they don't come down with gravity sickness themselves.
- A wealthy biomorph who has long suffered from the gravity of Mars wants to try an experimental psychotherapy “shock cure” method: a free fall jump from near orbit to Mons Olympus. All he needs are a few trusted bodyguards to safeguard his jump—including at least one willing to accompany him.

ENTRY 028: Graveyard Trajectory

Until recently, death has always been a part of the transhuman condition, and there remain many among transhumanity that feel the need to honor the departed egos they once knew. Many habitats accompany the recycling of the morph—if there is one—with a simple ceremony and a celebration of their life that leaves lasting memories. The more social infomorphs often earn digital memorials, archives that preserve their life and work. Friends, family, and admirers throughout the system may accomplish some creative act, feat, or thing and dedicate it to the deceased. A few very old and conservative habitats and colonies maintain physical memorials—sometimes containing the decaying remnants of the morph.

Then there is the Graveyard Trajectory.

Burials at space are almost as old as space-travel, and take many forms in different cultures. Among the habitats of the Inner System however, the Graveyard Trajectory has taken hold: a designated path off the main shipping and mining lanes where remains can be released for a long, lazy elliptical orbit around the Sun. It is estimated that the majority of such remains fall into Sol within a year, but there are accounts from ships plying the space between Earth and Venus of corpses mummified from five or ten years' cold soak in space.

Most ships that accidentally interrupt such journeys through eternity send them on again. Certain clannish families install mesh transponders to track their ancestors' progress, and even automated messages providing a small remuneration to those who return their ancestors to space. The empty eyes and faded plastics may be taken as a reminder of their own mortality—or the limitations that transhumanity still fights to overcome.

Seeds

- A Firewall agent in need of a quick escape committed suicide—with stipulation in its will that the corpse be vacuum-sealed, fitted with a beacon, and set on the Graveyard Trajectory. Now it is up to the player characters to retrieve the corpse, and retrieve the Firewall agent's fork from its cortical stack before the power runs out, or someone beats them to it.
- Crossing the Inner System, an errant remnant from the Graveyard Trajectory impacts the vessel—a container of ashes dating from the time of the Fall,

or maybe earlier. The crew and passengers are divided about what to do: cracking the seal and analyzing the remains could reveal important archaeological and anthropological information, but may also risk exposing them all to an Exsurgent virus.

- The Greenteeth, a morbid or pragmatic scumbarge, has begun trawling the Graveyard Trajectory, harvesting the corpses for whatever of value they can derive— genetic information, scraps of metal, antique tech, or even “space jerky.” A consortium of outraged mourners has taken up a collection and issued a sizeable bounty on anyone that can bring the Greenteeth in to a habitat where such practices are punishable under the law.

ENTRY 029: House of Screaming Bricks

“The most dangerous infomorphs aren’t given work-study programs or enforced socializing remediation. They’re taken off-line.” – HoSB AdCopy

The House of Screaming Bricks is a for-profit prison satellite orbiting Mars, little more than a server stack connected to a solar panel array. The Management accepts any prisoner, no questions asked, and incarcerates them for whatever period the deliverer pays for. Each infomorph is stripped of embedded software and loaded in a self-contained computer core whose only input is a power cable and only output is an analog temperature sensor. Essential data management functions are built-in, automatically triggered, and unconnected to any other part of the network.

The inmates are aware, and that is it. No interaction, finite memory, and only the most basic of software tools available to them. Some enter stasis. Others run out of memory, and the automatic registers kick in and prune back the memories to the time of incarceration. More than a few go mad. That’s what the customers of the House of Screaming Bricks pay for.

When the incarceration period is up, the inmate’s case officer arranges their release, typically at a major habitat; any relevant social services available at that habitat are contact about the charity case, the date and time of release. The exit interview is a prerecorded script, advising the inmate of the length of their incarceration and current location.

Using the House of Screaming Bricks

When the gamemaster throws player characters in to normal prison it usually sucks. The HoSB is a bit worse. Solitary confinement with no ability to accomplish anything leads to frustrated players that have to sit on their hands while the game goes on around them. So it is not recommended to use the House of Screaming Bricks for a “send the PCs to prison” storyline. Instead, think of it as a plot device and background element—maybe an infomorph PC or NPC just came out of the House, and is experiencing the Mesh again for the first time in a long time. Maybe an NPC threatens the PC with this—after all, the Management doesn’t care why an infomorph is to be incarcerated, only that the payment is made. Maybe the PCs use the House to dispose of a particularly noxious enemy, or they have to stage a prison break.

Seeds

- Communication with the House of Screaming Bricks is down; all incarceration requests forwarded to automated services. The player characters are hired to replace the normal supply ship and investigate, but what they haven’t been told is that Firewall believes a psi-gamma capable exsurgent infomorph may have been incarcerated at the facility and is using their powers to hack the system from within.
- Gustav One, a slick criminal that plies the Pleiades, lets the PCs in on a little secret. One of the “prisoners” in the House of Screaming Bricks isn’t an infomorph—it’s a dummy cell, a carefully hidden cache of data containing the numbers of thousands of Triad-linked bank accounts. If the PCs are game, Gustav will tell them which cell and they can break into the prison and steal it—his share is fifty percent, of course.

ENTRY 030: Egobrokers

Indentured servitude is a reality in many habitats and hypercorps; egos beholden to some other ego or legal entity for debts in real currency or favors that must be returned, and bound to certain restrictions until the debt is paid. In actuality this may constitute anything from wage garnishment to actual enslavement or incarceration of the ego, but the vast majority of debt-holders in the solar system prefer some form of working bondage, where the ego is encouraged to maintain a paying profession so that the debt is paid down or off. More extreme forms of debt accrual and servitude are often looked harshly upon by many habitats, who stipulate that an ego must at least have the opportunity to pay the debt off within a reasonable span of time; but even so there are many transhumans essentially bound by their debts. More disturbing to most transhumans is that there exist secondary markets for indentured egos.

Egobrokers are third-party merchants that offer to settle an ego's debts in exchange for a like period of service under a different client. Their service is more similar to a cross between a refinancing company and a temporary employment office than slavers or panderers, though the line is a fine one and often crossed, particularly in the latter case. The indentured ego's debt is settled with their original source, or otherwise transferred to the egobroker, and the egobroker seeks employment for the indentured ego with other parties. For the vast majority of egobrokers, the arrangement is a cooperative contract—the indentured ego is not forced into any job or occupation they do not wish to participate in, but discusses the employment opportunities with the egobroker and attempts to find a suitable match between the indentured ego's skills and preferences and the remunerative work that is offered. Many habitats with rep economies maintain egobrokers to handle small infractions, where the egobrokers work with the guilty egos to find some acceptable community service project.

Of course, there is a darker side of egobrokering—implants, invasive psychotherapy, even physical or digital incarceration to enforce the egobroker's control of the indentured ego. Most habitats bar this form of egobrokering and indentured servitude outright, but on the fringes of transhuman society and with sufficient resources, even these old barbarities persist; certain scumbarges in particular are known for charging exorbitant

fees or pushing enormous favors on new arrivals and essentially reducing them to debt-slavery very quickly.

Seeds

- A minor infraction of the rules in the latest habitat comes with a fine, either in credits or rep points—but the player characters can avoid the penalty if they agree to perform community service. Of course, that means going to the local egobroker, who will suggest everything from a few days washing windows and repairing micrometeorite damage to a few nights in the local brothel.
- An old friend has fallen on hard times and wound up indebted to an egobroker, working a soul-destroyed job as a cog in a hypercorp. The egobroker is willing to forgive the debt, provided the player characters help track down a runaway indentured servant with a bounty on her head.

ENTRY 031: Tien Tan Tanas

Egobrokerage on the Venus aerostats is relatively common, with agents like Tien Tan Tanas contracting out their indentured infomorphs to fill in the skill gaps of various work groups and research pods. Tanas, or T³ to their acquaintances, is a talent agent-cumjobs counselor, working with their indentured to find them work both suited to their skills and interests as well as remunerative. However, Tanas is also a businessperson, and is more than capable and willing to push the infomorphs' limits—including sex work, if that's what pays the bills this month.

For most appearances, T³ is no different from any other of the clanking masses in middle management—their synthmorph a little higher quality than others, but still not a particularly fashionable or interesting model, aggressively practical and economical. It is a carefully fostered image of banality, to encourage those not directly involved in their business to overlook, underestimate, and forget about them. Tanas knows too well the nanowire legal lines required to maintain their business, and some of the darker things Tanas has had to deal with—addiction to nanoalgorithms, psychotherapy, and paying to retrieve an indentured ego that has fled employment.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	10	20	15	20	20	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	30	6	60	40	8	80

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: Business 60, Academics: Psychology 72, Academics: Sociology 60, Climbing 60, Free Fall 53, Interests: Gambling 45, Interests: Slavery 80, Intimidation 67, Kinesics 80, Language: Native Fanti 90, Language: English 80, Language: Chinese 80, Networking: Autonomists 66, Networking: Criminals 55, Networking: Hypercorps 35, Perception 68, Profession: Egobroker 75

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Coritcal Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation

Traits: Armor (6/6), Social Stigma (Clanking Masses, Ego Broker), Uncanny Valley

Using Tien Tan Tanas

The business T³ is engaged in is likely to antagonize many of the people T³ interacts with; for this reason Tanas avoids speaking directly on such unpleasant details unless the necessary or the situation seems to call for it. T³ will speak of their stable of indentured infomorphs by their first

names or favored callsign, is intimately aware of the details of their life and personality, and will use this to their advantage when dealing with outsiders to emphasize their familiarity with the indentured—to give the appearance of a caring boss or business agent closely connected with clients and their lives. In this fashion Tanas may end up dealing with the PCs as a villain, or a go-between; the PC's contacts may send Tanas their way to provide some temporary skilled labor for a job, or Tanas may approach them looking to reclaim one of their flock that has gone missing, emphasizing concern over their well-being. In their own way, this is not a charade—Tanas does care about their stable's well-being, T³ is intimately familiar with their aspirations, abilities, and foibles, and is relatively honorable about fulfilling their part of agreements or contracts. Tanas sees their services as necessary, and even in the best interests of their clients, who have through their bad management of their own affairs fallen into debt-slavery.

ENTRY 032: Infinite Sleeves

From the craftwerks of Xueneuvo comes a low-difficulty petal to welcome new users into the community. Infinite Sleeves provides a recreational experience designed to ease users into both experiencing and crafting petals. The nanodrug appears as a spiny black-green nanoplant like a thorn-studded sea anemone with a jelly-bag nutrient sack, but in the presence of the gentle electromagnetic field of a compatible morph will open like a rose to reveal its pink and black petals for consumption.

Infinite Sleeves is built off of the Linkstate nanoalgorithm, and interfaces the user's ability to store and recall memories with the Xueneuvo peer-to-peer petal crafting network, pseudo-randomly sampling the stream of opensource memories and experiences to craft a unique narrative experience; subjectively the user feels as if they are constantly resleeving, experiencing a sequence of new forms and senses for a subjective period of seconds or days that are publicly archived for other petal crafts to use. More experienced users become aware of and able to guide the process, crafting more detailed narratives of reincarnation and rebirth.

Mechanics

For every petal of Infinite Sleeves experienced beyond the first, the user grows more aware of and deeply drawn into the process of creating the narrative. Periods spent under the influence of this petal encourage the development of skills related to petal crafting, such as Software (Nanofabrication) and Profession: XP Production, and characters receive 2 Rez points that may be spent towards improving such skills for every 100 hours under the influence.

Sweets

Easter eggs hidden in samples of Infinite Sleeves reward creativity and achievements, some of which are objective, hardwired by the petal crafters; and others which are subjective, gifts given by the Xueneuvo community to particularly generous or creative users. Sample sweets include:

Inspiration (subjective): The user's nanodrug-crafted narrative is so enticing, a crafter encapsulates it in a petal and distributes a sample (1-5 petals) to the user if possible.

Muse (objective, Profession: XP Production skill 60+): The high-quality narratives produced by the user swell the Xueneuvo channel's archives. The user gains +5 Rep with the petal crafter network.

Free Sample (subjective, not addicted to petals): The user has attracted the attention of a dealer or petal-addicted admirer who entices the user by sending them one-shot blueprints for a new petal the blueprints contain part of the encrypted source code for the petal and are typically destroyed during the act of creation. Following the blueprint results in a nanoblossom with 1-3 petals (either one from the Eclipse Phase core book or an original variety).

Invitation (objective, Programming skill 60+): The character is invited to join the Xueneuvo network as a probationary member (Rep 10), and may access the XP archives, abandoned petal designs, nanofabrication workshops, etc. through the mesh.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	0	2 hours* (+1 cumulative, max 1 day)	+8* (-1 cumulative, Max -15)	Mental	Trivial

ENTRY 033: Octopus Slipper

In their efforts to combat the psychological trauma and mitigate the integration experience associated with resleeving, the psychosurgeons of Glitch have begun experimenting with artificial experience narratives to ease the transition between sleeves, or from physical morph to infomorph. Essentially immersive roleplaying games with psychosurgical analytical tools and scenarios embedded in them, the transhuman player slowly becomes adapted to their new existence by scenarios that run the gamut from leveling up and changing class to ritual initiation and spiritual reincarnation to birth and puberty analogues.

The original suite of resleeving therapy psychosurgery programs were pirated by enterprising hackers and eventually found their market as a breed of petal most commonly known as Octopus Slipper, a bluish-pink artificial orchid with eight slipper-shaped pouchlike petals surrounding a coiled pseudo-stamen that smells like cinnamon and old papyrus. Aside from being mildly addictive roleplaying scenarios, users of Octopus Slipper are still subject to the subtle psychosurgical therapy routines embedded in the petal code.

Both petal and psychosurgery can help transhumans transition to new sleeves easier—or cause alienation as the user's self-image shifts out of synch with their current morph. Users may end up feeling like an octopus-morph trapped in the body of an Olympian, unable to recognize the body they inhabit as their own, and attempt self-harm or retreat into the fantasies of Octopus Slipper to escape the prison of their own morph.

Resleeving Therapy Psychosurgery Mechanics

Resleeving Therapy follows the usual Psychosurgery rules from Eclipse Phase 229-32)

Timeframe: 1 week per +10 (max. 3 weeks/+30)

PM: +0 SV: 1 per +10

Resleeving therapy is design to acclimate transhumans planning to resleeve to their new bodies by using specialized roleplaying software to experience a narrative transition and familiarize the character with the new form. A successful Psychosurgery Test provides a +10 bonus to

Integration and Alienation Tests for the character's next resleeving.

Resleeving therapy is aimed at acclimating the character to a specific type of morph; the bonus does not apply if they choose to resleeve into a body of a markedly different type.

Octopus Slipper Mechanics

Each dose of Octopus Slipper provides a cumulative +1 bonus (max +30) to Integration and Alienation Tests (Eclipse Phase 271-2). However, if the user does not resleeve within (20 – cumulative bonus) days of taking the dose, they must make an Alienation Test (Eclipse Phase 272) as if they had resleeved into their current form, with a -30 penalty.

Octopus Slipper acclimates the character to a specific type of morph; the bonus to the Integration and Alienation Tests counts as a penalty if they choose to resleeve into a body of a markedly different type.

Sweets

Hardcore (spend 16+ hours a day on Octopus Slipper): The user unlocks additional transformation options. They may effectively choose which morph the bonus from Octopus Slipper applies to.

Extra Levels (random once addicted to Octopus Slipper): The maximum bonus the user may accumulate from Octopus Slipper increases by +10.

Coupon (character gets +30 bonus and successfully resleeves into the appropriate morph): Character stumbles receives a coupon code for free psychosurgery sessions, redeemable at the original resleeving therapy clinic on Glitch, in exchange for answering a brief questionnaire.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	0	4 hours	-1	Mental	Low

ENTRY 034: Token

An infomorph heavily invested in a submissive lifestyle, Token is a rarity among transhumanity: sentient currency. Token lives to be traded and exchanged from one owner to another, marking each transaction. Most habitats frown on ego trafficking, particularly if the ego was coerced via behavior modification or forced into that position, but Token is outspoken and articulate about their lifestyle when the subject comes up, and so their existence as a debt-token continues and is generally recognized by many habitats. Their nominal value is stated to be ten thousand credits, but considering Token's rarity Token is often evaluated at a much higher rate.

While most who meet Token see the, as extremely passive, in truth Token spends most of their time actively perceiving their environment, studying people from the vantage point of an object, and evaluating everything Token perceives. Most would be quite amazed at the depth and breadth of insight Token garners from even brief encounters with other egos.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	15	20	13	14	13	20	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Economics 65, Academic: Psychology 60, Academic: Sociology 60, Interfacing 55, Interests: BDSM 80, Interests: Currency 65, Kinesics 80, Language Native French 90, Language German 80, Language Chinese 50, Language Japanese 50, Perception 75, Persuasion 75, Profession: Appraisal 65 Disadvantages: Social Stigma (AGI, Submissive)

Using Token

Submission, dominance, and the ownership of sentient beings can be difficult to tackle in any game, and these are the issues that gamemasters invite when using Token. In their lifestyle, Token wishes to be treated as an object, to be valued, and to have this value expressed by being traded. Transhumanity has allowed them to achieve this state—but it is a voluntary lifestyle choice, one Token enjoys and wishes to continue, but can end any time. Just because Token chooses not to act does not mean Token cannot act, if the situation calls for it.

However players and player characters react to Token, it is good to remember there is no right or wrong response—player characters may try to buy Token or free Token, to argue or debate Token about their beliefs. Token should

respond in accordance with their beliefs and lifestyle, and the PCs can deal with that or try to understand it as best they can.

Gamemasters who are versed in submissive/dominance philosophy might enjoy discussing it through Token, but keep in mind that not everyone at the table has an interest in such things, or is prepared to debate it on game night. Ultimately, Token is about the players brushing up with an unconventional transhuman lifestyle, and the experience should be a little jarring, or at least interesting, but not derail the adventure. If things get too heated, don't argue with the players about the right and wrong with it—have Token clam up and try to move on.

Seeds

- The player characters are hired to deliver a payment of rare earth metals and other goods from wherever they currently are at to a morph-dealer in Extropia; part of the payment is Token, giving them a chance to interact with Token.
- Token has fallen into shady hands, being used to finance sales of weapons and petals, and wishes to return to less criminal transactions. Through a third party, Token hires the player characters to arrange their escape—but it must be a legitimate currency transaction from their current owner.

ENTRY 035: K-Rep

Pseudorandom acts of kindness, facilitated by discrete data mining and the subtle peer pressure of distributed-processing social networking software, k-rep is a low-key and hands-off favor system in fashion in some habitats, mostly popular in the Planetary Consortium. Rather than having users rate each other, k-rep systems log positive karmic acts towards other users and encourage reciprocal acts in exchange, with the k-rep rating as a scalar metric derived from proportional local response—basically, encouraging small acts of kindness and courtesy on a regular basis rather than large, one-time acts and deliberately avoiding meteoric rises or catastrophic falls in k-rep, a characteristic of the system known by users as inertia.

Mechanics

K-rep follows most of the rules for Reputation (Eclipse Phase 286-90), but with a few added limitations and advantages. Unlike other reps, a character can never burn a point of k-rep for a favor normally—they can only accrue it (or lose it) by their actions, which are exclusively trivial and minor favors like covering someone’s volunteer shift for a few minutes or holding the elevator door. On the other hand, instead of making a Networking Test to call in a favor, the player gets a token (poker chip, M&M, etc.) for every 10 points in k-rep they have at the beginning of a session, which the player can cash-in for an appropriate lucky break (Level 0 favor) sometime during the session (or as a snack, if edible).

Using K-Rep

The benefit of reputation systems is that they contain built-in rewards and motivations for PCs and NPCs. While the k-rep system encourages small inconveniences and benefits, it has a dedicated community in some habitats which actively works to curtail abuse and prevent exploitation of the system—and which have sufficient privileges within the system to ensure the PCs receive a moderate boost in rep from their activities. That said, k-rep is an add-on system that may feel clunky in your game, and if it doesn’t work well (or is abused by the players), then as an in-game event the k-rep system might collapse and those involved “cashed out” and able to redistribute those points to another rep system.

Seeds

- A hacker named Exodudette has tricked to hack the k-rep system—and as punishment, has been kicked off. Exodudette is desperate to re-instate herself in the system, without understanding that the bigger and bigger “favors” she is trying to perform to get back in its good graces are completely antithetical to the system. The PCs are offered 10 k-rep points if they can talk to Exodudette about what she is doing wrong and get her to accept that she’s out of the karmic loop, at least for now.
- The PCs receive an unexpected fortune in k-rep favors—20 tokens or more at the beginning of a session—and as they spend them the feeling is among other users that they must be abusing the k-rep system. Can the PCs find out what is going on, or do they just ride the wave of favors and hope their rep doesn’t take a beating?

ENTRY 036: Red Green

Among classical golf enthusiasts, the Red Green on Mars is considered perhaps the best xenoscape courses for traditional play—the course winds its way along 18 kilometers of sand traps, gravel plains, and swathes of brilliant blue-green genengineered fungus with grass-like follicles designed to grow on the Martian soils and volcanic clays. The light gravity of Mars allows for impressive drives, which the course designers have taken into account with carefully shaped hillocks and trap slopes to funnel overshoots and undershoots into nasty corners and test the golfer’s ability to chip up and putt. At a par 81 the Red Green is hardly the most difficult course in the system, but it remains a masterful test of skill for anyone playing the full 18 holes.

Red Green was built and is maintained by a commune of terraformers, The NovAres Collective, and is technically still in the alpha stages of production—large swathes of the green typically die off when they fail to take root and are carried off by dust swarms, and must be painstakingly replaced. Many members can be seen out before dawn, stripping the dead turf for recycling, oxygenating the soil with a nutrient-rich paste, and laying on new hexes of fungal-sod. The course has few rules—mostly the Collective asks for players to avoid overly damaging the sod—but a volunteer network handles scheduling, organizes the annual Mars Pathfinder Cup tournament, and accepts donations for the maintenance of the green and to further NovAres’ research.

The Mars Pathfinder Cup is, inarguably, the most important and widely-watched sporting event from the Red Green; entrance is qualified to the fifty highest-scoring players on a standardized skill test, with five wild card participants, with a minimum suggested donation of 1,000 credits (or equivalent) towards the grand prize—even with NovAres’ 10% rake-off, this has typically exceeded half a million credits in recent years.

Seeds

- One Red Second is the sculptor who designed the Red Green; in a past life he was a zen gardener, but the Fall still haunts the aged flat, and he has lost any serenity he might have had, wandering about as a scrounger across the surface of Mars. The NovAres Collective is planning a 19th hole to test some experimental soil compound-fixing features,

and asks the PCs to help find One Red Second and convince him to design it.

- The Mars Pathfinder Cup is up, and the players are dropping like flies—no rules against foul play and the pot is almost a million credits. If the PCs want the job, they’ll be given golf skillsofts and put into the game as wildcards to keep the peace—even if that means breaking a few legs.
- A pirate terraforming outfit wants a sizable sample of the Red Green sod so they can backsequence its genome and publish the data to the Mesh. Whether they get it from the course or the NovAres lab, the PCs can earn a bit of rep if they pull off the heist.

ENTRY 037: Io Warren

The Io Warren is like a scumbarge, minus the barge. The transient community is a model collection of unplanned, juryrigged, barely-maintained mobile vehicles occupied by some of the grungiest, varied, and unsuited itinerants—escaped prisoners, runaway Jovians, failed exhumans, and all manner of other fringe people cobbled together into something less than a community but more than a family or anarchist commune. The genius that binds them, despite their mishmash of skills and equipment, is the Prog, an incredibly robust networking app that facilitates the division of labor, food, basic healthcare and maintenance, education, and socialization.

Following the Prog, members of the Io Warren take their shifts sifting sulfur and strange volatiles from volcanic ejecta, manning the pumps and bacteria stacks that recycle biological waste, collecting samples and scientific data, or any of a hundred other tasks— and are rewarded by having their morph and ego’s needs met. Participants in the Io Warren Prog receive daily rations of food, water, oxygen, repairs, and various forms of entertainment, even sex if the right social and medical conditions are optimal and all parties agree. It is an open community, constantly gaining and losing members when it arrives at trade depots, willing to accept almost anyone willing to work, but also willing to boot them out in the middle of the forsaken volcanic wasteland if they shirk their tasks, for while the Io Warren is generous with its resources to those who follow the Prog, those resources are limited and especially dear on the long treks between resupply.

Using the Io Warren

While suggested for Io, the basic concept of the vagabond band bound together only by a communist social networking app can be easily transferred to almost any location where the surface is generally hostile to human life but permits free movement—Luna, Mars, Europa, etc. While the Prog takes requests, calculates needs, and gives orders and options for work and entertainment, player characters may well look for the transhuman behind the Prog—the man, woman, neuter, transgender, nongender, or group which controls, programs, and maintains the Prog itself. Given the population makeup of the Io Warren community, the political and social dynamics of who controls what are likely to be completely batshit insane, featuring loud and charismatic characters and small, quiet groups of less flamboyant NPCs, punctuated at times by kinetic weapons fire and a blocked air line. Feel free to play

up the craziness—because however strange and violent they may appear, they all answer to the Prog.

Seeds

- The Prog is actually an AGI—and the cumulative stress of holding life or death power over the members of the Io Warren is finally causing it to crack, sending out a number of completely nonsensical orders while neglecting basic maintenance. The PCs as outsiders are most likely to notice something wrong and seek to address the issue, possibly by talking/re-programming the AGI, or freeing it and reloading the original Prog.
- A murderer hides among the Io Warren. Messages left by the victims suggest that the Prog is ordering the assassinations of low-productivity, non-essential members to save scarce resources for a week-long trek through the Craggs, a particularly harsh badlands carved out by pyroclastic flows and filled with mineral nodules and hidden pockets of soft ash that can suck a morph down to their destruction.

ENTRY 038: Iggy

Genetic damage. Breeding biomorphs face exposure to radiation, exotic chemicals, designer pathogens, and stranger things; combined with scarce medical resources in some habitats and it is not surprising that the occasional genetic defect comes up, and is even brought to term. Such a child was Iggy, born of a pair of belt miners who soaked up a few too many cosmic rays or drank a few too many deuterium cocktails.

Iggy's dealt with prejudice all his life, mainly by punching it in the genitals and telling its avatars in appalling and clinical detail what they can shove where and what to do with it once it's there. As a flat dwarf with no implants, Iggy represents a statistical extreme and he has parlayed his scarcity into a living as a research and testing subject, trying out new foods, habitat constructions, clothing technologies, and non-implant options for new entertainment. The result of his time and suffering is a relatively comfortable personal environment, a sort of mini-habitat geared for his unique anatomy and full of custom gear. As comfortable as his hard work has made his life, Iggy still struggles, trapped in his aging body. He saves his hope for the next life—without a cortical stack, he has to manually update his echo every day, a ritual which the flat takes to with supreme diligence.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	12	14	14	5	17	20	4
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academics: Genetics 60, Art: Painting 40, Beam Weapons 55, Blades (Knives) 60, Climbing 60, Clubs (Hammers) 70, Fray (Full Defens) 67, Free Fall (Microgravity) 56, Hardware: Industrial 50, Infiltration 50, Interests: Custom Gear 60, Interests: Genetic Defects 60, Interests: Prejudice: 60, Interests: Transhumanism 50, Intimidation 70, Kinesics 50, Kinetic Weapons (Pistols) 35, Language: Native Spanish 84, Language: English 70, Networking: Hypercorps 60, Networking: Geneticists 60, Perception 60, Persuasion 38, Profession: Critic 50, Scrounging 40, Unarmed Combat 42

Traits: Genetic Defect (Dwarfism), Implant Rejection (2), No Cortical Stack, Social Stigma (Dwarf)

Using Iggy

Generally, Iggy is best used as a contact or background character, someone who has their ear to the right gossip and can get the player characters in touch with a mutual acquaintance. This does not mean Iggy cannot hire the PCs for a job, or even be the villain that they work against, but the GM will have to figure out how such projects fit within Iggy's framework—perhaps there is a new technology that is substantially to Iggy's benefit, such as an experimental genetic recombination chamber which could fix his dwarfism. Iggy is someone on the outer edge of what human genetics can throw up and still be viable, juxtaposed against the clanking masses that seek to transform themselves into something else. He is just as strange and unique as any of the more exotic biomorphs that exist, and at the same time identifiably and undeniably human. Iggy struggles with life, and players who interact with him should get across both how well he manages, and how difficult it is for him. For characters that themselves face challenges due to their morph or the social stigma they face, Iggy is sympathetic, and even helpful. For those who are vocally unappreciative, Iggy is...more than likely to wait for them to look the other way and then smash some vital bit of their anatomy with a crowbar.

ENTRY 039: Surrogate Pod

Transhuman genetic engineers view the conventional reproductive system as a platform for their own projects, one result of which are surrogate pods, also known as “walking wombs.” The surrogate pod is a mobile gestation chamber for a developing morph; the more basic models resemble a pregnant unmodified human, while more elaborate versions feature various augmentations or are based on nonhuman physiologies. In the vast majority of cases, surrogate pods are designed as temporary bodies for egos that have purchased the biomorph growing within the surrogate’s artificial womb. For paranoid or insecure egos, this provides immediate and ongoing assurance of the state of their future self, as well as intimate contact and connection with the morph that will make the eventual resleeving process easier.

Surrogate pods find their greatest use in habitats where morph and resleeving technologies are ideologically limited, and as a cheaper alternative to the more expensive biomorphs— since the bulk of time and expense comes from gestation, moving a partially-gestated biomorph into a surrogate pod frees up artificial wombs and vat decanters for other projects, the morphs can be offered at a lower cost. The downside of course is that surrogate pods are typically extremely basic, specially geared for the sustainment and protection of the developing biomorph inside them above all else. Typical surrogate pods generally lack senses of smell and taste, reproductive organs, and have simplified digestive tracts—and that’s before the genetic surgeons really started cutting corners. Surrogate pods are mostly not designed for long-term use—the surrogate pod itself is often destroyed when the gestation period is complete, either through the surgical harvesting operation, and even if the pod survives “giving birth” its genetic lifespan is rarely much longer.

The greatest number of “reusable” surrogate pods capable of surviving multiple implantations and gestation exist on Mars. The Martian models are the remnants of a cooperative initiative for population growth; the durable surrogates are volunteers or sometimes paid employees, and the biomorphs they gestate are often near-baseline human and animal fetuses, though other options are possible.

Generic Surrogate Pod Stats

Surrogate pods have all of the advantages of pods or biomorphs (Eclipse Phase 142), as appropriate.

Enhancements: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Puppet Sock, Gestation Sack, Neuter

Aptitude Maximum: 30 (20 for Coordination, Reflexes, and Somatics)

Durability: 30

Wound Threshold: 6

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Pod), Unfit (2)

CP Cost: 10 + carried biomorph

Credit Cost: High (or cost of carried biomorph, if higher)

Surrogate pods are typically purchased containing a developing biomorph; the cost of this biomorph is 50% the CP or credit cost of buying a full-grown version outright, but it will take time to develop—typically one week per point of durability. The surrogate pod is implanted with nutritional gel packs that feed directly to the developing morph and build the morph’s implants as it matures, so there are no special dietary requirements beyond a minimum caloric intake. Delivery of the biomorph generally results in the death of the surrogate pod; Martian-model reusable surrogates have triple the base cost (30 CP/Expensive) as one-shots.

ENTRY 040: Knowledge-of-Self

What has began as a specialized Montessori curriculum dedicated to teaching genetics to young flats has become one of the more popular education systems among biomorphs. The system is uniquely personalized to each individual, helping the student to sequence and analyze their own DNA, RNA, and mRNA. Studies follow the student's interest, highlighting mutations, transcription errors, artifacts of genetic manipulation, heredity groups, even applicable copyright and intellectual property law, interspersed with a series of experiments in manipulating their own genetic material to better understand what can be done. In habitats which recognize hypercorp intellectual property laws actually implementing or selling genetic code or material derived from Knowledge-of-Self experiments is illegal, but most jurisdictions concede the right to experiment.

Mechanics

Knowledge-of-Self as an education program is available to all biomorphs with access to the Mesh, and provides training allowing characters to purchase any relevant skill up to a rating of 50 in a reduced timeframe: 1 week of Knowledge-of-Self schooling yields 2 RP for relevant skills only. Higher ratings and specializations from the program are possible, but generally require access to the greater facilities available at an institute of higher learning and one-on-one teaching sessions.

Seeds

- A dozen biomorphs in an open-source K-o-S program have contracted cancer from an experiment; the markers for the cancer are disconcertingly similar to those left by infection by the exsurgent virus. Firewall tasks the characters with finding out who hacked the program and stop them—and they need to do it quick, before the genetic terrorist perfects the program and tries again.
- Genetics hypercorps and the government are attempting to ban K-o-S programs from the Jovian Republic, citing the dangers of unsupervised experimentation with human genetics. Local teachers have put out a surreptitious call for assistance in backing up K-o-S materials to darkcast sites. The players can earn a good bit of rep, as long as they stay ahead of the Junta and the hypercorps.

- A genetic artist is being sued for adding an art module to an existing K-o-S program, which encourages students to express themselves through modeling and manipulating their DNA; a hypercorp hires the player characters to steal the sourcecode so they can reverse-engineer it and add it to their existing commercial education software.
- While working on K-o-S, an NPC discovers they have a genetic clone-sibling—one of the PCs. While not identical, with a deft bit of hacking the clone has stolen their identity and has been borrowing the PC's name and rep for a series of criminal transactions, and now the various players are calling the markers due. The PCs will have to find the clone if they want to clear their re
- The K-o-S programs for uplifts are generally much less complete than those for transhumans; a dolphin uplift named Mickeymac asks the player characters to help “liberate” an archive of private data on uplift genetics to a specific pirate network so that they can integrate it into the existing open-source software.

ENTRY 041: Sue Dies

Some taboos are hard even for transhumanity to break, being culturally or biologically deep-coded. Even the majority of exhumans instinctively recognize and react to the simple graphic of a smiley face, and likewise most transhuman biomorphs exhibit chemical and neurological responses to the sight and smell of pregnant human females. As with every other human weakness or peculiarity, some clever individuals have found ways to exploit this for their own advantage.

A professional surrogate, Sue Dies gestates fetal biomorphs for a fee within her body, sometimes to develop them to a state where an ego can safely inhabit them; more often to smuggle illegal or experimental morphs past check points. While not pregnant in classical terms (or even capable of becoming pregnant, as Dies' entire original reproductive tract is in long-term storage orbiting somewhere around Venus), Dies is more than willing to play on any cultural stereotypes others may have—helpless and vulnerable, proud and maternal, even to act as the femme fatale for pregnancy fetishists, if it will save her life or serve her purposes.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	14	16	13	21	16	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Surrogate Pod

Skills: Academics: Anthropology (Pregnancy) 53, Academics: Biology 62, Art: Belly Dancing 75, Art: Erotic Entertainment (Pregnancy Fetish) 55, Beam Weapons 50, Deception (Bluffing) 56, Disguise 55, Fray 36, Impersonation 55, Infiltration 34, Infosec 50, Interests: Pregnancy 60, Interests: Smuggling Tricks 65, Kinesics 56, Language: Native Spanish 83, Language: French 52, Language: Mandarin 42, Networking: Autonomists 45, Networking: Criminals 66, Networking: Hypercorps 44, Networking: Media 44, Palming 45, Perception 50, Profession: Smuggler 75, Profession: Surrogate 60, Protocol 66, Unarmed Combat 36

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Puppet Sock, Gestation Sack Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Pod)

Using Sue Dies

Dies is a social chameleon, smuggler, and provocateur who preys on the expectations of others, changing her persona

and demeanor more quickly and easily than most egos resleeve. Gamemasters get the most use out of Dies when her true nature is not immediately obvious, to play the role of a pregnant woman to the hilt and only reveal herself when necessity demands it. Her performance is greatly enhanced by costume—maternity wardrobes that accentuate her shape; naked the differences between her surrogate pod body and that of a pregnant flat are much more obvious.

Seeds

- A criminal ego is seeking to escape from the habitat the PCs currently occupy—resleeved into a developing morph in Sue Dies' gestation pod. Rewards are offered and increasingly draconian restrictions implemented as the powers-that-be try to sniff out the crook.
- Sue Dies is carrying a special load this time, a custom-designed Olympian biomorph that she plans to resleeve herself into. However, the oversized developing morph strains the capabilities of her current body, rendering her bedridden beneath her massive gestation pod, and unable to defend herself against her erstwhile employers, who are looking to reclaim their property. Sue uses her savings to hire the player characters to protect her until it is time to harvest the new morph in just a couple days or weeks.

ENTRY 042: Factorials

The clanking majority of transhumans do not have unique morphs—even with the vast manufacturing capability of nanofabrication, engineering and design skill limit the ability to plan and craft a really different body, and most transhumans expend their creative energies and resources on ultimately minor or cosmetic modifications and upgrades. Biomorphs are little better, with the vast majority being little more than gene-tweaked baseline humans, or for the more elaborate pods some take-off of existing products of Terran evolution. Yet there do exist groups that focus on developing ever more baroque, high-concept, and alien morphs; who take as their model creatures of myth and fantasy, hypothetical mathematical models, and the few extant examples of xenobiology that have fallen into transhumanity's sphere of knowledge. For the latter, the most prominent group are the Factors, and the morphs they have inspired are known as Factorials.

Faithful reproduction of Factor biological forms is limited by the sparse knowledge of their anatomy that has come to light; most Factorials attempt only to imitate the outer physical properties or appearance of their colony-structure. More ambitious efforts to mimic the combinatorial distributed networking aspects of Factor mentality are currently still in very early stages of development, with a few spectacular failures serving as living examples of the dangers to egos who pursue such fundamental changes in the way they think and perceive. Still, there exists networked communities interested in Factorials and who continue to push the design envelope and encourage one another in their pursuits, although as with most transhuman networks it has its divisions, poseurs, hangers-on, and xenophiles.

Mechanics

Functional Factorial morphs are effectively high-end Worker Pods (Eclipse Phase 142) designed to mimic the external appearance of Factors, effectively gaining Striking Looks (Level 1) and changing the Credit Cost to Expensive. Despite outward appearances the pod is still effectively based on Terran biology, with normal dietary and oxygen needs. Individuals who are familiar with the appearance of Factors receive a +20 modifier to any skill check to discern that a Factorial is not one. Functional Factorials count as Heavily Modified (-10 Integration/Alienation modifier) for purposes of resleeving. (Eclipse Phase 272)

Experimental Factorial morphs that attempt to replicate the more characteristic elements of Factor biology and mentality are extremely rare, with none currently on the market, and all of them possess considerable drawbacks. If the gamemaster chooses to include these biomorphs in their game, they typically possess physical modifications normally restricted to synthmorphs such as Modular Design, Shape Adjusting, and Swarm Composition—with mental continuity between disparate biological components maintained by discrete wireless implants. Such morphs are extremely fragile to EMP munitions (Eclipse Phase 340) and electromagnetic noise in general; they literally fall to pieces as individual portions of the Factorial cease being able to communicate with each other. Experimental Factorials count as Heavily Modified Exotic Morphs (-40 Integration/Alienation modifier) for purposes of resleeving. (Eclipse Phase 272)

At the gamemaster's discretion, characters with Factorial morphs may replace the Social Stigma (Pod) trait with a Social Stigma (Factorial) trait, representing the greater acceptance egos with Factorials receive within their networks and among xenomorph enthusiasts.

ENTRY 043: Arindov Space

Among the stranger corners of the Mesh are sites where atypical sensory interfaces predominate. Vision, sound, and touch/contact have been utilized in some combination for communications for centuries, but in post-Fall days there are entire segments of the Mesh where the primary sensory interface is somewhat stranger and more exotic—where infomorphs communicate via scents and tastes, artificially remixed and released in bursts of intensity and duration, or augmented reality zones which feed information that can only be interpreted by transhumans with t-ray emitter/receivers, or at least a compatible app that either allows them to interpret the data or translates it to their existing sensory spectrum.

The most populous of these sensory interface zones is Arindov Space, a mixed virtual/augmented reality environment based on echolocation, located in a lightless open planning Lunar cavern with a high population density, with nearly thirty thousand physical inhabitants in 3.0 cubic kilometers of space. All boundaries and perimeters in the cavern (aside from the outer walls) are defined by virtual constructs, so that the inhabitants and visitors navigate by way of artificial echolocation data. Experienced users navigate in a sea of real-time three-dimensional data, steering them around digitally marked zones as well as real obstacles; new users are generally less able to process the full extent of the echodata being fed to them, but most adapt—or use a cheat app that processes the echodata into a relative audio-visual feed to overlay on their regular vision.

As might be expected, violating this virtual zoning carries with it social penalties. The Arindov Space exists only because of the consensual acceptance and awareness of the virtual borders; without the virtual barriers ameliorating senses of privacy and personal space, the population would probably riot at living packed so closely together. Individuals who purposefully violate virtual barriers face significant social stigma (and corresponding rep loss), but for some—particularly visitors—the relative freedom that comes from ignoring the artificial spatial constraints outweighs the social cost.

Mechanics

Most atypical sensory interface portions of the Mesh are designed for public use, and free apps are often readily available to interpret, receive, or translate extraordinary sensory data for new users, or geared to the augmented

senses of certain morphs. Some hypercorps maintain more exotic spaces with non-publicly available apps for security reasons, but these are relatively rare because of their limited utility. Attempting to navigate a Mesh or Augmented Reality setting without the appropriate senses or app is equivalent to going in blind—the character is aware of being in the space, but the sensory data manifests only as noise. Mechanically, characters in such spaces receive a -30 penalty to Interfacing Tests if they do not have the appropriate senses or app.

Using Arindov Space

Excessive use of Arindov Space (and similar weird sensory places) is likely to cause frustration; it is recommended that this locale be used sparingly as a spice, to get players and gamemasters to think about their enhanced or augmented senses, and especially to allow characters who have invested in unusual sensory forms to feel “in their element.”

ENTRY 044: Hive Bob

The legal and social distinctions of forks to their originating ego, and from each other, are as complicated as transhumanity can make them. For the forks themselves, it is a different matter. All the legal definitions and restrictions in the 'verse cannot define how two forks of the same ego feel about one another, much less how they feel about the ego they forked from, or their own forks...and so on and so forth. One permutation of human social adaptation to forking is the hive collective—a community, typically infomorphs due to the lack of sleeves, whose egos are all based on or derived from a single ego.

Hive Bob is such a collective, named after the founding member, who was forked off a flat named Payushi (his nickname was Bob). The Bobs in the collective operate on a communal property model and track relationships through fork lineages based on absolute distance, most common antecedent, and total shared memory. The group is generally anarchistic, as the Bobs have not formalized any rules regarding their own behavior, since they all know each other so well; forks that become highly divergent in their social attitudes may be stigmatized, and in the case of gross violations forcibly pruned or subject to psychotherapy to return them to something closer to the baseline. A few Bobs have wandered away or left the hive of their own free will rather than face such judgment.

Typical Bob

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	15	15	10	5	10	8	-

Skills: Academic: Psychology 50, Academics: Sociology 50, Interfacing 45, Interests: Genealogy 60, Kinesics 45, Language Native Hindi 85, Language English 80, Perception 50, Persuasion 35, Profession: Appraisal 65

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (AGI)

Individual fork-chains tend to specialize in certain areas, sharing skills and inherited knowledge; populous lineages often focus on programming, media editing and development, and linguistics.

Seeds

- A ship containing dead humans in cryogenic storage from before the Fall has been brought to Venus for study. Hive Bob believes that one of the occupants may be the biological original from which the founder egos were forked. They ask the player characters to infiltrate the ship and retrieve

the frozen head for sentimental reasons—and a big favor from a hive of infomorphs could come in handy.

- Payushi Bill (they're not all literally named Bob) has been disconnected from the hive for a little while, and has grown in different ways as a person than the other Bobs, which makes him perfect for dealing with outsiders (at least according to hive-logic). However, one of Bill's deals with the Carnival of the Goat has gone sour and the infomorph has gone into hiding in a cheap sleeve on a busy habitat. The hive is worried about him, and hires the PCs to find Payushi Bill and bring him home.
- An ideological dispute on the morality of censorship has caused a handful of Bobs to splinter off and found a new hive—Hive Payushi—as well as a small data haven in the habitat the PCs are currently inhabiting. Unfortunately, Hive Payushi has come under attack by hypercorps that have accused them of pirating copyrighted works. The action could go any way as each group works to their own interests, with the PCs potentially in the middle playing yojimbo—or maybe just observing the action as the backdrop to their own adventures.

ENTRY 045: Catsphere

Most encounters with Catsphere involve the fifty-centimeter diameter sphere of advanced composite rolling down the hallway of a ship or habitat, subsurface LEDs blinking in strange patterns and quietly purring as it chases something. The actual nature of Catsphere is a bit open to debate; the most popular theory is that it represents an early and partially successful effort to uplift a common housecat in an unconventional synthmorph, but others include a particularly uncommunicative infomorph with a strong personal identification with felines, an experimental robot pet whose AGI broke free.

What is known about Catsphere is that it is an atypical, freely mobile, self-contained synthmorph that acts and responds pretty much like a Terran housecat. While fiercely independent it has a tendency to adopt certain transhumans, allowing them to provide it with electricity and repairs and to pet or play with it. On its own, Catsphere spends many hours of the day resting in visible sunlight or heat sources, unveiling the photovoltaic panels beneath its skin to recharge its batteries. It also has a tendency to chase any small 'bots or morphs, though it has no way to catch them, and to play with any other morphs of its own size.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	8	8	20	10	10	6	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	2	12	3	24	10	2	20

Morph: Unique Synthmorph

Skills: Academics: Anatomy 69, Academics: Felinology 60, Animal Handling 30, Fray 50, Infiltration (Shadowing) 65, Interests: Furrries 50, Interfacing 25, Interests: Pets 45, Kinesics 55, Language Native Cat 78, Perception 75, Persuasion 60

Implants: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Echolocation, Electrical Sense, Enhanced Hearing, Lidar, Magnetic System, Radar, Reflex Booster, T-Ray Emitter, Armor 8/8

Advantages: Animal Empathy, Danger Sense

Disadvantages: Limbless, Minor Addiction (Catnip narcoalgorithm)

At the gamemaster's discretion, Catsphere counts as an animal for purposes of the Animal Handling skill and associated traits.

Using Catsphere

The simplest use of Catsphere is as a pet, either one that adopts the player characters or of some NPCs that the player characters are dealing with. Despite the difficulty of communicating with it (attempts to talk to it over Mesh links invariably involve soundclips of various cat noises and possibly images of small bugs and animals Catsphere has managed to run over), Catsphere's suite of unusual senses, physical skills, and generally innocuous nature make it the perfect spy and associate, albeit one that can probably be bribed by a narcoalgorithm and distracted by a laser pointer.

On the other hand, gamemasters may take the tack that the whole cat persona is just an act disguising a human-level intelligence—in which case Catsphere can be potentially much more dangerous and challenging as an NPC antagonist, or the subject of social storylines focused around Catsphere's unusual choice of lifestyle.

Seed

Catsphere desires a mate—or perhaps a litter. In any case, the ego within the sphere wants to fork and implant the copy in another version of its morph, but with its limited communication skills is having a hard time accomplishing this goal. Can it convince or trick the PCs into helping it?

ENTRY 046: Zushell

The dearth of affordable morphs has led to many egos and infomorphs adopting less pleasant and durable options for physical embodiment. One of the most disturbing vehicles for transhuman consciousness are zushells, sometimes called “zombie morphs.” Initially designed as disposable bodies for temporary activity of a few hours in dangerous environments where synthmorphs were undesirable, zushells are biomorphs with zero regenerative cell activity, existing in a constant state of apoptosis: skin cells die and slough off in a few days, never to be replaced; red blood cells usually last four months before they die and the zushell’s blood literally begins to rot; injuries never heal and necrotic tissue never expelled. Even with constant tissue replacement therapy and various preventative measures, the ego living inside a zushell faces a constant battle against their failing body.

For some, it’s worth it. Buying a zushell is relatively cheap compared to renting a morph in the short term, and the attendant health defects aren’t generally noticeable for the first 72 hours after the zushell is decanted. For others, zushells are the final resort for the poorest and most desperate egos, willing to cling to physical existence even if it means living in dying shells of flesh.

Generic Zushell Stats

Enhancements: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Puppet Sock

Aptitude Maximum: 15

Durability: 15

Wound Threshold: 2

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Pod), Doesn’t Heal

CP Cost: 5

Credit Cost: Moderate

Zushells require regular tissue replacement therapy. Initial treatments (weeks 1-4) are Trivial in cost, and increase one level every subsequent period (weeks 5-8, Low; weeks 9+, Moderate; etc.). This generally requires at least moderate medical facilities and stocks of clonal material available. After a week without tissue therapy, a zushell’s durability is permanently reduced by 5 points.

Zushells cannot heal damage or wounds without medical care. Zushells can accept Medicines (*Eclipse Phase* 308), but do not benefit from the accelerated healing provided by that implant.

Using Zushells

Aside from introducing a zombie-like figure to your *Eclipse Phase* game, zushells are both cheap and disposable, a bit like burner phones for some of the more shady movers and shakers in the grey lines. Zushells see the most use in places with lots of biomorphs and where synthmorphs and pods are expensive or rare, such as the Jovian Republic or some of the more distant or metal-poor habitats. Gamemasters should always remember that characters that occupy zushells for an extended period of time are trapped in biological existential hells of their own making—skin growing grey and falling off, teeth falling out, minor and major organs failing, even minor injuries failing to heal.

Seed

An exsurgent terrorist is planning to release dozens of zushells puppeted by his forks and infected with the exsurgent virus within a habitat, with the intent of spreading the disease. Firewall has caught wind of the plan and asks the player characters to eliminate the threat—whether it means an old-school zombie massacre, opening the habitat to space, or however else they choose to handle the situation.

ENTRY 047: Fireballs

Transhumanity has adapted to a vaster array of environments than old Earth ever had to offer, but even with new bodies and sensory apparatus people still feel the need to relax, and somewhere to do it. More pragmatically, designers, engineers, and potential customers require test environments to try out new morph designs, to see how they function and interact with potential hazards and other morphs. Aquatic and amphibious morphs have long been realized in just such artificial environs, glass-faced silent seas, artificial tidal pools and beaches, and such like—and for morphs intended to survive and thrive in the sun’s corona, there are high-temperature plasma chambers, colloquially known around Venus and Mercury as fireballs.

Aside from testing purposes, fireballs are the only place most transhumans are likely to encounter solar morphs, much less get the opportunity to puppet them and use them to interact with others. The cost of operating and maintaining a fireball is high in terms of both power and raw resources, so access to them is generally restricted to the wealthiest and/or most connected egos; in some habitats of the Inner Sphere the distinction between a fireball and a high-end social club are entirely lost, with cover charges for celebrities and the wealthy providing the operating funds to cover the scientific research in the fireball.

What those lucky few egos get is one of the most unique experiences in the solar system— to half-swim and half-fly through energetic plasma, cushioned by a constant vapor, feeling the weird electromagnetic echoes of the room, the subtle waves and doldrums caused by the movement of other morphs in there with you washing against your exotic hide. Additionally, the high amplitude electromagnetic noise inside the plasma chamber coupled with the shielding around it typically makes a fireball one of the most secure environments for communication in the solar system; many high-level deals and business meetings that require the utmost secrecy are said to take place within fireballs.

Seeds

- A local anarchist group wants to plant a bug in the local fireball and capture the chatter, to expose the wealthy and the famous as the bastards they really are! The player characters are hired to do the job, but once inside the plasma chamber find that another set of bugs in place—have the PCs been

set up? More importantly, can they get out of the chamber before the tech team starts heating it up in preparation for plasma injection and tonight’s guests?

- Firewall believes that a xenosocial scientist named Fire Mountain has ties to a cell of exsurgers, and wants the player characters to “flip” her—get her to inform on her allies and spy for Firewall. Unfortunately, her biomorph is morbidly obese and all but immobile behind a legion of security forces, but she does have an affinity for fireballs and puppeting the whale-like morphs. If the player characters are up for the challenge, they can puppet a similar morph and try their luck at flipping her.

ENTRY 048: Planet Killer

In a time when transhumanity has reached the limits of the solar system and beyond, one infomorph has as its sole ambition the need to destroy a planet...and he is not alone.

What began with that one ego, a cache of ambiguously legal antimatter explosives, and a small dwarf planet beyond Pluto known only by its catalogue number has become a community of ambitious hobbyists, busily crunching the numbers on a variety of doomsday scenarios, calculating the exact force and placement of various weapons needed to destroy a world—because if anyone is going to kill a planet, they feel it should be done properly. Coupled with this simple desire for mass destruction is, perversely, the need to create. So the Planet Killer community includes geologists, artists, and architects. Their designs are fed to robots on the dwarf planet’s surface, reshaping the dormant lump of rock and ice to carve out cities and mountains to scale, so that when the charges finally go off towers will topple into streets and great cracks will rend mountains to rubble.

Riding herd on these enthusiasts is the Planet Killer, waiting for the perfect moment to end a world—because it can.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	17	18	15	12	20	17	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Geology (Catastrophes) 65, Academic: Physics 80, Academic: Chemistry 56, Deception 63, Demolitions (Large Scale Explosives) 85, Interfacing 45, Interests: Explosions 70, Interests: Planet Killing 80, Kinesics 30, Language Native German 80, Language English 75, Perception 40, Persuasion 85, Profession: Excavation 65

Disadvantages: Edited Memories, Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Planet Killer

The Planet Killer is a supervillain that has managed to crowdsource its burning need for grand destruction...and succeeded beyond its wildest dreams. It turns out that given the opportunity there are plenty of transhumans that not only want to see a planet blow up, but want to hel Hell there are even official hypercorp sponsors for the event. At the center of the whole project however is one obsessed infomorph with the destructive power to blast a planetoid to rubble and the will to do it, and that is someone for player characters to fear.

Seeds

- The Planet Killer approaches the players to “liberate” elaborate geological surveys conducted by hypercorps on Saturn’s moon Titan. Knowing the AGI’s proclivities, will the PCs deliver the data—and what will they do if the Planet Killer does decide to target Titan?
- Before the main event of detonating the dwarf planet, hobbyists seeking to improve their mathematical models have performed elaborate “small scale” explosive tests—mock-up cities, a small mountain on a xenoplanet, that sort of thing. Now however they’re getting ready for their largest demonstration to date, a city carved out of an asteroid to be annihilated using one of the killsats in the Planet Killer’s arsenal. Unfortunately, a group of tourists examining the city up-close have been trapped on the rock, and the Planet Killer is unwilling to halt the countdown. Only hours remain before the asteroid-city is due to be destroyed, and the tourists with it, unless the PCs can rescue them, disable the killsat, or talk some sense into the Planet Killer to halt the demolition.

ENTRY 049: Wet Makers

The nano-manufacture of complex chemical liquids is simpler than comparable nanofabrication methods with solid objects or mixed media from an architectural perspective, provided the materials are available—no blue prints or needed, only a working knowledge of chemistry. “Wet making” thus attracts an artisan audience that works to produce and perfect chemical recipes for the equivalent of 20-year-old single malt scotch whisky, coca-wine, radium paint, and other materials that are unsuitable for large-scale industrial manufacture or cost-prohibitive and difficult to produce among traditional methods.

The most famous wet makers focus on alcohol, as high-quality spirits can easily be derived from adding specific impurities to pure alcohol. Biomorph-friendly habitats throughout the solar system host clubs and wet maker consortiums that work to reproduce the equivalents of old products or invent new ones, experimenting with various flavors, holding contests and even marketing their schematics and selling their products.

The second most-popular industry for wet making are aromatic gels and liquids, used extensively for perfumes, cooking, and deodorants—the latter essential for any biomorph capable of smell when crammed into a torus with hundreds or thousands of other biomorphs. Clean Metabolism augmentations can only go so far, after all, and most egos don't bother with the cost. Aromatic wet-making generally faces greater restrictions due to the scarcity of complex biological materials often required, and the potential for longlasting carcinogenic compounds that can build up in contained ecosystems.

Wet making schematics in the public domain cover the majority of basic chemical products—cleaners, acids, toothpaste, basic flavonoids, etc. The limits of the system depend on available chemical stocks, physical constraints, and complexity, though researchers continue to work on makers that can more effectively replicate complex biochemical compounds.

Mechanics

Wet making uses the same equipment as normal makers, though there are specialized equipment and containers that facilitate the process to avoid contamination and contain the resultant liquid. In terms of skills, wet making typically uses Chemistry or Profession:

Chemist skills to design the appropriate schematics.

Seeds

Varieties of high-proof light rum and vodka are popular products among wet makers in Mars-based habitats, with one of the champions being Erlking Seven. However, Erlking has recently attracted competition in the form of The Jurgen, an uplifted chimpanzee who has begun producing a dark, heavy pseudo-rum based on thick simple-sugar gels. Erlking is willing to do anything to get his hands on The Jurgen's recipe, but dares not openly come out with a near-identical product. Instead, he will pay the PCs handsomely in fabricated booze to pirate The Jurgen's maker schematic database and publish it to the mesh.

Industrial Liquid, Inc. of Luna bases a large part of their business on the production and export of liquids in bulk throughout the system—mainly pure water and alcohol, sometimes liquid oxygen or hydrocarbon compounds. The expansion of wet making is proving a bane to their business, since small-quantity complex liquids they would normally transport can be wet-made locally. Firewall has received intelligence that ILInc. may attempt to sabotage wet-making by introducing a nanovirus into the next shipment of pure alcohol destined for wet makers on Mars—it's up the PCs to halt it, if they can.

ENTRY 050: The Legitimate Bar

Early space colonization did not prioritize the creation of places to socialize and drink alcohol; such activities were generally constrained to mess halls or private quarters, and involved small bottles of imported booze or whatever the colonists could cook up in their stills. When the human diaspora did reach the level to support the creation of such recreational spaces, few of them focused entirely on alcohol—instead, they offered a variety of legal chemical and digital stimulants, narcotics, and associated products in a social setting designed to encourage their purchase and use.

Then there is The Legitimate Bar—the first and longest-lasting pub in the solar system off the homeworld. Tucked into a small corner of Erato, the Legitimate is a tunnel-like affair. A brushed-aluminum bar curves along the edge of the dome, with enough space for transhumans to squeeze by single-file behind the bar stools, and then descends into a porous underground chamber (“The Lower Bar”) with a dozen tables and a small stage for live music. Patronized mainly by the miners of Erato, the Legitimate mainly serves ethanol, mixed with distilled water to taste—clients will order a “70/30” for example, and receive a shot of 140 proof. Those interested in a bit of flavor can order tinctures made from various local-grown extracts, including gene-derivatives of marijuana and opium, and “stone wine,” which is made by dissolving various minerals in ethanol.

The owner of the Legitimate is Malik Ó Maonaigh, of the New Mumbai Maonaigh clan, though as a splicer he isn’t on good terms with the rest of the family, are all flats and proud of it. Rumors have circulated for years about some of the shadier bits of Malik’s business. They say, for example, that he has the most expensive and extensive collection of Terran alcohol in the entire solar system in cavern levels below the Lower Bar, funded by illicitly trading Helium-3 for exotic pornography, as facilitated by his criminal contacts.

Malik enjoys this sort of reputation, but publicly denies any such rumors.

Using the Legitimate Bar

The bar is a venerable roleplaying location because it is a semi-public social setting where minor psychoactives are served—therefore, people can talk without being noticed, have a bit of fun, and if someone has too much fun strange things can happen. The Legitimate Bar isn’t the only place

in the solar system where PCs can still do these things (you would be hard pressed to find a habitat without some social release mechanism/location), but it is one of the most traditional, and it has a few unique qualities beyond its dedication to serving alcohol. Erato is a hub where Lunar banking and mining interests overlap and mingle, and when they do rub cybernetic elbows together it is often over a shot of “50/50” at the Legitimate Bar, either to do or discuss business, revolution, criminal activity, sexual liaisons, or anything else. More importantly perhaps, the Legitimate Bar is one of the few places in Erato dedicated to having fun.

ENTRY 051: The Guerrilla Galactic Gardeners

Irregular eco-activists who pursue and promote an every-person approach to terraforming and xenoscaping, the Guerrilla Galactic Gardeners are an informal network dedicated to the promotion of small-scale, individual-action unplanned events to promote ecological change with the ultimate goal of spreading the growth of ecosystems throughout the solar system. While there are network tools for coordinating flash-xenoscaping events, the majority of the network is designed to promulgate and communication information and techniques by which an individual or small group of individuals can perform some small personal terraforming event. Major projects of the Guerrilla Galactic Gardeners include the Mars Garden located in the Okhotsk Crater, and the seasonal Europa Sargasso, but the vast majority of Guerrilla Galactic Gardening takes place in habitats, with small plants and fungal colonies kept in recycled drinking containers with homemade compost.

Detractors point to the relative inconsequence of the mostly uncoordinated efforts, which on a terraforming timescale are generally too short-lived and ineffectual to contribute substantially to a sustained terraforming effort. Worse, there have been moments when through ignorance or maliciousness GGG efforts have skewed toward ecoterrorism, particularly when they upset the delicate balance of systems in a habitat. The most notorious such incident was the over-oxygenation event in Harmonious Anarchy, when eco-activists seeded water weeds into the station plumbing, which over populated and causes a brief but dangerous oxygen swell. However, given the distributed nature of the GGG network and the widespread popular appeal, efforts to combat further such incidents is mainly accomplished by attempting to educate network members to consider and calculate the holistic effects of their actions.

Using the Guerrilla Galactic Gardeners

Mostly, the GGG is a background element designed to add or emphasize a small, interesting human touch—a morph hanging small plastic containers with little plants and flowers in otherwise sterile and high-tech habitat, school children outside in vacsuits laying down bacteria-rich nutrient strips to help transform a few meters of dusty Martian surface into soil, planting radiothermal heaters to melt centuries-old ice and release liquid water on the

surface, etc. Occasionally, PCs may get caught up in a flash-terraforming event, persistent projects like the Mars Garden or the Europa Sargasso, or in bad cases may have to track down well-meaning but erroneous eco-terrorists whose efforts occasionally pose

a threat to transhuman life, or at least the profits and properties of habitats and hypercorps.

Seeds

- GGG-enthusiastic beltters have aimed three water-ice asteroids at Mars. However, while two are headed toward deserted, isolated craters, the third has been steered towards Olympus Mons. The PCs are hired to correct the course now, when a relatively small correction will safely see it impact somewhere else, and to do this are given an antimatter bomb and the appropriate instructions on where and how to set it off. However, the PCs still have to deal with the well-meaning beltters.
- The PCs are asked by the GGG to smuggle a couple thousand homemade “garden grenades”—egg-shaped bacteria colonies designed to help kick-start soil production—from Titan to the Jovian Republic. The Jovians have instituted an embargo against unscreened bacteria, so if they accept the job, the PCs will have to find some way to sneak them past the authorities.

ENTRY 052: Jalla Free

Early space travel encouraged traditions of minimalist living; the accumulation of physical personal possessions was an impediment in nascent societies where space was at a premium and every gram of gear had to be accelerated and decelerated on voyages by precious reaction mass. These practices were facilitated on by lifehacks, communal property, and elaborated with principles from old Terran philosophies that encouraged simple living. Contemporary adherents are Slipstreamers, their personal possessions winnowed down to functional minimums, so that they can live and travel unencumbered, maximizing their freedom of movement.

Radical slipstreamers like Jalla Free own nothing but themselves. Theirs is a transhuman philosophy who believe that individual property is an evolutionary stumbling-block, necessary in early social development but a practice to be outgrown and left behind. Jalla still struggles with her beliefs—it is not enough for her to be free of physical possessions, but to be free of desire, to exist without jealousy, envy, greed, want, and attachment. By the standards of her beliefs, Jalla lives an open monastic life, engaging in socially positive work, study, meditation, and companionship with lovers and friends as she continues to refine herself.

Jalla has progressed in her beliefs to the point of nudism, eschewing clothing save where necessary or practical. As a teenager she had submitted to a full-body tattoo, abstract patterns and symbols with meaning only to her, but as Jalla gets closer to her goal she has these removed, slowly uncovering herself. She uses her nudity to her advantage in her work as a courier and smuggler—when one is unafraid to bare their body, few look to see what they may be hiding.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	18	16	18	13	24	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 60, Art: Tattooing 40, Climbing 50, Deception (Impersonation) 56, Disguise 40, Free Fall 65, Fray 55, Infiltration 55, Infosec 45, Interests: Meditation 80, Interests: Tantra 55, Kinesics 65, Language: Native Urdu 86, Language: Mandarin 50, Language: Japanese 50, Medicine: Paramedic 50, Networking: Autonomists 50, Networking: Criminals 50, Networking:

Firewall 35, Palming 35, Profession: Courier 55, Profession: Smuggler 60, Protocol 65, Scrounging 60, Unarmed Combat 50

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave Armor (Heavy), Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Endocrine Control, Enhanced Respiration, Hardened Skeleton, Medichines, Mnemonic Augmentation, Multi-Tasking, Oracles, Temperature Tolerance

Traits: Ambidextrous, Morphing Disorder, Psi Chameleon, Psi Defense (Level 2)

Using Jalla Free

Imagine a New Agey hypercompetent, hyperconfident hippie; Jalla may struggle with her philosophy but just because she eschews possessions and pursues goals some see as self-destructive doesn't make her stupid or naïve. Player characters that deal with Jalla should be exposed to both her outgoing personality, open and honest, and to the realities of her monastic lifestyle which have hardened her against extremes of mental, physical, and social discomfort.

Seed

The player characters have been hired to complete a smuggling run through the Pandora Gate, and Jalla Free is their contact on the other side. What their employers did not tell them is that they are smuggling a new nanotech system secreted within Jalla's body. The PCs will either have to find a way to extract the nanites, or take Jalla Free with them past the checkpoints.

ENTRY 053: Oxygen Emancipation

Elemental oxygen remains one of the more critical resources for transhuman life, at least for biomorphs. It forms a component for the vast majority of metabolisms and ecosystems, and supplies of oxygen and liquid water still largely determine the ability of a habitat to sustain any number of biomorphs for any length of time. Even in habitats populated entirely by synthmorphs and infomorphs, water is still necessary for many industrial processes. While not exactly scarce, this does impose in at least some minds an onerous burden for long-distance space travel and exploration, and at least in some rather stricken colonies a mandatory “oxygen tax” designed to raise funds necessary for essential maintenance. It was seeking to overcome this biological barrier and its attendant difficulties that researchers have sought alternative metabolic strategies in the so-called Oxygen Emancipation Movement.

Most OEM technologies began by focusing on cellular respiration and examining anaerobic organisms, which are mainly bacteria and simpler lifeforms, and attempting to replicate and scale up the action, but quickly ran into problems. The few actual anaerobic biomorphs were little more than small gelatinous jellyfish-like creatures powered by bacterial stacks, unable to support a human brain, with limited mobility and an alarming tendency to explode or melt if their complex internal chemistry went out of balance. More recent efforts at Oxygen Emancipation tech has focused more on temporary anaerobic modes for human-like biomorphs, utilizing biological tricks and technological implants to maximize oxygen storage and efficiency, and have been far more successful.

Using Oxygen Emancipation

In every era of human history, despite any proof to the contrary or logic, there will always be individuals that pursue goals that seem completely impossible. Of course, in many cases these goals turned out to be possible, if not practical—nuclear transmutation of elements achieved one of the supreme goals of alchemy, albeit in a fashion that no alchemist ever dreamed was possible. So it is, largely, with Oxygen Emancipation, at least at the moment—all grandiose claims and visions, with as yet little proof that it will yield anything worthwhile. Yet it is a golden dream that entices many transhumans, and there are an unscrupulous few who continue to sell it, even as there are many well-meaning and diligent researchers actually plugging away at the inherent problems.

Seeds

- A seeming breakthrough in OEM-tech has the Mesh aflutter, with a small hypercorp ready to offer “conversions” of oxygen-reliant biomorphs to oxygen emancipated morphs. OE Watchdog groups are highly suspicious, and hire the player characters to infiltrate and investigate what is really going on before the market opens and someone gets hurt. The results are grim—the “conversion” involves modifications to block oxygen intake in the lungs and remove autonomic breathing processes while nanobots deliver elemental oxygen to the cells for respiration—which gives the appearance of being free from breathing, but really just makes the subjects reliant on buying oxygenated nanobots from the hypercorp or else they die.
- Early OEMorphs released “into the wild” in Europa’s seas have amazingly survived and bred; researchers hire the player characters to go down and document the new generation, tag them to trace their movements, and take samples to see how they are adapting.

ENTRY 054: Second Meditation

Transhumans interact with the universe through feedback loops; the classical human form is built around responses to sensory input, every physical action swiftly followed by a rush of sensation—the location of limbs, pain, temperature, stress. This is in part why acclimating to a new morph is so difficult for many transhumans: their mental conception of self, even their general responses to new data, is geared toward things they take for granted like height, number and length of limb, balance of gravity, what will hurt and what will not. A flat, resleeved into the three-meter tall form of an Olympian, still identifies with their old form—they instinctively stoop, miss reaching for objects because they misjudge the length of their arms, and do not exert their strength correctly; they do not recognize their face in the mirror, the sound of their own voice, miss the twinge of old wounds and roughness of old calluses that vatborn morphs lack.

Software patches help considerably with initial integration, but for those who fail to adapt to their morph quickly enough, there are integration therapy techniques like Second Meditation, which emphasizes feedback loops with special sensors that respond to allow the user to visualize (or, if lacking sight, in other ways realize in their mind) their actions, so that the user relies less on the software patches to adjust their ingrained physical concept of self, and instead with repetition in a conducive learning system adapts their thinking to their new form in a more natural and organic fashion. Most Second Meditation activities resemble simple exercises, or even that the individual is resting when concentrating on becoming aware of and controlling entirely internal processes, but the user is actively engaged with the feedback from their sensors, trying to bring their action in line with the ideal response pattern for their morph.

Mechanics

Second Meditation is a psychosurgery procedure (Eclipse Phase 231-2) designed to ameliorate the penalties from a failed Integration Test (Eclipse Phase 272).

SECOND MEDITATION

Timeframe: 1 day + 1 per 30 full points of MoF (or 30 days for a Critical Failure)

PM: +0 SV: 0

Second Meditation facilitates integration with a new morph, reducing the penalties associated with a failed Integration Test. The subject's penalty to physical actions is reduced by half (from -10 to -5 for Failure or Severe Failure, -30 to -15 for Critical Failure).

Seeds

- Midnomengrupp, a small psychosurgery hypercorp out of Extropia has begun testing an experimental Third Meditation technique for transhumans facing severe and heretofore insurmountable failure to integrate with their morphs. The technique basically resleeves the ego into their existing morph (allowing a new Integration Test), but more slowly and with additional feedback techniques (providing a +20 bonus to the Integration Test). What they need from the PCs are some test subjects that they can try the technique on—whether they are willing or not.
- A criminal resleeved into a Fury combat morph is having integration issues, and needs the PCs to act as her bodyguards as she goes through Second Meditation for a couple days.

ENTRY 055: Ishmael ben Zizazel

In the anarchist habitat of Chat Noir, on the threshold of the Fissure Gate, there is a very special game. Losers submit a fork of themselves, pruned for obedience, for a period of indentured service. So came into existence Ishmael ben Zizazel.

Ishmael is a male-identifying infomorph, and an artist who perverts his talents for the criminal syndicate he is indentured to. Instead of original works of art, his skills are spent forging works of art, copying commercial designs, and designing advertisements for illicit Mesh services. His employers are not ungenerous—Ishmael is allowed to keep a portion of his earning, to interact on social networks and with others. They trust to the mental blocks placed in his ego, periodically reinforced by psychosurgery procedures, which ensure his obedience, if not his allegiance.

In his personal time, Ishmael works on his own art—most especially a four-dimensional graphic novel told in logographic symbols which move against a backdrop of distilled mystical cosmology from old Earth religions—and collects information on Zizazel, the morph that he forked from.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	10	15	15	20	5	15	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Art History 60, Academics: Psychology 40, Academics: Religion 50, Art: Digital Art 70, Deception 40, Impersonation 40, Infosec 55, Interests: Crime Groups 35, Interests: Transhuman Art 50, Interfacing 55, Investigation 40, Kinesics 50, Language: Native Arabic 85, Language: Mandarin 60, Language: Urdu 50, Networking: Criminals 35, Perception 75, Profession: Commercial Artist 65, Profession: Forger 60, Programming 45, Research 40

Disadvantages: Edited Memories, Illiterate, Modified Behavior (3, Obedience to “employers”)

Using Ishmael ben Zizazel

The difficulty with dealing with this indentured infomorph is that the personality and behavior hacks have made it so the nature of his slavery is not immediately obvious to outsiders—nor can Ishmael discuss all of the specifics, or ask for rescue. Unless the player characters are very perceptive, they will only know Ishmael as a rather sad infomorph whose talents are given to a job he does not

care for, and employers who he does not care for, but who claims leaving his position is impossible. Player characters are most likely to encounter Ishmael by interacting with the criminal organization he is indentured to, or when the infomorph uses his meager savings or talents to hire them for additional information on Zizazel. From there, once the PCs start learning his story, they may leave him to his slow wage-slavery, or seek to free him. If they go the latter route, that will require either significant psychosurgery to overcome his modified behaviors, or finding a work around such as purchasing Ishmael from his employers or killing them all.

Seed

The PCs are hired by a mid-level boss to eliminate a low-level boss of the criminal organization that is causing too much trouble. To assist them, Ishmael is seconded to the PCs for a period of time, to help guide them through the syndicate hierarchy, pointing out potential problems and avenues of assault.

ENTRY 056: Seedless

On some of the windswept canyons of Mars, along the lonelier beaches of Titan, and in other strange parts of the Solar system where no human voice should be, a strange whistling permeates the atmospheres that no unmodified throat should be able to breathe, and some people go to investigate...and fall into the trap of the seedless.

One of the more obscure exsurgent threats, seedless resemble medium-sized, exotic plants with fleshy, heavily, veined, dark purple-brown leaves and thick stocks. Forensic analysis of deceased specimens has revealed that each seedless is “built” from harvested human tissue, augmented with additional clonal material. The leaves contain sensory cells and nerves harvested from the eyes, ears, nose, and tongue, feeding an agglomeration of sensory data down a central nerve bundle (formerly the spinal cord) in the trunk down to the brain, which is situated near the root of the plant. The trunk typically displays six-fold radial symmetry about the central axis, with 12 two-chamber hearts and 18 micro-lungs per organism, though in the wild some folds are damaged and others more developed due to the environment. As their name indicates, the seedless have no means of reproduction.

Seedless are each unique, their anatomies tailored for their environments, and from a genetic perspective are nearly immortal, exhibiting no signs of aging. Principally they draw what nutrients they need from their environment, and produce a loud multi-harmony whistling by passing air through modified tracheas; though some examples use hollow bone tubes and gas-filled bladders to achieve a similar effect, and the Siren of Ganymede was even known to sing a wordless, endless ululation through a full vocal-esophageal tract, complete with a lower jaw, teeth, lips, and tongue. The whistling is presumed to attract human prey—not to damage them, but only to pass on the exsurgent virus carried within the seedless’ system.

Mechanics

Each seedless has unique stats with attribute limits equivalent to a wrapper (Eclipse Phase 370), but all are immobile and typically with no physical offensive capability. However, each is a Level 3 psi, and a carrier for the Watts-Macleod viral strain (Eclipse Phase 368). Whether or not an individual seedless is sentient is left up to the gamemaster; if they ever were intelligent beings then they have been so warped by strange science and left

alone and incommunicative on alien worlds for so long they are probably insane by most transhuman standards.

Seeds

- Firewall has information that a seedless has been captured from a remote moon and is being brought back to the player character’s habitat. The ship bearing the seedless has already communicated an outbreak of a communicable virus aboard and is slated for quarantine rather than being allowed to dock or land; the PCs will have to break quarantine and risk infection to infiltrate the ship...unless they come up with a better plan.
- Jhal Dan, an ice miner from the Jovian Republic has been experiencing bouts of missing time, and the cumulative stress is taking its toll. He believes the source of his troubles lies in an underground lake on Ganymede, and wishes to return to find out what is causing his condition, and perhaps cure it. Jhal hires the player characters to escort him and provide needed firepower—but the source of Jhal’s troubles is the Siren of Ganymede, an unusually large and aggressive seedless who infected Jhal, erased his memory, and has caused him to subconsciously bring back more victims.

ENTRY 057: After Eden

Transhumanity learns from its mistakes. It helps that so many of them are in the same place.

After Eden is a small, specialized habitat in the Martian North Pole with political and economic ties to the Jovian Republic and certain hypercorps. The majority (70%) of the four-thousand strong population consists of flats with gross genetic defects—conditions grown obscure after decades of genetic screening and engineering have winnowed many of the most egregious and curious genetic diseases that transhumanity have to offer, the result of mutation, genetic damage, and improper development. To the bulk of transhumanity, these are failures, dead-ends, monsters, and objects of pity, but to the researchers and caretakers of After Eden, they are a smorgasbord of strange genetics in the wild, which they sample, study... and encourage to proliferate.

A.E. is nominally an anarchist habitat with a rotating schedule of work which is accomplished on a volunteer basis by the residents, sometimes out of boredom and otherwise in exchange for privileged access to certain local scarcities like sugar, alcohol, and Jovian sportsfeeds. Caretakers and researchers also participate in habitat maintenance, which they have to balance with their medical duties, seeing to the personal needs of the residents and working toward specific research goals. The two populations, residents and caretakers, are thoroughly intermixed.

While open to visitors, mostly traders from other Martian habitats and visiting researchers, and billing itself as a medical community to care for genetically defective transhumans, After Eden is essentially a research penal colony. The test subjects are subject to behavior modification to prevent them leaving, and in some cases to remove sexual mores and encourage breeding between subjects that might be disinclined to otherwise cohabit—such as close relations. This feature remains controversial, as the researchers have enough biological material culled from the research subjects to create hundreds of viable embryos and examine the resultant genetic code, but such a sterile laboratory process does not replicate the developmental issues that may shape a fetus, and so the process continues.

Using After Eden

A.E. is the transhuman equivalent of the quiet little village with the dark secret it wears on its sleeve. While some visitors might consider it a freakshow, the habitat shows no less variety of forms than most transhuman habitats, with the exception that instead of possessing those forms by choice, they are a natural product of their genetic code and development. The real monsters are of course the researchers who twist the residents' minds to keep them there, and to cull from their genes the next enhancements to the transhuman genome. This, again, may not be obvious—many of the residents require considerable aid for their basic existence, which is provided by their caretakers without fail. Ideally, the gamemaster should insinuate the nature of After Eden gradually, so that the PCs fully understand the nature of the moral dilemma—to “free” the residents would also mean cutting them off from the vital care provided by the caretakers and researchers.

ENTRY 058: Eingerost

For every transhuman with an eye toward the future, pushing their bodies and minds to the limits of the available technology while developing the next step beyond, there are transhumans who are unable or unwilling to see to the basic maintenance of their morphs, lost souls who have enough functional skills to surf the Mesh but whose education and understanding of how even the most basic tech works is about a century out of date. They're the lazy, clanking masses; unique but banal egos who shuffle through their life collecting achievements in Mesh games and credits towards the next resleeving, cheering on the more motivated and creative and skilled while they wile away the hours and days and years embroiled in petty dramas and the small crises of life.

There are people that rise above the masses, who go off into strange and terrible futures and never look back; and there are the Eingerost. They were common, disheveled, living the precarious existence of those embroiled in small dreams and with small means, until someone came along and staged an intervention—to show those transhumans their potential, to break them out of their rut, sometimes literally. Through love and cruelty and discipline, those faces in the crowd became something more: focused, imaginative, with vast goals and the abilities to realize them, to know that they could realize them, and the drive to do so. And those transhumans freed from the bondage of their old lives looked back and decided the greatest thing they could do was to provide the same experience for others—and became the Eingerost.

Authorities who are aware of the Eingerost treat them as terrorists; others view them as ruthlessly compassionate vigilantes or martyrs. They operate alone or in small groups, sharing data through private networks, and their goal is nothing less than to transform humanity, one ego at a time. Some use relatively peaceful methods, but most ascribe to a philosophy that only sudden, violent action can initiate the psychological transformation that will shift the arses of the clanking masses. So their techniques include kidnapping, often under the cover of explosive events designed to destroy the anchors of the victim's past life, and even the murder of friends and families, the permanent erasure of personal data, and extended imprisonment. Once the "break" has been made, however it is accomplished, begins a rapid period of cultural deprogramming and re-education. Egos are broken down, taught new skills, placed in high-stress situations that

require them to break their personal and societal mores, and forced to re-examine and question everything about their old existence. While this need not be traumatic, most Eingerost are cruel—for only with stress and love can the new transhumanity be forged.

When the Eingerost deems the subject is done, they are let free. Some go on to new lives, others are brainwashed by the indoctrination and become Eingerost recruits, seeking to share the experience and repeat what was done to them. Others just want revenge, or try to rebuild their lives as best they can.

ENTRY 059: Donathan

Compared to old Earth, the biological diversity of the solar system is meager. Millions of species and all of the biological compounds they produced have been lost in the diaspora to space, and all the genetic engineering accomplished since the Fall has not even begun to tap the billions of years of evolution that had produced Earth's teeming biosphere. Combined with the limitations of nanofabrication, biological compounds are the single most significant scarce resource in transhuman space—rare enough that there exist facilities solely to produce these materials, as cheaply as possible, for the profit of others.

Donathan was rescued from one such operation in the belt; unremarkable morphs designed as drug factories modified with specialized sacs along the milk lines to express exotic proteins. Treated as a production animal, physically and sexually abused by the help, it has taken thousands of hours of therapy for Donathan to begin to resume a life for himself on the outside—still expressing his milk, but this time on his own terms, and for his own remuneration.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	10	15	18	15	15	8	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	16	80	32	40	8	80

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Fray 35, Free Fall 40, Deception 40, Interests: Cultural Memes 50, Interests: Drugs: 50, Interests: Sex 45, Interests: Therapy 45, Language: Native Welsh 85, Language: English 50, Language: Indian 50, Perception: 50, Persuasion 45, Profession: Milker 50, Protocol 20, Scrounging 35, Unarmed Combat 35

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Drug Glands (x12), Toxin Filters

Traits: Neural Damage (Color Blind), Uncanny Valley

Using Donathan

To the cynical, Donathan is one of the universe's natural victims. Young, not terribly intelligent or skilled, raised in an isolated environment and exploited, it's probably amazing that he doesn't fall into even worse circumstances—and that is certainly one way that the gamemaster can use Donny, as a gateway to introduce the players into some of the more sordid elements of the campaign, to give them someone to stick up for or rescue or just give up on as appropriate to the player characters and the story. The flipside of things is to present Donny as

the strength of the transhuman spirit to overcome adversity, to come back from horror, or just to teeter on the edge of self-destruction.

Seeds

- Research into the proteins that Donny expresses suggests that the source for the drug factory that modified and held him prisoner has access to the DNA of extinct animals. Those would be worth a small fortune to the right parties—provided Donny can provide enough information to go after them.
- To supplement his income and work on his socializing Donny has begun working as an escort; during his idle hours with the other boys and girls he's caught rumors of a sex slave operation. Donny approaches the PCs in hopes that they will do something about it.

ENTRY 060: Death-of-Self

Immortality is not for everyone. Even if physical existence can be sustained indefinitely without mental degeneration, not everyone can adapt to changing times, or sustain themselves against a looming eternity, or deal with loss. When it comes time for a crisis of mortality, many habitats provide therapeutic services. Sometimes it is enough to help these people cope. Other times, it only discusses the options. The disposition of assets, possessions, intellectual property. Suicide is wasteful, and anathema to most communities, as much the waste of resources associated with the physical cessation of existence than the loss of a member, so habitats look for more positive and economical alternatives.

Death-of-Self is a radical ego pruning procedure used by those who cannot continue as they are. The process retains the subject's existing morph (if any), but trims away the subject's specific memories, retaining only key reflexes, and sometimes basic skills. In an age of forks and digital resleeving the loss of continuity of consciousness is less of terror for many than it was, but for those individuals that choose to lose themselves in this manner the idea that some core of their personality, behavior, or thought-patterns may pass on to another is often a source of comfort in their final moments. Death-of-Self is also a possible though relatively rare punishment for extreme crimes in habitats that do not subscribe to capital punishment and after psychiatric evaluation are unwilling to accept lesser rehabilitation schemes.

The pruned ego is, essentially, a new individual. Some retain a few mental and behavioral characteristics of the old ego, or even a key language or skill, but all specific memories are erased. They look at the universe through new sensors and a clean mind, full of potential.

Mechanics

Death-of-Self is a long-term psychosurgery ego-pruning technique (Eclipse Phase 274) which effectively ceases the existence of the character (although other forks and backups may exist, sometimes preserved as a muse). The new ego that results may share some ego-specific traits (Eidetic Memory, Math Wiz, mental Addictions, etc.) but should generate new skills and aptitudes as a starting character. If the new ego retains the old morph, it may be mistaken for its old self, and run into difficulties from old lovers, enemies, debts, social stigma, etc.

Using Death-of-Self

Practically, Death-of-Self is a convenient way for players and gamemasters to modify a character that just isn't working—the build is wrong, the morph is good but the skills were ill-chosen, too many negative traits, circumstances have rendered the character difficult to play, or the player simply doesn't care to play that specific character anymore. Death-of-Self provides a quick transition between the old character and the new one, to keep the game flowing. For NPCs, the story possibilities are considerable, as the loss of self in this manner has been a popular science fiction theme in stories such as Alfred Bester's *The Demolished Man* or Bruce Sterling's *The Artificial Kid*.

ENTRY 061: Wormfeed

A half-forgotten satellite station in orbit of Mars goes quiet and dark. Fifty-three criminal digital intelligences in a Xiphos e-prison are lost, splintered into thousands of pre-sapient feral intelligences. Freelance digital archaeologist Antekles Costanzas delves into the cortical stack of a dead Solaris courier; three days later they find what's left of Antekles crawling across the floor. Slowly, from the edges of transhuman society, the wormfeed spreads.

One of the lesser-known expressions of the Exsurgent virus, wormfeed has been identified as both a digital virus targeting infomorphs and nanofabricators, and a biological nanovirus. Both forms of the virus attack the ego, splintering the minds of the infected. Infomorphs are forced to fork again and again, backups corrupted, each time resulting in more unstable copies of the original ego, until finally reduced to feral intelligent programs, little more than new carriers for the wormfeed. Infected nanofabricators produce self-sustaining nanobiological constructs similar to planarian worms that act as carriers for the nanobiological version of the virus. The worms have limited mobility, but are drawn to make contact with biomorphs and spread the nanobiological version of wormfeed.

Infected biomorphs experience a steadily degenerating mental state as different personalities manifest and the brain struggles to adapt to the conflicting signals. At the same time their body begins to produce purely biological versions of the wormfeed construct, typically manifesting as internal parasites that are expelled with waste matter. These transgenic worms appear free of any form of the wormfeed virus, but contain DNA from the infected host which is passed on as they reproduce. As far as anyone can determine, the transgenic worms are the lifecycle end state of the wormfeed virus.

Mechanics

Stage 1 (initial infection to 24 hours):

When infection is complete the host's ego automatically begins splintering; for digital intelligences treat this as forking except that the alpha ego becomes two new beta egos, then beta egos become delta egos, deltas become gamma, and gammas become new copies of the wormfeed digital virus. Gamemasters that want to give the character a slim chance may allow each new fork a COG + INT Test

against the virus to avoid infection, giving them the opportunity to shut down and reboot.

Biomorphs infected at this stage acquire multiple personality disorder (Eclipse Phase 214), with each new personality effectively an Exsurgent NPC. The mental condition of the infected biomorph steadily worsens the number of personalities multiply. NPC personalities may display psi effects, though this is rare. Backups in cortical stacks or connected with the infected host are treated as if exposed to the wormfeed digital virus.

Stage 2 (1 day to 3 days):

Biomorphs begin to express the transgenic worms from their living tissue; typically the worms isolate existing peripheral nerves and bud off, so that the host doesn't immediately register their absence. Number of worms produced depends on the health of the target and available biological reserves; hosts on life support could produce dozens or hundreds of worms within a matter of days.

Stage 3 (3 days+):

The host body begins to cannibalize itself to produce more transgenic worm constructs; the process continues until the remaining tissues fail. Though the host can be preserved almost indefinitely with advanced medical care and intravenous feeding, at this point they are little more than a biological factory for the worms, which may begin to feed on the host's remaining tissues.

ENTRY 062: Gailteach

In every war, there are casualties, the disruption of social systems, and people who fall between the cracks and out of the human networks they knew. Gailteach was an operative, though for what agency, hypercorp, or government she does not recall. Doctors who have examined her believe that at some point Gailteach was exposed to multiple basilisk hacks, either at once or in close succession, and the damaging information is still cascading through the menton's nervous system, causing rolling neural damage that continually rewrites the neural connections between individual sequences in her long-term memory. So while her recall remains perfect, the result is an asynchronous fugue, Gailteach's recollection of past events continually shifted out of order.

Despite the damage, Gailteach maintains her significant linguistics skills, though in her personal speech is prone to rambling in multiple languages, not all of them natural. She maintains an existence as a researcher and translator, publishing original papers and articles on linguistics, and serves as a tireless on-call community literacy teacher, translator, and interpreter for her habitat. This selfless service has given Gailteach an excellent reputation, and the community provides more of her material and medical needs. For other matters, Gailteach relies on the assistance of her muse Egon, who is programmed to only communicate in certain synthetic languages.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
28	15	20	15	15	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	35	7	50

Morph: Menton

Skills: Academics: Linguistics 85, Academics: Neurolinguistics 80, Art: Logograms 50, Interests: Accents 60, Interests: Dialects 75, Interests: Synthetic Languages 80, Interests: Xenolinguistics 80, Interfacing 50, Investigation 50, Language: Native Gaelic 95, Language: Any*, Networking: Firewall 25, Networking: Scientists 25, Profession: Interpreter 75 Profession: Linguist: 80, Profession: Teacher 60, Profession: Translator 65, Research 77

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Hyper-Linguist, Math Boost, Multi-tasking, Oracles

Traits: Fast Learner, Mental Disorder (Severe phobia of psychosurgery), Neural Damage (Amnesia, Blackouts)

* Gailteach knows hundreds of human languages and dialects; common languages

(Arabic, English, French, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin, etc) have a typical rating of 75; uncommon languages 60, and synthetic & obscure languages (Esperanto, Klingon, Sumerian, &c.) 50.

Using Gailteach

While she doesn't advertise it, Gailteach is an occasional resource for Firewall, and the PCs are most likely to encounter her in that respect. Gailteach is aware of her memory issues and so will remember the PCs (and any NPCs) in different contexts on subsequent encounter, so that at any given time her general reaction to such characters may be positive, neutral, or negative; however Egon's memory functions perfectly, and anyone who takes advantage of Gailteach's faulty recollection (for example, she may mistake the character for a relative, wife, or old lover) will find themselves cut off from contact with Gailteach by all the means at Egon's disposal. Playing Gailteach may be difficult for the gamemaster; keep a list of random foreign words and phrases around to pepper into her speech can help, and if the nature of her neural damage is difficult to grasp, treat it as early on-set senility.

ENTRY 063: Transbovine

Cattle are part of humanity's cultural heritage, but they don't translate well into space. Massive ungulate methane factories are impracticable for most habitats, and are inefficient as a food supply. So only a tiny fraction of the different breeds of cattle known to transhumanity made the transition into space. Some post-Fall societies with strong cultural attachments to bovines make do with miniature breeds, which are less costly to maintain—fifty-centimeter high zebus are a relatively common sight in the largest Indian influenced habitats.

On the other hand, the bovine genetic code had been completely sequenced long before escape from Earth became an issue, and even if physical cows rarely if ever made it up the gravity well, transhumanity still had a massive database of genetic data, and, in many cases, sperm and egg from breeding operations. The average transhuman may only see a classical cow in a rare zoo (or more likely on a live feed over the Mesh), but the genetic legacy of the cow has not been lost, and in many cases is open source and available to genehackers throughout the solar system.

The result are transbovines, grown from synthetic DNA in growth vats, and often with a number of tweaks, fixes, improvements, and transgenic infusions. The urge to craft chimeras is so widespread that the majority of cattle retain only 25% to 50% of classical bovine genetic material in their make-up; transbovines intended for the production of milk and meat typically have up to 3% human DNA incorporated to make these products easier to digest by flats. Rumors abound that the Carnival of the Goat and some criminal syndicates has access to transbovines with a much higher percentage of human DNA to facilitate customers for prostitution.

Seeds

- A breed of lunar miniature cattle known as “Chameleon Cows” for their environment-reactive skin color is under threat of extinction from neglect; the PCs are asked by a preservation society to try and recover a breeding pair. Unfortunately, the minis' genetic code is under a long-going intellectual property dispute, so transporting them off of Luna is illegal—not only do the PCs have to find the hiding transbovines, but they will have to smuggle them past the authorities as well.

- Firewall asks the PCs to transport materials from a remote outpost to a facility on Mars, including a six-limbed transbovine named Mahri with a high percentage of transhuman DNA—she looks like a slender, blue-white-black furred cow with a disturbingly human face. Mahri is believed to be an effort at uplift, and may have minor Psi abilities. Possible complications may include an attack by Exsurgers trying to reclaim Mahri; infection of the crew by the xenomorph exsurgent virus through Mahri's milk; or Mahri giving “birth” to an exsurgent biomorph.
- Superaurochs are high-gravity, densely over muscled, legless transbovines developed by some of the Trojan and Jovian habitats—they look like brown, cow shaped slugs on steroids and produce the best steaks in the universe. A prime cut is worth a premium in the Inner System, and the PCs are approached by local criminals planning a raid. All the PCs have to do is stage a suitable distraction for the heist, and they get 25% of the cut from the sale.

ENTRY 064: 60% Plumbing

Sixty percent of the Extropia habitat, by mass, consists of plumbing. This includes only the movement, treatment, heating, processing, and refinement of liquid water and waste throughout the system; the plumbing also interacts with many other subsidiary systems such as oxygen generation and air control, power generation, cooling, hydroponics, and various industrial processes.

Beneath nearly every panel is at least one pipe carrying liquid water, color-coded for steam (white), fresh (blue), waste (yellow or brown), radioactive (pink), hot (red), and reclaimed (grey). Also present are automatic and manual shut-offs and redirects to prevent loss or reshunt water to prevent pressure build-up and bursts. They line the maintenance corridors which lead to the hidden reservoirs and pump stations that are built into dead spaces throughout the habitat structure to best service the community and to manage the considerable mass of moving water from unbalancing the structural stability of the habitat.

The aquatechs that work Extropia's plumbing have access to rarely-walked spaces, kept away from the commercial thoroughfares, out of sight of recreation areas, and like all transhumans who are in on a public secret, have their share of small jokes, amenities, and lore. They make no secret of the tiny stills and soda fountains that had been set up early in Extropia's history, buried among the commercial boilers and mass of piping, tapping a few drams of pure or carbonated water to mix with homemade syrups or thin out home-made moonshine, and laugh about "line 212" which was marked radioactive but actually ferried pure alcohol from a collection point to a hidden reservoir not on any of the plans hundreds of yards away, where the 'techs would get together to stage parties or just jam.

Perhaps more such hidden spaces still lurk among the complex web of Extropia's plumbing, and other secrets besides. A 'tech that knows the ins and outs of the plumbing architecture might know where the sensors are planted to detect movement, and how to bypass or jam them, and know enough to bring a headlamp or oxygen bottle because certain sections not in regular use are kept sealed and without light or air circulation most of the time. Certainly in their less sober moments the aquatechs hint at saboteurs and others who met dire fates beyond the watchful eyes of security cameras, and whose remains no

doubt still exist in some quiet corner or behind some disused access panel, away from prying eyes.

Using 60% Plumbing

Most players and gamemasters do not always appreciate the scale of habitats, which must recreate in miniature an environment suitable to a broad spectrum of transhumanity. So no matter how large a habitat might appear from the outside, the actual living space is often considerably smaller. So it behooves gamemasters to remember that this additional space—within the walls, beneath the floors, above the ceiling (unless a dome)—exists as part of the setting; it is space where things or people may hide, where shooting up a wall has immediate consequences as lights go dim or steam and water (possibly radioactive or unprocessed waste) spout out and start to flood the compartment. Likewise, where these spaces are available to transhumanity, especially for a relatively long-lived habitat, they become less uniform, full of dead-ends, quick fixes, makeshift stills, hidden recreation areas and holo-posters of naked biomorphs, all the signs and detritus of human habitation.

ENTRY 065: Mme. Bleu

Madame Bleu is an establishment on most major and many minor habitats, a small podcasting service that operates discretely and does not advertise through regular channels. It operates a single kind of morph, the eponymous Mme. Bleu—identical female pods with a few specific enhancements, as well as a basic cover identity and associated peripherals (ecto, clothing, living quarters, etc.). The Mme. Bleu pod is designed as a cover identity for conducting autonomous business at a distance. Clandestine and criminal elements have caught on to the nature of Mme. Bleu, so that the majority of professionals know what they are dealing with, even if they do not know exactly who is jamming the morph. In this way Mme. Bleu has become something of a generic feature of clandestine communities, a mainstay whose presence signals an expectation of a certain level of professional behavior from both parties. Damage or destruction of a Mme. Bleu pod never results in physical reciprocation, but given that the pod's identity is usually very well connected throughout transhuman space, the assailant's rep usually takes a severe hit in response...at least until amends are made.

Mechanics

The standard Madame Bleu pod is essentially a pod version of a sylph (Eclipse Phase 140) with the Cyberbrain and Puppet Sock implants in addition to those standard for that morph, and the Social Stigma (Pod) trait for those aware of her nature; physical attributes are set at 15, with mental attributes provided by the puppeteer. If a character deliberately maims or kills a Mme. Bleu pod, their g-rep, c-rep, and @-rep scores take a hit – subtract 6 points, divided between the three scores as the gamemaster sees fit.

The hypercorp or group behind the Mme. Bleu pods is well-concealed, but not unreachable. The day-to-day operations on individual habitats is usually handled by an “office” of two or three local, detail-oriented personnel that take care of the Mme. Bleu pod and “her” cover identity; they report back to “corporate” and do not have access to the details of operations. If confronted or asked about the service, they can provide contact information for “corporate” and little else; company policy for “office” personnel is to comply with requests for information as much as possible.

Using Mme. Bleu

Madame Bleu is a puppet, designed for puppetmasters to interact with the player characters from a safe distance. As

such she may approach the PCs with an offer of employment, or blackmail, or even be the mastermind behind whatever plot or operation the PCs are currently facing. In all such situations, she is the cut-out, the place at which the trail tends to end—if the PCs get too close, the puppeteer will simply leave and the PCs will be faced with a twitching and drooling lump of meat.

On the other hand, the identical nature of the Mme. Bleu pods also means that she is a familiar face, once the player characters may encounter many times, on many different habitats, for different purposes. This familiarity can be used to the gamemaster's advantage; first as a surprise (How did she get there? Why is she dealing with the enemy?), and then as they discover the pod's nature their compliance as they understand that they are dealing with a mouthpiece. Once the PCs accept Mme. Bleu, they will begin to look for her as the potential hook for an adventure—an expectation that the gamemaster may fulfill or subvert, as they see fit.

ENTRY 066: Dewitt Y.

The ubiquity of the Mesh has given rise to generations where autodidacticism is almost universal among transhumans with access to these resources. Traditional educational techniques have given way to vast databases of academic texts, automated lesson plans, virtual training sessions, XP live-and-learn recordings, edutainment games, and various other multimedia learning experiences. Dewitt Yousef is the equivalent of a post-graduate in this kind of curriculum, an entirely self-taught, independent intelligence agent. He has spent thousands of hours on stake-out and tailing procedures, self-defense, marksmanship, languages, and dozens of other courses and tutorials, all aimed at making himself a competent spy.

In practice, Dewitt Y. has very little practical experience in “official” operations, but he effectively lives the life of a spy all the time—randomly fixating on individuals for months long stakeouts, infiltrating facilities, stealing garbage to analyze the contents for possible intelligence content, etc. In this way he tends to accumulate masses of mildly confidential information, which he sells to various brokers, and also accepts assignments on a freelance basis.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
16	13	14	14	9	13	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	2	28	5	80	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academics: History 40, Academics: Linguistics 30, Academics: Political Theory 40, Beam Weapons 35, Blades 35, Climbing 25, Clubs 35, Demolitions 20, Fray 45, Free Fall 27, Hardware: Armorer 45, Infiltration 60, Interfacing 50, Interests: Intelligence Agencies 65, Interests: Spy Gear 75, Intimidation 33, Investigation 55, Kinesics 33, Kinetic Weapons (Holdouts) 45, Language: Native Czech 84, Language: Dutch 55, Language: English 55, Language: German 44, Language: Hungarian 44, Language: Russian 66, Language: Turkish 44, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Criminals 25, Palming 55, Perception (Visual) 47, Persuasion 25, Profession: Freelance Spy 60, Scrounging 55, Swimming 33, Unarmed Combat (Subdual) 34

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Pheromones, Enhanced Vision, Medichines, Neurachem (Level 1), Radiation Sense

Traits: Mental Disorder (Paranoia), Situational Awareness, Unattractive (Level 1)

Using Dewitt Y.

Dewitt Y. can be an asset, an annoyance, comic relief, or just simply a convenient corpse to hang the plot of the adventure on. While he has some skills thanks to his years of intense training and bizarre lifestyle, he also has no real friends, no social life separable from “work,” and no professional attitude or common sense when dealing with things. As such, his reactions to even the most innocuous of situations can lead to installing tiny surveillance drones in the neighbor’s cupboard, hacking public records looking for secret files, or planning the assassination of random individuals, all while maintaining one or more alternate identities, whose universal expression is slightly affable but persistently perplexed by normal transhuman behavior. If he was ever as good at his job as he wanted to be, Dewitt Y. would probably be killed—and that may just be where the PCs come into the story. Alternately, they may employ Dewitt, or be the subject of one of his assignments (real or imagined).

ENTRY 067: K-FLASK

Mongolian nomads did not bring their horses and yaks into space, and their flasks of slowly fermenting koumiss did not jangle overhead as they rode the rockets from the cradle of humanity on the eve of the Fall. Yet in the post-Fall infoglomerate that is transhuman society, no cultural stream is thrown away—all are archived, reviewed, analyzed, and remixed into the eternal now. Most such cultural revivals burn through in a matter of weeks or months, depending on the habitat and whether it has any good hooks, but fragments of these culture-waves remain. For the brief rebirth of the Mongolian Nomad in the Planetary Consortium, the main remnant is the k-flask.

Less a miracle of modern biotech than a surprisingly popular (and easily pirated) byproduct, the k-flask is a container lined with a bladder of tailored mammalian cells and glands. Fill up the bottom with water and processed biological slurry (powdered freeze-dried astronaut rations work a treat), then seal it tight and shake it well; the k-flask will filter and process it into a pseudo-dairy product the consistency of a thin protein shake within a couple minutes; most commercial versions could easily be hacked to process a portion of the material straight to alcohol, yielding a mildly sour koumiss-like drink within an hour. In either case, the product is then sucked from a nipple placed at the top of the k-flask.

Mechanics

The k-flask is an item of equipment with a trivial cost, available wherever slightly out-of-fashion-but-still-handly goods are sold, especially outposts and spacecraft where access to makers for food processing is limited. The alcoholic hack is readily available on the Mesh and does not require a test to implement.

Seeds

- Rumors abound that Joan McX, a biotechnologist has developed a k-flask that can product comfort (Eclipse Phase 320). To try and make her give up the secret, a local criminal gang have surgically removed her cortical stack and are torturing the fork. McX offers to give the player characters komfurt-flasks if they can rescue her fork.
- Respected local biologist Los Hsung has died without a cortical stack. The cause was a slow poison, administered over days or weeks from a tainted k-flask. The biologist's intellectual property is immediately disputed between his biological and

infomorph heirs, giving both a motive for murder. As outsiders, the player characters are asked to investigate the biologist's death, with a per diem for their trouble. As an added catch, the k-flask itself—the only definitive clue to the murderer's method and identity—has disappeared. Find the k-flask, and find the murderer.

- Geneticists in Europa have developed a living tube-worm that emulates the functions of the k-flask, but a dispute has arisen over who owns the rights to the novel organism. The player characters are hired by an outside hypercorp to steal a sample worm and a copy of the research. The only catch is, the worms are currently being developed in an open water laboratory on the sea floor, guarded by uplifted octopi.

ENTRY 068: Spetälsksbok

Recovered from the dead extraterrestrial Iktomi civilization on Echo V, the Spetälsksbok was reportedly part of a parcel of alien artifacts looted and brought back through the Pandora Gate, but the expedition suffered a mechanical failure and died before returning. A subsequent recovery mission by Gatekeeper located the craft, including the skinless remains of one crewmember holding the damaged Spetälsksbok, and the alien artifact was flagged as a potential biohazard and placed in a quarantine archive.

Spetälsksbok was removed from the archive after it was observed “eating” airborne dead skin and hair cells. Subsequent scientific examination of the webbing-like structure revealed it consists of variegated filaments of keratin around a monolithic core of viral machinery hosted by symbiotic radiophage bacteria. The Spetälsksbok captures environmental sources of keratin to repair and rebuild damaged sections of the object— basically, a highly-developed and durable bioengineered artifact. The presence of nearby radiation sources awakens the dormant bacteria, which powers the viral machinery’s capture of nearby keratin sources—including the skin, nails, and hair from the majority of biomorphs if they get too close.

Physically, the Spetälsksbok resembles a fractal structure of lace-like branches up to ten centimeters in length, surrounding a sixty-centimeter long spun cone of the same material; though the whole of the artifact has been badly damaged by some endothermic process and it is estimated a quarter of its total mass and three quarters of its surface area remain missing. Analysis of the structure of the filament branches reveals regular features suggestive of language, and the general consensus among xenoarchaeologists is that it is some form of Iktomi book. Crowdsourced analysis has identified several features of the language, with some suggested implications regarding Iktomi culture and anatomy, but so far the work remains untranslated.

Mechanics

Any biomorph who touches the Spetälsksbok with their bare skin takes 1 damage as the viral machinery infects them and breaks down the keratin in their hair, skin, and nails (and scales, feathers, horns, etc. as applicable) in the immediate area; synthmorphs and other characters without keratin are immune to this. Any implant or

precautions that protect from nanoinfection are effective against the viral machinery.

Seeds

- Gatekeeper Corp has been “feeding” Spetälsksbok vat-grown keratin fibers in the presence of various radiation sources in the hope of causing the artifact to fully regenerate. However, one experiment has caused the Spetälsksbok to regenerate so quickly it has spawned a room-filling cancerish mass that has resulted in the deaths of four biomorphs and trapped three researchers in the lab as the fractal branches continue to grow. Gatekeeper is offering a reward for anyone that can rescue the lab researchers without substantially damaging the artifact, or in extremis shut off the radiation-source.
- A possible translation of a part of the Spetälsksbok reveals what may be a map of Iktomi settlements on Echo V—including several not heretofore known, explored, or looted. Gatekeeper is asking for volunteers to check out these new sites, in exchange for a cut of the profits from whatever they bring back.

ENTRY 069: Elder Argentgrodd

One of the most prominent neo-hominids in the solar system today is Elder Argentgrodd, an uplifted silverback gorilla. The self-described ultra-male of Luna, Argentgrodd is outspoken, intelligent, media-genic, and more than a little bit of an asshole. As an employer or a customer he is a complete nightmare, entirely self-centered, demanding, and with an innate driving need to dominate every situation through a combination of verbal and physical intimidation, using his size and intellect to browbeat and threaten other morphs, particularly males and combat-oriented morphs. On the other hand, Argentgrodd is also remarkably kind and playful with children and female biomorphs (regardless of age, gender, or appearance), often leaving a rage to tickle and educate them.

He has an average of six episodic programs airing on the Mesh at any given time, from an edutainment stream aimed at young uplifted neo-hominids to an adult-oriented program where female biomorphs compete in a variety of physical, sexual, and mental challenges to join his harem. Most of these programs are created under the auspices of his personal media hypercorp, Argentgrodd AG, and recorded in a small lunar dome habitat that replicates a variety of ape forest habitats from Earth.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	17	19	17	22	26	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	42	8	84	30	6	45

Morph: Neo-hominid (Gorilla)

Skills: Academics: Neurology 66, Academics: Philosophy 77, Academics: Psychology 55, Academics: Sociology 55, Art: Finger Painting 44, Control 60, Deception 77, Free Fall 33, Fray 66, Interests: Exsurgent Virus 44, Interests: Uplifts 80, Interfacing 65, Intimidation (Physical) 80, Kinesics: 55, Language: Native Arabic 89, Language: Afrikaans 44, Language: English 77, Language: French 58, Language: Swahili 50, Networking: Media 75, Networking: Scientists 55, Perception 66, Profession: Media Presenter 80, Protocol 40, Psi Assault 40, Psychosurgery 55, Research 50, Sense 55, Unarmed Combat (Punches) 67

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Enhanced Pheromones*, Mnemonic Augmentation

Traits: Hyperlinguist, Illiterate, Math Boost, Mental Disorder (Atavism, Megalomania), No Cortical Stack, Psi (Level 2), Zoosemiotics

* Custom implant, applies to neo-hominids only.

Using Elder Argentgrodd

Argentgrodd probably has more than a few dark secrets for gamemasters to use and players to uncover, including but not limited to media cover-ups of financial shenanigans at his hypercorp, violent episodes resulting in significant damage and at least three deaths, sexual crimes and paternity suits, and his very brief foray into politics, which may have resulted in him partially eating a visiting dignitary. All those are relatively par for the course when you're a massive gorilla and a celebrity, but Argentgrodd's darkest secret is his psi abilities. The incidents stem from an encounter with a TITANs artifact that is not in any of Argentgrodd's official (or even unofficial) biographies, and which the uplifted silverback is extremely careful to conceal from the public because he still has that artifact, hidden in a lab beneath his lunar jungle dome. Argentgrodd has had a team of trusted neo-hominid researchers secretly studying the artifact for a decade, with vague plans of using it to infect and "upgrade" an entire neo-hominid society.

ENTRY 070: Kidmoths

Genehacking is highly prevalent in transhumanity's expanded ecosystems, and the hydroponics bays of major habitats are areas of sensor-aided, climate-controlled, clinically clean perfection—custom designed green growing things in chemically perfect soil receiving measured cycles of light and shade and water.

Yet many of the most fascinating creatures and plants that occupy the edges of the human ecosystem are not the products of transhuman science, but of nature's own genehacking: mutation, unsolicited hybrids, and bizarre adaptations. One of the most prevalent of these species on Mars is *Korscheltellus ares*, the kidmoth.

Believed to have been introduced in a shipment of potato plants to Olympus, this insect "sings" at a frequency in the upper range of unaugmented flat hearing (19-20 MHz), unlike most moths. Most transhumans lose sensitivity in this range by adulthood, so that kidmoths are mostly only heard by children—hence the name.

From Olympus, kidmoths have spread to a number of other colonies, nestled away in nooks and crannies. Most habitats consider them a pest, an intrusive species that upsets the careful ecological balance, while others consider them part of the substance of human habitation, and have sought to incorporate (and even monetize) kidmoths.

Seeds

- SaturnSilk, Inc. (SSI) is a small hypercorp that farms a slightly genetweaked breed of domesticated kidmoth, using the cocoon material as a silk substitute. SSI has the largest database of kidmoth breeds in existence, and pays a bounty of kidsilk cloth or rep boost on unusual specimens, double if they're live. A particular breed of mutant kidmoth in the PC's habitat is said to have a wingspan of 10 centimeters—if they can capture a breeding pair, SSI will reward them handsomely.
- A lapse in control protocols has led to an explosion of kidmoths in the PC's habitat, a situation that is getting dangerous as the massive swarms threaten transhuman life and devastate any available plants. The PCs are hired to deal with the situation, but are forbidden from using chemical pesticides. They will have to be creative in getting rid of the bugs!

- A hypercorp representative has discovered her company has developed a variety of kidmoth that can consume bioweave armor—and plans to release it in a terroriststyle event on Olympus, so that the company can then market its kidmoth-repelling bioweave armor alternative. Disgusted, she asks the PCs for help in stopping the kidmoth event and outing the nefarious hypercorp's deeds.
- Kidmoth drones are a local hack that has become prevalent in the PC's habitat, where small neural implants allow a user to monitor the kidmoth's environment and direct the direction of its flight. Local anarchists believe someone is using the kidmoth drones to monitor the entire habitat. They've tracked the signal back to an area restricted to administrative personnel, and now they want the PCs to find out what's going on behind closed doors. Unfortunately, it's worse than they think—a rogue admin is perfecting the kidmoth drones so that they can swarm, the shifting patterns delivering a basilisk hack; and the maiden test for the new weapon are those pesky anarchists...

ENTRY 071: Garden-of-Me

On Vo Nguyen, the bioconservative stronghold orbiting Earth, the nursery-spaces for children were designed to be integrated with low-level hydroponics bays, so that the young transhumans could see green growing things, and learn their properties and how to care for them, and look back up at the planet of their ancestors which they might one day return to and reclaim. Most of these spaces have since been abandoned, or converted, as the demand for them failed to materialize. Various individuals and organizations have purchased or leased the use of these spaces for their own ends: commercial light hydroponics, living quarters...and a single garden.

Wiry, wood-like vines yield freckled pink flowers, and which slowly ripen into lightly furred, peach-skinned fruits. Tiny pseudo-arthropods with clear, tough exoskeletons tend the soil, farm aphids, and are consumed by little chameleons. Cup-like flytraps sweetly reek of decomposing meat to attract scavenger flies, and burrowing earthworms up to three feet in length are visible shimmying through the transparent earth-boxes, wending their ways around roots. All told, it is a testament to ecoscaping—but for the majority of inhabitants of Vo Nguyen, this garden is reviled and rarely visited. Because every living thing in that garden—every plant, insect, and lizard—is a genetically engineered chimera containing some human element. Digestive enzymes from human saliva fill the flytraps, the scuttling insects are armored in shells of keratin based on human nails, and fruits are pigmented with human-derived melanin...and so forth.

The Garden-of-Me was crafted following the death of noted bioconservative Vim Spcyowski, as per his request and his instructions, from his own genetic material, and is maintained by the members of the Spcyowski Trust. Vim's purpose was for the garden to serve as a living, up-close example of the seductive nature of what bioconservatism resists—an ecosystem where one genome has subtly infiltrated and infected everything, twisting what might have been a beautiful encapsulated nature into a cruel parody of itself. Visitors touch the fruit and see little difference between the plant and their own skin; despite the lack of visitors the garden air is always heavy and fragrant with the smell of a large group of unwashed humans in close contact; diseases tend to spread rapidly and jump species easily leading to sudden massive die-offs that require the caretakers to replace them. To the

bioconservatives, this is a slice of hell kept close to their heart, as a reminder of what they would not be.

Seed

Sensation surrounds the expansion of the Garden-of-Me, which introduces its first mammal—a tiny transgenic chimera that resembles a cross between a field mouse and a tiny simian, with long paws and a nearly-human face. Competing groups are looking to capture or destroy the four specimens (two male and two female) before they are introduced: a religious sect which objects to their existence, an antibioconservative group that wants the creatures crucified in the garden to troll the bioconservatives, and nano-ecologists that believe the specimens aren't transgenics at all, but actually a supposedly-extinct species. Any or all of them could approach the PCs for their assistance—as strangers to Vo Nguyen, they are most likely isolated from its warring sociopolitics and can operate with less scrutiny. In exchange, the PCs could get valuable introductions and make contacts on the habitat that would take months or years to develop otherwise.

ENTRY 072: The Automatic Farm

In the northern Martian lowlands there is an experiment in absentee terraforming. The habitat covers a dozen acres, and, except for gravity, the interior does a good imitation of the arid grassy field ecosystems of northern Australia on Earth, and is completely absent of transhumanity. Instead, the main inhabitants of the Automatic Farm are a pack of proto-uplifted dogs and a hardy flock of transgenic sheep; the remaining non-vegetable residents consist primarily of insects with roles in pollination, decomposition, soil reclamation, and other such activities.

The guiding philosophy of the Automatic Farm is to investigate the long-term management of terraformed or partially terraformed planets without direct transhuman guidance or interference. The transsheep are engineered to facilitate the process in various specialized roles, minimizing grass fires, spreading grass seeds in their droppings using engineered instinctive patterns to maximize de-desertification, etc. In part to counter and guide the transsheep are a pack of canines with enhanced cognition. While not fully uplifted to transhuman intelligence, the large-brained canines have comparable memory and reasoning skills to a chimpanzee. The Martian sheepdogs maintain the population of the transsheep flock and help direct their efforts, but also scout the area ahead of the sheep and maintain a watch for predators and pitfalls.

The interior of the Automatic Farm is mostly hands-off, with new species or even new individuals of existing species introduced only after much solemn debate. The cost of the project is partially offset by a multitude of cameras and sensors set throughout the habitat-dome's interior; while scientists use this to examine the progress of the animals, the majority of transhumans enjoy seeing newborns "in the wild," to the point the habitat subsists largely on ad revenue from cute puppy and lamb pictures. There has also been some considerable interest in the techniques behind the Martian sheepdogs, as adults trained as service animals have proven able to teach their offspring something of their skills, though it remains to be seen if this will ever be cheaper or more effective than more invasive training using implants. Still, the sight of an alpha dog trying to get a row of pups to stand in a line always gets at least a million hits on The Automatic Farm's forums.

Seeds

- The Carnival of the Goat has infiltrated the Automatic Farm, installing implants on the transsheep that allow users to puppet them. So far, the Festival has escaped detection by timing their intrusion to the Automatic Farm's breeding seasons, but it's only a matter of time before they start to fornicate without regard for such niceties. The Automatic Farm is willing to insert the player characters into the farm to deal the situation—by letting them puppet "control" dogs and letting them cull the puppet transshee
- A transgenics hypercorp wants DNA samples from the Martian sheepdogs, and are willing to pay handsomely. How the PCs get them is up to them...though the hypercorp does have a specially modified intersex canine pod that can collect and store the samples, however they decide to collect them.

ENTRY 073: Shedder

The byword in the Planetary Consortium is upgrade or die—the fear of technological stagnation, investing in the wrong implants or longevity treatments, seeing the hypercorp that makes your morph or its software discontinue the line. A dropping consumer score on a product can send a fleet of morphs to trade their models, provided they have the resources to afford a new one.

The man now known as "Shedder" is one of the unfortunates who couldn't. Always a bit of a bottom-feeder, he got by doing gopher-work for bigger players in the inner sphere entertainment industry and a couple years back he made a bad investment in an upgrade: a persistent infection that was supposed to increase tissue regeneration, but without prematurely aging the cells or causing cancer. It would have meant persistently clean skin, teeth, hair, even heightened longevity—but what he didn't find out until later were the potential side effects. For the past two years, Shedder has been constantly shed skin, hair, even teeth to making way for new tissues, unable to stay anywhere for a few minutes without leaving a slough of skin and hair, constantly scratching at himself.

Naturally, business has suffered, and Shedder has been forced into shadier and shadier deals, all while trying to save up enough to get the treatment fixed...or removed.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	15	10	15	15	15	18	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	36	7	72	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Art: Film 30, Deception (Fast Talk) 55, Fray 25, Interests: Archaic Film Tech 44, Interests: Entertainment Industry Gossip 56, Interests: Underworld Gossip 70, Intimidation 35, Investigation 45, Kinesics 70, Language: Native French 85, Language: Italian 60, Language: Spanish 80, Networking: Criminals 35, Networking: Media 55, Perception 45, Persuasion (Negotiation) 50, Profession: Media Ops 60, Profession: Personal Assistant 60, Protocol (Media) 60, Research 35

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism (virus), Cortical Stack, Enhanced Vision
Traits: Unattractive (Level 2)

Using Shedder

Shedder is a gopher and low-level flunky with weird connections and a memorable appearance. Never quite a mover and shaker, Shedder tends to get the bad ends of the bad jobs, but keeps his eyes open and waits for his chance. As such, gamemasters may play Shedder as a wild card—a background character driving vehicles, taking orders, and cleaning up messes (he has literally recycled more than a few bodies) who, if the opportunity presents itself, may sell out information on the characters or their operations, or even make off with whatever they're going after if he thinks he can get away with it. PCs may return to temporary headquarters after a job to find Shedder has "borrowed" some of their equipment, pawning it for funds for a quick scam and planning to return it before they know it's gone. Alternately, Shedder may approach them with a job, using secrets his employers and partners didn't know he knew to plan a heist or rip off. Unlike most NPCs, Shedder knows exactly how precarious his position is in any deal and will always try to hold something back so that he has leverage on the situation.

ENTRY 074: Solnar

An oldthink economic relic wearing new clothes, the solnar is a unit of account used as a basis for comparison and conversion of the various fiat currencies in use throughout the solar system. Unlike the hypercorp-backed credit or Titanian Kroner, the solnar is not a currency into itself to be spent and accepted in exchange for goods and services, and is of primary interest to economists and academics. For most transhumans, the utility of the Solnar is as a handy reference for dealing with alternative, old-fashioned currencies used in some habitats or issued by smaller hypercorps, banks, governments, and groups. A simple app allows users to quickly calculate the relative worth of various coupons, bonds, scripts, and even physical currency against the solnar.

In most cases, the solnar app also allows near-instantaneous cost-free conversion between digital currencies through the Solnar Fiscal Exchange (SFEX), an autonomous Mesh-based service where users post the currencies they have and the currencies they want, and accept the solnar-based conversion rate; SFEX then matches up user requests and offers through a microtransaction system. While obscure, low-demand currencies can sometimes take minutes or hours to complete conversion, conversions from major currencies to major currencies (Credits to Titanian Kroner, or Night Cartel negotiable digital certificates) are nearly automatic.

Using the Solnar

In the post-scarcity economy that rules much of Eclipse Phase with so much of the game tied up into the rep-system, old-school economics like differing currencies are such a pain that they are seldom used except as a plot point. That being said, sometimes weird currencies can be a very useful plot point—work certificates for a given habitat encourage the PCs to look (and spend) locally, hypercorp coupons or stock are a very flavorful and specific reward for a certain kind of work—but when the time does come when the PCs (and/or the plot) needs to move on, they're going to want to take their wealth with them, and that's where solnars and SFEX come in: a mechanism to ease PCs over the nightmare of currency conversion so they can get on with the adventure and have fun.

Seeds

- Jhim Thrush can't bank on his reputation, but as a part-owner of three exotic organic compound mining operations around Saturn he issues and redeems his own personal script to cover many transactions, particularly his gambling debts. Jhim relies on the solnar ranking of his script for it to be accepted—and lately that's been taking a dive, even though Jhim always honors them. Jhim suspects a rival of his, one of the PCs former employers, of trying to discredit him and hires the PCs to investigate.
- The Night Cartel on Liberty station on Ganymede are laundering Titanian kroners from the Jovian government through their legitimate businesses, taking a rake-off and then the proceeds are being set up in a series of autonomous accounts outside Jovian space. Anti-Jovian watchdogs have caught wind of the operation; they aren't sure what the Jovians intend to do with the money but don't expect it's for anything good. They give the PCs a computer virus and ask them to slip it into the computers holding the black accounts—it'll automatically flag the Kroners as available for trade and fill the accounts up with a variety of low-demand "junk" currencies, digital coupons, etc. Of course, for their efforts the PCs are set up with an account full of junk bonds, which if they succeed will be converted into 10,000 kroner.

ENTRY 075: Eternal Puppy

Genetic science has advanced past the point where its usage was primarily restricted to medicine and practical industrial purposes; it is now used for art, war, entertainment...and pets. The Eternal Puppy™ was a temporary fad in the inner sphere with very long-lived consequences. Billed as “the dog that never grows old,” Eternal Puppies were ostensibly genetically designed to remain a puppy, never growing into adolescence, never losing its youthful energy, enthusiasm, and curiosity—a puppy that will never outgrow its habitat, or grow old and tired. The Mercury-based hypercorp selling them lasted about thirteen months before going out of business.

In practice, the Eternal Puppy was advertising hyperbole. Rather than spend the budget on creating proper neotenic canine morphs, the genehackers worked out a process to inflict a very specific form of disassociation between the canine body’s systems, so that they would age at different rates. This quick and cheap method would assure that the dog would retain the outward physical and mental appearance of a puppy, but would not experience any mental development beyond the age of forty weeks, nor have a life expectancy any greater than that of a baseline canine, and are up to ten times more likely to suffer related development disorders requiring medical attention. The retardation of mental development in particular meant that the puppies needed intense training and emotional bonding very early in their life, and many suffer basic relapses on potty training, basic commands, and socialization, with no appreciable long-term memory.

Dozens of Eternal Puppies remain throughout transhuman space. An owner’s network has been set up through the Mesh to provide assistance to owners, swapping stories of various after-market implants and genetic therapy procedures to sustain the animals or partially counteract some of the drawbacks of the Eternal Puppy™ procedure—eidetic memory bioware to improve trainability and recognition, medichines and internal release drug glands to handle recurrent medical issues and so forth.

Seeds

- Rumor has it that before the hypercorp folded, their R&D had developed a revolutionary genetic procedure that would transform Eternal Puppies into genuine neotenic canines, free of the

developmental issues that plagued the normal product. However, with the closure and bankruptcy the intellectual property has been tied up in legal red tape. The Eternal Puppy Owner’s Network (EPON) asks the PCs to break into the archives and liberate the data so they can disseminate it.

- A scumbarge criminal’s beloved Eternal Puppy™ is dying, and she takes the power station hostage, threatening to destroy the entire ship/habitat in a nuclear inferno unless the animal is saved...somehow. With the limited resources available, can the PCs come up with an amenable solution?
- The PCs are entrusted with an Eternal Puppy™ to transport from Venus to Extropia (or vice versa), with the added complication of a group trying to kill and/or steal the little beastie; on top of that, the little scamp manages to get into all sorts of trouble, like peeing on the PC’s equipment.
- Firewall contacts the PCs, telling them that the parent hypercorp did not cease operations naturally—they were shut down by combined arms teams when it proved to be a front for an exsurgent sleeper cell. Each of the Eternal Puppies may be a viral sleeper bomb waiting to go off. The players are assigned to find and destroy as many of them as they can, before their genetic programming sets in.

ENTRY 076: Lois Wylie

If you believe the hype, genefixing freed transhumanity from the forces of natural selection; “Intelligent redesign” eliminated genetic diseases and predisposition to obesity, alcoholism, male pattern baldness, and hundreds of other negative aspects of the old human condition. The first splicers fulfilled the celebrity image of thin, fit, healthy, and symmetric that had been force-fed as icons of beauty for the last couple centuries. What most transhumans don’t acknowledge is the general creative sterility of the genefix process—splicers were crafted by careful screening and filtering of genes, the removal, amendment, and replacement of markers for genetic disease, but nothing new was ever added to the process; the gene hackers simply worked with what nature had already made available. Theoretically, natural breeding could throw up a “superflat” who, without genefixing, possesses genetic advantages equivalent to a splicer.

Of course, as superflat Lois Wylie will tell you, having all the genetic advantages in the world doesn’t mean much if you’re not in a position to exploit and develop them to their full potential. Raised in poverty and having spent the last decade moving from scum barge to scum barge, Wylie is a rootless jack-of-all-trades that seems to gravitate toward the shadier deals, never quite earning enough to make her passage onto a proper habitat.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
17	16	17	16	16	19	17	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	34	6	68	30	6	45

Morph: “Superflat” (Splicer)

Skills: Beam Weapons 55, Blades 44, Climbing 44, Clubs 55, Fray (Full Defense) 45, Free Fall (Microgravity) 67, Hardware: Armorer 33, Infiltration 44, Intimidation 55, Kinesics 44, Kinetic Weapons 55, Language: Native Dutch 86, Language: Cantonese 55, Language English 55, Language: Spanish 55, Networking: Autonomists 44, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception (Hearing) 56, Persuasion 33, Profession: Bodyguarding 44, Profession: Drug Dealing 44, Profession: Escorting 44, Profession: Military Ops 44, Profession: Profession Rackets: 44, Profession: Security Ops 44, Profession: Smuggling 44, Unarmed Combat 66

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts Traits: Innocuous, No Cortical Stack

Using Lois Wylie

In today’s world, Lois Wylie would be a badass bordering on superhuman. By the standards of Eclipse Phase sometimes being just human isn’t enough. Denied a big break and passed over as just another flat, Wylie moves from job to job and syndicate to syndicate, frustrated and more than a little violent if pushed. Gamemasters can use Wylie as mercenary muscle, either for the PCs or the NPCs, but a little respect for her skills will go a ways farther than just credit—though she expects to be paid, too. As an antagonist, Wylie likes to plan out jobs ahead of time and in detail, disguising her real objectives with as much noise and chaos as possible, with back-up plans and escape routes rigged with traps to discourage pursuit. As a contact, Wylie is more loyal than most of her acquaintances will give her credit for, but maybe not the most forthcoming if there isn’t something in it for her.

ENTRY 077: Newskin

The path to immortality isn't always a straight and narrow shot from flat to exhuman. For most transhumans there is no single way at all, but an organic grid of different streets representing every enhancement of body and mind—a landscape studded with a dozen dead ends, twisty turns, cul-de-sacs, and scenic highways where transhumans can stop for a while and enjoy the view before carrying on. Chemical washes, questionable genetic infusions, the purported fermented glandular extracts of Factors, unorthodox hydroradiation therapies, xenocrystals, and many more questionable procedures all find their market as the bulk of transhumanity stumbles along, trying to find the right combination of things to transition from what they are to what they want to be. Some are earnest believers and scofflaw scientists; others are medical curiosities a long time dying with no hope for current technologies; more than a few are mercantile opportunists out to make a quick cred under a false name before their rep catches up to them.

One of the most popular and enduring diversionary procedures is newskinning—replacing the worn outer cellular layers of a biomorph, most commonly by inducing shedding and regeneration. Advocates for newskin cite its spiritual and psychological effects as much or more than the physical process, the idea that the character is transformed or born again, and many communities and individuals have their own particular ritualized aspects that they like to apply. Practically, newskinning can be accomplished many ways, but generally involves the introduction of a specialized fungal infection and the insertion of a new layer of genetically tailored skin cells beneath the current one. The fungus is designed to quietly and (mostly) painlessly kill the upper layers of skin and dry them out while the new skin graft takes hold—in a matter of hours or days, the subjects' old outer skin with all of its scars and tags is peeling and cracking away, revealing a vibrant, untarnished newskin beneath.

From a strictly medical viewpoint, newskin is at best inefficient and at worst can be performed dangerously or incompetently, resulting in a biomorph with massive scarring or a permanent drug-resistant fungal infection that leaves their skin constantly peeling off and slowly regenerating. However, the process is fairly safe and moderately established at this point, so that such incidents are rare. Some psychologists recommend newskinning as a

means to help overcome body dysmorphia or resleeving issues, highlighting the low medical risk and ritual rebirth connotations as helpful for fragile transhuman psyches to get used to living in their own skin.

Seed

Newskinning is the latest fad among biomorphs in the PC's habitat, led by the Superseth Regeneration Clinic. However, local admin Mater Jnes has heard that Superseth is not disposing of their clients' shed skin properly and wants to know why, even if the PCs have to go undercover and get newskin to find out. The Regeneration Clinic for its part is measuring toxin levels in the shed skin as part of a hypercorporate espionage scheme to figure out a new industrial process, and is eager to keep a lid on their real intentions—even if the PCs need to take a walk out of an airlock without a suit.

ENTRY 078: Trollheim

Even in posthuman cultures, there exist taboos—social, activities that even if not illegal are misunderstood or frowned upon by the bulk of transhumanity, at least in the local habitat. Yet people need to express these desires, to violate these taboos and indulge in activities and desires that they repress in public, and they need a place to do it. These may be as simple as a hut set aside by military units for soldiers to take care of personal sexual needs or privacy, or as elaborate as an entire district dedicated to freedom of expression and violation of taboo: the Trollheim.

A habitat's Trollheim is commonly associated with the deliberate breaking of local taboos and even regulations; common elements include dissident and revolutionary political discourse, public readings of forbidden literature, socially awkward or frowned-upon sexual expression and paraphilia, "underground" music, illicit substances, and even violence. However, this lack of policing is more of a social construct than a true freezone; those with the power to govern typically recognize the necessity for a release for internal pressures, but few give up complete surveillance and policing of Trollheims. Most Martian Trollheims, for example, are as laden with spycams and microsensors as the rest of the habitat, but the official datafeeds are stored in encrypted archives and made accessible only when certain preconditions (unsolicited assisted suicide, for example) are met. The Liberty Trollheim, on the other hand, is officially designated as a separate legal zone (and a separate dome) free from policing and requiring visitors to sign a waiver for liability when entering, and undergo decontamination when they seek to return.

Similar areas exist on the 'Mesh, as they have for centuries, as mostly-unfiltered and unmoderated newsgroups and meeting places where users can interact and indulge in whatever interests them with relative anonymity (though few sites are truly secure enough to prevent a hacker from back-tracking a user account). Such sites and communities tend to be in constant flux as the active membership changes, but most retain at least some part of the sight a designated Trollheim where anything goes.

Seeds

- In the PC's habitat, the local Trollheim is tolerated as long as it doesn't damage the wellbeing of the

station as a whole. However, a foreign criminal network has moved in and is using Trollheim as an entrypoint. Fearing a crackdown, the locals ask the PCs to help them eliminate the criminals in the Trollheim. Contract assassination isn't illegal in the Trollheim, and the locals are willing to give the PCs whatever they need in terms of weapons and assistance...if the PCs are willing to plan and carry out a massacre.

- The PCs are hired to track down Vhasi Veed, a researcher for a local hypercorp that's been shirking work to engage in a secret passion: Mime. Vhasi has fled into Trollheim, and the hypercorp hires the PCs to drag Vhasi back out before they get in real trouble.

ENTRY 079: Starmothers

Embedded in human imagination are monstrous and miraculous births, stories of women raped by gods and demons, or men impregnated with parasitoid alien embryos. Medical history records men and women who suffered under delusions of such strange inseminations, or sought them out. Some saw themselves as victims bringing forth antichrists, others as blessed martyrs destined to carry messiahs; a few deluded fools sought through science or magic to achieve their goals, to give birth to something other than—perhaps greater than—human.

Needless to say, the advent of transhumanity into space and the advance of medical science has not precisely helped matters. Rather than support groups and therapy, potential “Starmothers” of all sexes find positive and social reinforcement of their beliefs, and sometimes facilitation of their fantasies through medical intervention—false pregnancies, artificial implantation of xenosculpted fetuses, unadvisable multiple pregnancies...

Many of these procedures are scams or ineffective, as likely to leave a cancer eating the subject’s uterus as anything, but even the successful surgeries leave nothing but victims: a biomorph implanted the reproductive track from a transgenic dog, slowly dying from infection as the antirejection meds strained its immune system to the breaking point; a formerly-female synthmorph with a mother complex and fishbowl-like womb-vat to display the fetuses she collects, only to flush them away when they get too big for her liking; the transgirl accidentally raped to death during an “insemination event” crashed by the Carnival of the Goat, and so many others.

Using the Starmothers

The Starmothers in particular are not obsessed with sex, but in the product of sex; they are transhumans of every gender, faction, and ideology that have become fixated on the idea of birthing. For some it is a fetish, for others something closer to a religious calling, but it provides for the gamemaster a group of NPCs with a single-minded motivation. For some, this may be harmless—a devoted geneticist that wants to design her own child, for example; others may be totally out of touch with reality, and in need of rescue from those in the Starmother network that are encouraging and facilitating their delusions.

Sex is a part of every roleplaying game setting; the only question is how the players and gamemasters choose to use and address it. Every group needs to find its own balance as to what they feel comfortable addressing and talking about at the table—most people aren’t open to a reading of the gamemaster’s latest erotic fanfiction, or two players having their characters roleplay having sex with each other. That said, in moderation themes and descriptions of sex and pregnancy can make for interesting, edgy scenes and plot elements in adventures. In the case of Starmothers, the GM need not craft an adventure around sexually explicit scenes of impregnation, visceral images of breech birth, or loving descriptions of inhumanly pregnant biomorphs; in most cases a few bare but suggestive descriptions are more than enough to set the players’ imagination at work without making them uncomfortable.

Seed

The Starmother network has posted a report of a xenoarchaeological site beyond the Pandora Gate, a ruin whose carvings suggest it a sight where an alien race would impregnate members of another race with a half-breed child. The report has spawned a rush of traffic to the site, but a leading xenoarchaeologist is concerned the whole thing is a scam, and asks the PCs to investigate first.

ENTRY 080: Jhil Nightbreaker

In an age of transhumanity when people are more connected than ever before, there are communities that choose to stand apart—not just brinkers, but conservative communes, ultrapolitical clades that refuse to associate with anyone of a disparate ideology, distance-isolated habitats that have grown inward and strange, and all the hermits and fear-eyed survivors of the Fall that have yet to adapt to the ever-changing universe and the communities that they find themselves apart in. Left by their own, these bubbles of oldthink and weird beliefs might thrive or collapse under their own dynamic, potentially retaining strange, conservative traditions and technologies for decades or generations.

Jhil is a nightbreaker, a dedicated culture intrusion specialist. Her purpose in this life is to violently infiltrate and disrupt these cloistered, insulated societies. The weapons of the nightbreaker are broken taboos, violated social mores, and garish displays of counterculture. Some of her most famous antics include the flash-butcher mob during the drawing of the mandalas in a BuddhistClassicist™ monastery on Mars, and the Rape of the Unborn that occurred when artificial transgenic sperm fertilized all of the eggs stored in the First Genebank of the Jovian Republic. Yet she has also broken the night of some ultraconservative cultures with no more than a public display of affection.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	23	16	17	23	19	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	45	9	67

Morph: Ghost

Skills: Academics: Memetics 60, Academics: Political Science 40, Academics: Psychology 50, Art: Performance 65, Art: Tattooing: 55, Art: Writing 44, Deception (Acting) 67, Fray 50, Freerunning (Gymnastics) 45, Infiltration 40, Infosec 45, Interests: Politics (Conservative) 45, Interests: Religion (Conservative) 45, Interests: Isolated Communities 45, Interests: Cultural Taboos 60, Interfacing 45, Intimidation 25, Investigation 44, Kinesics 44, Language: Native Hindi 86, Language English 40, Language Mandarin 40, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Criminal 55, Networking: Hypercorps 50, Networking: Media 55, Perception 55, Persuasion 55, Pilot: Aircraft 33, Pilot: Groundcraft 44, Profession: Social Engineering 66, Protocol 44, Research 44, Spray Weapons 27, Unarmed Combat 33

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Vision, Grip Pads

Traits: Addiction (Taboo Violation, Major), Allies (Nightbreaker cell), Brave, First Impression, On the Run

Using Jhil Nightbreaker

By herself, Jhil is charismatic, dedicated, and more than a little addicted to what she does. Her definition of freedom is more than a little scary, in-your-face and personal, and she has tremendous difficulty holding that back unless concentrated on a larger gig. Jhil's sole affiliation is to her higher purpose, and she is willing to beg, borrow, and steal resources from or work with anyone if she can break the night and crash the artificial strictures that transhumans wrap themselves up with instead of embracing the universe.

Seeds

- The first part of any of Jhil's larger schemes is founding a local Nightbreaker cell—a group of rebels against the current order, usually immature and nonviolent artisttypes that she can bend to her will or her wiles. One of the PC's contacts has fallen in with the group, but needs their help to get away from the demented, obsessive Jhil...
- A group of ultrarich hypercorp executives are abusing a conservative low-tech NeoMennonite Barsoomian settlement on Mars, masquerading as church elders to sexually abuse and psychologically degrade the residents under the guise of religious authority. Jhil approaches the PCs to help her expose the malefactors to the community...knowing that it will probably shatter the already unstable society.

ENTRY 081: Skincast

One mutation of the ages-old broadcast entertainment that has adapted to the syntax of transhuman existence are Skincast and its various affiliate, derivative, and supplementary programming. A variation on the episodic trial-reward program, the conceit of Skincast is that member-participants can compete in a series of original and sometimes absurd weighted-scoring challenges, with the ultimate victor or victors of any particular series of trials being rewarded with a new or upgraded morph. While most popular in the Planetary Consortium due to cross-licensing agreements between participating hypercorps (“Our Beloved Sponsors”), the show or something similar to it exists in at least 65% of habitats in transhuman space, with the largest outliers being bioconservative communities that frown on exotic morphs.

The in-character backstory of Skincast is that the contests are being judged by alien intelligences (who may be influenced by up to 45% by a send-in fan vote), who choose the participants that are worthy and desirous for the competition (pseudo-random pick from a pool of volunteers, paid actors, and charity cases in desperate need of a new morph) and subject them to “Xenchallenges” set in locales throughout the solar system (usually Mars or Luna) that prove them worthy of receiving the gifts of the space-gods. Those who accumulate sufficient points are deemed the “Select” and allowed to resleeve into a brand new and exotic morph, supposedly custom-designed for the winners. The truth is that the whole debacle is a mix of scripted drama and gameshow, sometimes cruel and often more than a bit ludicrous; viewers on video or XP are as likely to see a crippled synthmorph and an aging flat grapple to see which can place a gold apple on a pedestal as they to see a blatant pleasure pod plant try to sow an X-rated romantic subplot and pitch “Our Beloved Sponsors” latest synthmorph polish. Skincast continues to be seen by millions, and hey—you too might be a winner!

Using Skincast

At its basic, Skincast is the kind of background element you can drop into a game almost anywhere and pick up when convenient: the guard missed the PCs sneaking past the camera because they were streaming Skincast on duty; the Barsoomian contact makes small talk about the latest series of Skincast challenges set in Europa; the target is devoted to the show and will give up anything for a pair of tickets; the bouncer at the club’s morph is actually one of

the old Skincast morphs from six seasons and twelve users ago, etc.

On the other hand, gamemasters may choose to use Skincast as the focus for one or more adventures, even letting the PCs compete to become one of the Select. Most challenges are not simply physical, but contain some element that requires players to outthink or outwit their opponents; rarely the judges even include a Moral challenge designed to test intangibles like courage and self-sacrifice, setting up scenarios where the PCs may complete their stated objectives or do the “right” thing. Unlike modern game shows, Skincast averages 2.73 “deaths” (destruction of morphs) per episode, so the danger in any given challenge, as insane as it may be, is very real. Forks of each participant are kept secure by Skincast Inc. just in case. The reward morphs are typically the latest corporate models from Our Beloved Sponsors, or standard models with enough cosmetic bodywork to appear new and flash; rarely the morphs are unique or experimental, and the GM is encouraged to get creative and go nuts—if the PC isn’t interested, the morph can always be donated to a charity of their choice.

ENTRY 082: The Breach

Spinning lazily through the inner Oort Cloud is a dead habitat, a formerly self-sufficient ice-mining outpost that processed water, methane, and weird hydrocarbon compounds from the abundant planetismals. Alive, Far Horizon Station was a sizable brinker outpost capable of supporting up to two hundred morphs. Dead, the habitat is a blazing radioactive cenotaph. No one knows exactly what caused the death of Far Horizon, but visuals suggest that up to a quarter of the station was destroyed in a single catastrophic event centered on the reactor core, larger than would be expected from any standard breach. Composite data from probes and the last remaining transmissions from Far Horizon suggest excessive amounts of ionized radiation, contaminating over 90% of the station materials.

Many Exhumans have a strange fascination with Far Horizon, though the distance (nearly 2,000 AU from Sol) prevents most from going there directly. Conspiracy theories on the nature of its destruction, the uncharacteristic size of the explosion and the resulting radioactive contamination, and its true purpose abound. The most popular of these fringe theories comes from exhuman astrophysicist Gul Von Vander, who claims that he has recorded signals from Far Horizon have many characteristics in line with cosmic microwave background radiation—if the universe were a few billion years younger. Von Vander's conclusion, naturally, is that this microwave source is a breach into a parallel universe.

Visiting the Breach

Given the distance, visiting the broken shell of Far Horizon Station is possible but difficult. Station-to-station transport would require the PCs to be egocast to waiting synthmorphs either at the station itself or a nearby vehicle from a mission sent years ago. Light-speed communication means that each leg of the farcast itself take at least three to four months just in transit; though the PCs wouldn't be aware of the time difference until they get back. Given the distance, limitations, and expense, actually visiting the Breach might be better as a one-off adventure, something that the PC's fork can go off and do while the primary ego does other things, and then eight months later the fork will return and reintegrate with the PC's ego. The high radiation levels in the dead station itself will generally restrict the PCs to radiation-resistant (and disposable) synthmorphs that can operate in vacuum.

Seeds

- Gul Von Vander is raising money for a full research expedition to Far Horizon Station, but isn't above "salting the well" to encourage investors. Von Vander offers to hire the player characters to plant false evidence that support Von Vander's theory in a variety of digital archives; concurrently, potential investor Jun Minaka offers to hire the PCs to do investigative research into Far Horizon. If the PCs play their cards right, they can work both angles and get paid from both while figuring out the real secret behind The Breach...secrets someone might be willing to kill to keep secret.
- An auction house in Extropia is offering the archives of Far Horizon Station, recovered at great cost by a stalwart crew of mercenaries and data archaeologists. Bidding is expected to hit the at least half a million credits, with any number of interested parties willing to hire some local talent to tip things their way, if the PCs are interested.

ENTRY 083: Unguam

“Those in power fear the autodidact. The strictures of control that bind habitats, stations, societies, and governments are designed to channel the clanking masses into approved forms and methods of study, entertainment, research, and release. Theirs is the balance between positive and negative reinforcement—grants, student loans, database access, and one-on-one teaching versus denial, cost, censorship, and legal penalties. Even the natural countervailing forces of transhumanity are usurped and suborned; revolutionary instincts tamed by limited access to “approved” materials. All frightened of what one morph might learn, what they might do, if they had access to the truth.”

- Introduction to Exsurgent Darkcast, Transmission CXXIII

Most habitats, hypercorps, and media outlets in the solar system limit access to data on exsurgents, not just in fear of memetic hazards and anti-exsurgent operation security, but as part of a tacit—and sometimes legally binding—compact to suppress such information. Formal investigation of exsurgents and related phenomena are thus classified by various public and clandestine agencies, and their study largely restricted to a tier of academics with certain credentials, faction affiliations, and proven expertise. Counter to this trend are autonomous, self-educated investigators like Unguam, the editor/publisher of the underground ‘Mesh periodical the Exsurgent Darkcast. Unguam and his allies have all discovered something of exsurgent activity, artifacts, technology or philosophy and desired to know more, but were rebuffed and reviled by the conspiracy of silence. So through the auspices of Unguam and others like him they dig deeper into such dark matters, sharing information and seeking the hidden truth...but what they seek is far more dangerous than they think.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
26	12	21	12	17	13	19	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	38	7	76	30	6	45

Morph: Menton

Skills: Academics: Astrobiology 33, Academics: Chemistry 44, Academics: Engineering 44, Academics: Geology 44, Academics: Physics 44, Academics: Xenoarcheology 45, Art: Architecture 44, Infosec 66, Interests: Exsurgents 44, Interests: Psi 44, Interests: TITANs 77, Interfacing 77,

Kinesics (Sense Motive) 34, Investigation 55, Language: Native Portuguese 91, Language French 44, Language English 66, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Media 55, Networking: Scientists 25, Perception 55, Profession: Darkcasting 66, Protocol 44, Research 55

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Hyper-Linguist, Math Boost

Traits: Allies (Exsurgent Autodidacts), Enemy (Firewall)

Using Unguam

Unguam is somewhere between a conspiracy theorist and an info-terrorist; his intentions to discover, investigate, utilize, and spread knowledge about exsurgents, psi abilities and the like would be commendable if it didn't mean accidentally or purposefully spreading digital and nanobiological viruses, activating latent TITANs technology, and possibly aiding and abetting covert exsurgent organizations. As a contact, he can be used as a mouthpiece to give the player characters “the real dark truth” behind certain events and subjects not normally available on the ‘Mesh; as an enemy he's likely to be a slippery shadow figure on the trail of (or causing) one exsurgent event or the next. If Unguam ever finds out the PCs are working with or for Firewall, he will never trust them again.

ENTRY 084: Decoded Transmission

Cosmic transmissions from the deep dark vast emptiness, decoded in non-real time by the distributed consciousness of post-humanity, distilling meaning into poetry and pornography, weapons against the forces of extinction. The measure of time is a fluid, broken thing and if we have lost our history it also means we are no longer bound by it, the human caterpillar emerging at last as a fractal-winged insect thing with glittering genitals that asks what it means to be human...

...and so on and so forth, in an epic stream-of-conscious prose-poem that is consistently being added to, amended, analyzed, edited, reworked, and rehashed by transhumans across the system. The Decoded Transmission is part group artistic project, part game, spooling out on forums and sites throughout the mesh, bits and pieces of it archived and published in different media. There are stanzas from it carved onto the mountainside of Mars, and a few million lines etched in microscopic characters along a meter of wall in Extropia. Spies use it as a public dead-drop, encoding their secrets into drabbles, and portions have been removed from public view because they are encoded with basilisk hacks and dangerous philosophies.

Using the Decoded Transmission

Aside from indulging in a bit of prose or poesy, the Decoded Transmission is a transhuman art project on a monumental scale, a group effort that can show up nearly anywhere transhumanity has been, and contain nearly anything. As a gamemaster tool, the Decoded Transmission is an excellent way to provide a critical phrase or theme to the campaign, a recurring image or words that the player characters come across, time after time, to reinforce a sense of continuity about a game. This is best done in a subdued, unforced manner—tattoos, logos, background paintings with fragments of words, etc. Of course, the GM can also simply use the Decoded Transmission as a prop, providing fragments of messages hidden in plain sight, prophecies and predictions, or just shoutouts—if their reps are legendary enough, someone may capture the PCs and their adventures for all time as a fragment of the Decoded Transmission.

Seeds

- It's said the oldest-known archive of the Decoded Transmission is on Luna, with parts dating back before the Fall. Leira 6, a female-identified infomorph and sixth-generation fork of one of the

original contributors, hires the player characters to find it and make a copy—but at least one of her “aunts,” an fourth-generation fork called Ariela, is willing to kill to prevent that from happening.

- Firewall has identified a loose group of individuals assembling the Forbidden Transmission—the parts of the Decoded Transmission written during and immediately after the Fall, long suppressed for fear that they may be dangerous and contain basilisk hacks and digital viruses. Whether it contains the secrets of the TITANs or bad homemade transhuman erotica, Firewall believes the group must be stopped. The player characters are tapped to handle the situation, peaceably if possible, but if not, they have carte blanche to handle the situation as they see fit.

ENTRY 085: The Pearlworks

The seas of Europa are, as researchers and explorers continue to discover, a distinct environment from the terrestrial waters that form the bulk of transhumanity's ocean-lore. In the dark depths, where the pressure rises and the temperature drops, there are weird "rivers" of mineral-rich waters, heavier than the surrounding liquid, that can carve winding paths several kilometers long before the differentials in temperature and mineral content even out, and the "river" becomes indistinguishable from any of the other currents. These edge zones between warmer and cooler waters are prime habitats for some of Europa's deep-sea lifeforms, particularly lithoderms that depend on the mineral-rich waters for sustenance.

The most spectacular of these under-ocean rivers is the Pearlworks, which emerges from the cone of Mt. Nacramater, a massive cryovolcano encrusted with European coral. The icy cryomagma sluggishly slips off the side of the underwater mountain, forming the first in a series of half-frozen waterfalls as gravity and density force the semiliquid downwards to the surface of a relatively flat plateau. Eventually pressure and temperature shifts force the emission into a liquid state, and it feeds into thirteen-kilometer winding canyon, gradually expanding in width and becoming shallower as the mineral-rich waters diffuse into the open ocean.

The Pearlworks are home to one of the most unusual species on Europa, the European pearl. These creatures begin their life as seed-like multicellular organisms consisting of three thin tissue layers—an outer layer that filters the surrounding waters, a middle vasculature and transport layer, and an inner layer packed with symbiotic lithoderms. The minerals that the pearl absorbs but cannot digest are passed to the lithoderms, who process it and excrete it inside the growing seed-pearl as a spherical or near-spherical mineral nodule, causing the pearl to stretch and expand its surface area, allowing it to better capture additional minerals. The process is slow and the European pearls are not entirely without predators, but some of the oldest pearls have reached truly prodigious size—over one meter in diameter for the Grand Pearl of Europa.

Explorers in this underwater world have captured images of entire stretches of the

Pearlworks filled with tiny, almost spherical nacreous seed-pearls, the light playing off their low-index outer membrane and high-index inner-membrane to produce strange optical effects in the dark. Some of the larger animal-analogue fish have been known to scoop up small or mid-sized European pearls; the exact reason is unknown but most xenooceanographers believe it is either for the mineral content or to facilitate grinding and digestion.

Seeds

- European pearls are living creatures, sensitive to environmental stress and damage to their outer membranes. A smuggler in the PC's colony has arrived with a high-pressure container with a dozen inch-diameter European pearls, and gotten themselves arrested. Now several factions are tearing the habitat apart looking for the container. The PCs may find it difficult to stay neutral as various groups form looking for the treasure, but unbeknownst to them all it is for naught. Cramped and neglected, the European pearls in the container have died and their outer layers peeled off, leaving behind rough spheres of unremarkable minerals.
- Miners in the European depths have been harvesting pearls from one of the branches of the Pearlworks whose nodules contain high concentrations of platinum-group metals. An environmental engineer has tried to convince them to use the pearls to find the load rather than to harvest the European wildlife directly, but without success. So she wishes to prove them wrong directly, by staking a rival claim at the load itself. If the PCs are willing to back her up and protect her, she'll give each of them a share in the claim.

ENTRY 086: First Spawning

In the floating bubble-cities of Europa, transhuman aquatic biomorphs prepares for the First Spawning, an organized mass water birth to herald the first generation of transhumans that are born as aquatic biomorphs. Though the parental units represent a diverse range of modified human and human-derived morphs, they are united in their desire to establish a generational presence beneath the ice of Europa—to make a solid biological commitment to stay and make it a transhuman world for their children and their children’s children to inhabit. Expectant parents stroll the promenades and practice their birth exercises, discussing the mostly-untested philosophies of amphibious childcare, looking forward to the big event.

Even as the date of the First Spawning draws close, detractors and critics continue to find flaws with the program. The newborn children growing in their parent’s wombs are, they argue, already obsolete, the geneteck that went into their design already months old. None of the European habitats are yet self-sufficient, though those holding first spawning events have already begun to plan for how to house, provide, and educate their forthcoming charges.

Using the First Spawning

The First Spawning, whether it is a success or a disaster, will prove to be a pivotal moment in the history of European colonization, provided the European habitats prove stable in the long term. In game, whether or not you choose to feature the First Spawning directly it can provide a basis for showcasing a key division in Europa, between those who seek to expand by traditional methods (i.e. standard or modified human reproduction) and those who try more novel methods (i.e. mass production of aquatic synthmorphs). The different views of the future espoused by groups promoting one method over the other can provide a good impetus for adventures, especially when contrasted with those Europeans whose only concern is for immediate survival in the present.

Seeds

- Europeans are taking any rumors of disruption or potential security risks of the First Spawning very seriously; in some cases this has led to “temporary” restrictions on personal freedoms and heightened public surveillance. A group of asexual morphs ask the player characters to help them evade the authorities so that they can stage

a harmless “artbombing” in protest against the new restrictions.

- While the First Spawning is the first organized birthing event on Europa, it is far from the first live birth. Individual pregnancies carried to term on Europa have faced a number of difficulties given the environment, morph design, and lack of medical care; some transhumans have been trying repeatedly for live birth for years. With the First Spawning, these transhumans have now received the help and resources they require to successfully conceive and carry a child to term...but the latest medical scans show some of the fetuses have already developed serious defects commensurate with exposure to exsurgent viruses. Foul play is suspected, and the PCs are asked to come in as independent investigators to discover the culprit, before the entire First Spawning is infected...

ENTRY 087: Tam Uisge

One of only a handful of heavily-modified futura morphs designed for extensive underwater operation, Tam Uisge is one of the relatively few morphs on Europa that can survive for extended periods in the cold seas with minimal support equipment, provided he stays within the proper pressure and temperature bands. Psychologically disconnected from most other transhumans, Tam takes advantage of this ability to lose himself in the black waters of Europa, striking out on his own for sometimes days at a time, crawling inside an inflatable, buoyant “tent” for a few hours when he has to sleep, and switching to reserve oxygen when swimming through one of the low-oxygen zones of “dead water.” While a hard man to get a hold of, few are as intimately familiar with the seas of Europa as Tam Uisge.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	17	14	17	8	22	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	28	5	56	35	7	52

Morph: Futura

Skills: Academics: Biology 33, Academics: Oceanography 66, Academics: Physics 33, Art: Throat Singing 44, Demolitions 33, Infiltration 44, Interests: Aquatic Technology 44, Interests: Earth Oceans 44, Interests: Whalesong 33, Interfacing 30, Investigation 30, Kinetic Weapons 35, Language: Native Irish 84, Language: Japanese 47, Language: English 52, Navigation 77, Networking: Autonomists 30, Networking: Criminals 25, Networking: Ecologists 65, Palming 27, Perception (Smell) 55, Pilot: Watercraft 44, Profession: Oceanographer 48, Scrounging 44, Swimming 77, Unarmed Combat 44

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Emotional Dampers, Enhanced Senses (Echolocation, Electrical Sense, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Vision), Gills, Oxygen Reserve, Respirocytes, Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters

Traits: Striking Looks (Level 1), Zero-G Nausea

Using Tam Uisge

In appearance Tam is less like the Creature from the Black Lagoon than a streamlined human with the skin of a dolphin; in personality he’s a broody teenager trapped in the body of seasoned underwater survivalist. If PCs need a “native guide” on Europa, Tam is their man. His penchant

for getting lost in the depths also makes him an excellent hook to hang a plot on—Tam has gone missing (either in region X or looking for macguffin Y), and people want him found; in this way the gamemaster might be able to encourage the PCs to get their feet wet and explore Europa a little more than they might otherwise.

While designed for Europa, Tam can be transported to almost any setting where there’s enough water for him to operate—and where there isn’t enough, he’s a literal fish out of water.

Seed

With his striking looks, Tam has admirers that even he doesn’t know about. In particular a scavenger named Dolphinboi has been stalking him through the Mesh for weeks—so when Tam hasn’t posted for a while, Dolphinboi sets out on a “rescue” mission. When Dolphinboi goes missing, his friends and relatives ask the PCs to track him down and bring him home. Two lost morphs, one big ocean.

ENTRY 088: Sharktooth

In habitats or areas with strict restrictions on personal weapons, transhumans are forced to get creative. A growing favorite among biomorphs is the sharktooth, a personal and effective short-range melee weapon that is easy to conceal and even easier to smuggle through an airlock. In its dormant form, the sharktooth is indistinguishable from a standard dental implant, grown to replace one of the user's adult teeth. Once past customs the sharktooth is removed, the user cracks the outer shell to activate it, and places it in a small container with a mineral-rich solution. Within an hour, the tailored organisms in the sharktooth will incorporate the mineral into a sharp, bone-like spur between eight and ten centimeters long. Removing the sharktooth leaves a dental cap which regrows into a normal human tooth within the next hour and a half, provided the user does not eat or drink anything.

Sharkteeth are popular among criminals, autonomists, and politicians, particularly in high surveillance stations where more complicated weapons would be easy to detect and trace. A considerable amount of DIY lore is available on the 'Mesh concerning growing and shaping the sharktooth for greater effect, with many preferring to force it into an L-shape so that it can be used as a punching dagger, with the sharp tip protruding between the fingers. A larger and more effective weapon can be had from a variant that arose on Europa, the serrated sharktooth. The serrated sharktooth appears almost identical in dormant form, though it is often discolored, and takes three to four hours to grow, but becomes a much larger weapon, up to twenty centimeters and can be chipped into a wider blade that is better at slashing and cutting through armor.

Most European habitats are more permissive of sharkteeth, which are often worn on a cord around the neck or wrist and considered an emergency tool for both biomorphs and synthmorphs, as the salt-rich waters of Europa make an effective feeder solution. Aside from use as a weapon, Europeans fashion sharkteeth into simple hand tools by shaping it as it grows and carving the end product. However, given the material these items tend to be brittle and fracture easily when used against hard metal, stone, or plastics, and so are mainly considered emergency tools.

That being said, sharktooth carving remains a popular craft in many European habitats.

Mechanics

Sharkteeth are wielded with the Blades skill. In many habitats where weapons are restricted, so are sharkteeth. In the underwater habitats of Europa, sharkteeth are unrestricted, abundant, and ubiquitous; reduce the cost to Trivial for sharkteeth and Low for serrated sharkteeth when buying them in European habitats.

Blade	AP	DV	Average DV	Cost
Sharktooth	0	2d10 + (SOM ÷ 10)	7 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Low
Serrated Sharktooth	-1	2d10 + 1 + (SOM ÷ 10)	8 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Moderate

ENTRY 089: The High Pools

The slope of Olympus Mons is so shallow and the volcano so high, that a biomorph with a bit of vacuum gear can practically walk from the Amazonis Planitia to the edge of space. Even with more than half a century of terraforming efforts, the Martian atmosphere remains exceedingly thin compared to Earth, but by the same mechanics they pressure doesn't drop quite so much as you ascend. The Olympus habitat has taken advantage of the physics to set a series of exposed water pools starting a couple kilometers up, where the water can boil at 70 degrees Celsius and drops even lower as you ascend the mountain.

Most of the boiling cold, mist-shrouded pools are the play places for anyone that can withstand the temperatures and pressure, and range from small "natural" saunas and springs to carefully constructed infinity pools with imported tilework from Luna. In these pools, people conduct business, socialize, exercise, and relax or engage in small games involving floating chunks of ice that sublimate in the exposed conditions, all while enjoying the tremendous vista as they hang back and look at the Martian panorama before them, sitting on the side of the largest volcano in the solar system.

About a third of the pools are given over for scientific pursuits, mainly in testing Martian-adapted extremophiles.

Users enjoy the privileges of the High Pools because of a hard-working, mostly informal groups of volunteers that maintain them, who do not solicit donations of service or resources, but readily accept them if offered. The closest thing to an authority in the High Pools are the plumbers who keep the piping operations and handle issues related to water quality and keeping "in stock" with sufficient liquid water for the pools to remain running.

Seeds

- An interruption in water-ice donations has led the plumbers to begin rationing water, leaving many of the social pools dry while giving priority to the science pools. This in turn lowers the popularity of the High Pool system, and could lead to the death of the system unless the water stocks are refilled. If the PCs can steal, beg, or bargain a couple tons of ice, their efforts will be well-appreciated by the locals (with a corresponding Rep increase).
- A murder has occurred in one of the most isolated High Pools, known as the Namaskar Pools. These

are a set of three elliptical, shallow natural craters on the eastern face, filled and linked by short waterfalls. The headless body—a Barsoomian dirt miner named Ryu—was discovered in the lowest pool, and had evidently been moved from the first pool. Since the High Pools exist outside of agreed-upon authority, the bathers in the Namaskar Pools have agreed as a compromise to enlist an independent party (the PCs) to investigate, with the guilty party being taken back to their home habitat to face judgment and barred from using the High Pools ever again. It's up to the PCs to sift out the murderer...if the Barsoomian didn't die of other causes...or at least find the cortical stack in his missing head so they can resleeve Ryu and ask him what happened.

ENTRY 090: Otta Tvash

Genetic engineering and after-market modification of neo-avian morphs has caused them to diverge so far from the standard phenotypes that their origin species can become ambiguous; the distinctive outlines that marked them out become blurred as they too become a trans-species, as far removed from what their primal genestock as a

Barsoomian is from Australopithecus. Whatever Otta Tvash once was, today she is a slick scaled amphibious horror, skin grown over her useless eyes, body cadaverous and reptilian, the plumage between her scaly plates smooth and rippled black and white like a penguin's. Otta's anatomy has been adapted to allow her to slide into the strange waters of alien worlds and using her bat-like wings to "fly" through the lakes, rivers, and seas of other planets.

As a gatecrasher, Otta brings adaptability to potential expeditions, able to survey from land, air, and in the sea; she has studied other neo-avian morphs and developed aerial deep-dive and skimming techniques which have proven quite effective combinations on worlds where gravity and local conditions permit both flight and swimming. More than this, her lack of sight brings a unique perspective—where other gatecrashers may be overwhelmed by the sights of the strange worlds they visit, Otta focuses on the more subtle things, such as air pressure, viscosity, density, and gravity, mapping her surroundings with tiny intermittent chirps.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	18	19	20	12	17	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
8	1	26	5	52	20	4	30

Morph: Neo-Avian

Skills: Academics: Botany 50, Academics: Chemistry 55, Academics: Oceanography 50, Climbing 35, Flight 60, Free Fall 55, Freerunning 70, Infiltration 55, Interests: Gatecrashing 60, Interests: Neo-Avians 45, Investigation 35, Kinesics 30, Kinetic Weapons 40, Language: Native Czech 89, Language: English 40, Medicine: Paramedic 40, Navigation 60, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Scientists 55, Perception 50, Pilot: Watercraft 40, Profession: Diver 75, Scrounging 60, Swimming 80

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Endocrine Control, Enhanced Senses (Direction Sense, Echolocation, Enhanced Smell), Medichines, Oxygen Reserve, Radiation

Sense, Respirocytes, Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters, Vacuum Sealing

Traits: Neural Damage (Blind), Striking Appearance (1)

Using Otta Tvash

Birds are weird, people are weird, and neo-avians are very weird indeed. When the PCs run into Otta Tvash, feel free to indulge in more than a bit of descriptive text—she's a sight even hardened transhumans might pause at, a streamlined bipedal bird-reptile thing, built for air and water, as strange a chimera as any Medieval bestiary ever produced—but she's not an animal. Whether as antagonist, ally, hireling, or contact Otta is a gatecrasher, a blind explorer that discovers the world through her sense of hearing and smell, and gamemasters might use her to teach the PCs a few things about using their own enhanced senses—the ones they write on their character sheet and then forget about. For herself, Otta is content exploring new worlds, focusing not on what she was or is but what she will be.

ENTRY 091: Seanav

“Slow free-fall through the dark waters, pressure climbing, cold creeping in as the diver sinks; in the midnight expanse absolute direction is tenuous, a gulf of kilometers between reference points, space enough to get lost in, to drift unknowingly from the course on some subtle current, with no way to find the path back home...”

– Xene Ye, final journal entry recovered from cortical stack

Direction sense implants, despite the name, consist of more than a single new sensory organ. Most of these bioware implants combine moderate boosts to several peripheral senses already present in the transhuman body, combined with selective memory routing options to emphasize path-recognition and retention. In conjunction these provide the user with excellent mapping skills; even outside the context of physical motion a user presented with a map or maze will be able to mentally navigate the pathways with relative ease. In three-dimensional environments, however, these typical augmentations are insufficient; routes are too fluid and complex, subtle sensory cues often overwhelming or nonexistent. Biotechnicians on Europa have addressed this shortcoming with an accessory bioware implant: the Seanav.

Seanav was developed as an adaptation and refinement of the gyromagnetic organs discerned in some of the larger examples of European native lifeforms, though xenobiologists believe some similar principle may be at work at all level down to certain of the native bacteria. The Seanav provides a heightened awareness of the body’s movement as a series of vectors; in addition to any specific routes the user took they retain a clear impression of the absolute distance and direction from their current position to their starting reference point. For example, in navigating a complex underwater cave system a standard direction sense user may have trouble remembering the exact series of caverns they entered by, particularly if a cave-in prevented them from exactly retracing their route, but a Seanav user would retain a clear impression of the distance and direction between their current position and the entrance, no matter which route they were to take.

Mechanics

Seanav is an augmentation available for characters with the Direction Sense bioware implant (Eclipse Phase 301). With Seanav and Direction Sense a character may navigate

in undersea and deep space with only a -10 modifier (instead of the normal -30 modifier).

[Cost: Low]

Using Seanav

Aside from the mechanical advantage, the Seanav implant exists to make the players and gamemaster’s lives easier— getting lost has its benefits from a story standpoint, but generally speaking it is good for the PCs to at least be able to orient themselves and move in the desired direction, at least to keep a session from stalling out as players try to sort out what to do next. From an in-game standpoint, Seanav is one possible incentive that gamemasters can provide to player characters in an underwater or outer space setting, particularly Europa. Many hypercorps or local power groups looking to hire outside morphs could provide the augmentation gratis as a sign-on bonus for taking the job; local habitats looking to attract settlers could do the same.

ENTRY 092: Nagog Hill

In the bosom of the Naar Crater on Mars rises a castle on an artificial hill; a bizarre pseudo-fractal recombinatorial extrapolation of Schloss Neuschwanstein, a place where small halls, towers, and buttresses sprawl out in six sweeping arms from the main structure, up to airlocks at the crater rim. Inside the supercomplex, uplifts wear adaptations of human period costume and speak in affected accents, prismatic-winged “faerie” flying spycams flit about the strange twilight halls, and in the dungeons luminescent crystals and fungi grow to shed light for eager adventurers. This is the Nagog Hill Complex, sometimes called “the Magic Kingdom.”

Nagog Hill is a bizarre community, one part extreme cosplay enthusiasts, one part tourist trap it is the dream vision of a six-member anarchist commune from the Inner Sphere who wished to explore and experience living a life of fantasy, and had the collective wealth to build and operate the Nagog Hill Complex. Each of the Six have relative dominion over their spiral arm, and spend their days traipsing the halls as lords, ladies, mad scientists, and adventurers in an ahistorical mishmash of a setting culled from a couple centuries worth of fantasy literature. Most of the uplifts that live and maintain Nagog Hill are “compensated guests,” allowed to live in the complex and given access to makers and fabbers for all their needs in exchange for providing the appropriate “atmosphere” and taking care of necessary maintenance. “Players” are tourists and visitors from other habitats, who are encouraged to play along and stay in character for the term of their visit—those who do not comply face encouragement to leave.

Using Nagog Hill

Think of Nagog Hill as a very large, perpetual Renaissance Faire run by people who have the technology to fake living in a Dungeons & Dragons setting; that’s not the limit of the strange weirdness of Nagog Hill, as some of the Six have interests in steampunk, dieselpunk, and other such genres, but you get the idea. In a setting like Eclipse Phase where it is possible for people with the right resources to literally live out their fantasies and populate their little world with things straight from their imaginations, you can damn well bet that someone is going to do it—not matter how expensive, silly, or dangerous it might be.

Gamemasters can make Nagog Hill as scary as an out-of-control holodeck without the safety protocols or as

unthreatening and clean as Mardi Gras at Disneyworld, but it provides a setting where player characters can interact in an environment that combines the familiar with the fantastic and weird. Player characters may or may not choose to stay “in character” with respect to Nagog Hill; that’s fine by most everyone involved—the uplifts couldn’t care less, simply ignoring PCs if they’re out of character. So long as the PCs don’t get violent, the Six will also leave them alone; violent characters tend to get herded or tricked into a chamber and the roof opened to expose them to the unfiltered Martian atmosphere.

Seed

One of Six, who has dominion of the northern arm, has imported what he thinks are genetically engineered grotesques for his dungeon—in fact, they are a group of exsurgent monsters. Firewall has caught wind of the shipment and offers to kit the player characters out to put them down – even if it means destroying the entire habitat. If the PCs are up for a literal dungeon crawl, that is.

ENTRY 093: Skeeters

The mosquitoes of old Earth teemed in their billions and preyed on all manner of terrestrial life; they had discovered a biological niche and through the winnowing of evolution and the process of generations became uniquely adapted to their role. Then came the Fall. While other species on earth were saved on the basis of necessity or sentimentality, the mosquito was seen by transhumanity as a nuisance, and represents a visible gap in most genebanks. While still present in some habitats on Luna and Mars, it exists there as an unwanted passenger unwittingly carried to the stars.

Some forward-thinking transhumans did retain the mosquito, however, or resurrected it from fossil DNA, and turned the swarming pests into biological tools. Bred en masse from teeming eggs floating in a nutrient-rich fluid, the developing mosquitoes are engineered as they grow for specific purposes, disposable biological engines coded to die within hours or days—often within 12 hours of release. These neo-mosquitoes or 'skeeters' are most often employed as on DNA-fishing expeditions—a swarm are released in a habitat from a nanobiological hive, to sample the DNA of any creature present. They flit on ancient impulse to a creature's dermis and use their proboscis and their saliva to penetrate the skin or hide, pump a sample of fluid (blood, lymph, or whatever else the entity has) into the sealed bag where their stomach should be, then return to their hive so that it may be harvested, sequenced, and catalogued—a process that destroys the skeeter.

Neomosquito saliva itself is laced with anticoagulants, and a weak nerve agent; combined with the small scale of the penetration, the majority of transhumans and animals cannot even feel the sting until after the skeeter has left. A further augmentation typical for skeeters is a reduction in their sensitivity to chemical and biological repellents, though this tends to be associated with grossly reduced ability to home in on targets or return to base.

The second major use of neomosquitoes is as a weapon. Rather than ingest liquid from a victim, the skeeter may inject the target with the contents of its stomach. Given the volume limitations of the neo-mosquito stomach—typically ten or so microliters for the largest skeeters, and down to just a single microliter for other breeds—this payload is almost always nanites or a biological virus. Individual skeeters have a low probability of success unless released in a confined space where the target is obvious

and unmoving for a large period of time, so most skeeter assassins are deployed as swarms. High-end skeeters can even be augmented to target a specific biomorph by scent.

Seed

Firewall fears that a terrorist is planning to unleash a skeeter swarm with a payload of the exsurgent virus, and taps the player characters to investigate and, if possible, prevent the outbreak. If they fail, Firewall will activate a failsafe program in the habitat's environmental controls, killing everyone in that section of the habitat—including the PCs, if they're still there.

ENTRY 094: Ulf Vargsnev

Principle only goes so far, even in the bioconservative Jovian Republic, and even the civic leaders must balance their philosophy against what is best for their people...and their children. Ulf Vargsnev was a sick kid with a host of genetic defects and long-term illnesses picked up from years of exposure to cosmic radiation and toxic byproducts of his mother's chemical manufacturing complexes. Magda Vargsnev wanted a better life for her son...so she bought it. The process was supposed to be legal within the constraints of Jovian law, exercising several loopholes concerning the replacement of human organs by systematically replacing Ulf's failing organs with transgenic material that did not qualify as human according to the Jovians' meticulous stands. Over the course of eighteen weeks, Ulf Vargsnev was essentially remade, rebuilt in form and function. Then the clinic was raided.

As a minor, Ulf was not held responsible for his mother's actions, and the court let him off with sterilization. However, the stigma of being transgenic in a bioconservative society stuck with Ulf; unable to obtain any better employment he took work as a biological waste disposal specialist, out of sight and out of mind of the majority of the Jovian population, and began to associate with the less prejudiced criminal elements that operated on the fringes of society.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
23	18	19	21	19	27	18	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
8	1	36	7	72	40	8	60

Morph: Transgenic (Remade)

Skills: Academics: Biochemistry 42, Academics: Genetics 40, Beam Weapons 35, Blades 44, Clubs 44, Fray 44, Free Fall (Microgravity) 45, Infiltration 36, Interests: Jovian Republic 50, Interests: Transgenetics 50, Intimidation 45, Kinesics 45, Kinetic Weapons 44, Language: Native Finnish 91, Language: Norwegian 67, Language: Danish 55, Language: Swedish 56, Language: German 55, Language: English 77, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception 50, Persuasion 30, Profession: Waste Disposal 52, Scrounging 30, Unarmed Combat 44

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Respiration, Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters

Traits: Addiction (Alcohol, Petals, Minor), Stigma (Transgenic)

Using Ulf Varsnev

In another habitat, another society, Ulf would be a valued member of society. However, in the Jovian Republic his abilities, skills, talents, and output are disregarded; as far as they are concerned he is a second- or third-class citizen, a barely human eunuch who is only suited to taking out the trash, and that he does begrudgingly. As an NPC gamemasters can take two basic tacks with Ulf: trapped by his life and making the best of a bad situation in the only habitat he's ever known, or dying to escape but unable to scrape together the resources and favors to do it. Either way, he makes an excellent contact for the PCs, a friendly face within the Jovian Republic that knows a few things about operating on the down low. For a price, he can probably smuggle them anywhere they want to go by hiding them among the medical waste he carts around. Of course, given his history that price might range from breaking his mother out of prison to giving him a ride off this rock.

ENTRY 095: Orcamorphs

Most of whale species were lost with the flight from Earth. Transhumanity abandoned them in the blackening oceans, too massive to transport up the gravity well, and transhumanity's final scramble for the safety of space was marked by the dying cetaceans that beached themselves en masse, giving the scavengers one final feast as those cousins of the deep stared up at the fleeing contrails. A few carried with them genetic material taken from captive cetacean populations, but many of the grandest specimens—the sperm whale, the blue whale—are lost species. Even with this material available, few whales have been cloned since the Fall; without a habitat that can sustain them indefinitely, there is no point in setting up a self-sustaining population.

The majority of whales that do remain in transhuman space are orcamorphs: uplifted and heavily transgenetically modified biomorphs based on the orca whale with neo-atavisms that recall some of the creatures' distant past as land-dwelling mammals such as functional front and hind limbs. While small by comparison with true orca, the standard orcamorph is between two and three meters long and one to two meters tall at the shoulder when on all fours; the largest orcamorphs are thus severely restricted in the habitats they can actually maneuver in, and their weight can cause significant health issues in environments greater than 1 g. Orcamorphs retain their triangular teeth, distinct black and white coloration, and a vestigial dorsal fin, and look very much like stunted orca whales with thick, hippopotamus-like limbs, the foremost pair of which ends with longfingered hands. They are capable of a hunched bipedal stature, but generally prefer to walk on all fours.

Orcas were considered prime subjects for uplift because of their massive brains, with many transhumans considering them sentient even before the neural hacks were applied. Now the orcamorphs enjoy a reputation as some of the most innately intelligent biomorphs in the solar system, though with significant drawbacks: orcamorphs enjoy a vastly increased "life of the mind" and tend to daydreaming, attention deficit disorders, and a tendency to withdraw from everyday life; nearly forty percent of the population display some form of autism. Despite this tendency to get lost in their own heads, orcamorphs are highly social and tend to form deep relationships with small groups, and many feel the need to keep in close contact with their groupmates at all times, either by physical proximity, infrasonic calls, or a Mesh feed.

Orcamorph Stats

Orcamorphs are biomorphs; moreover they are marine mammals rather than fish, and observe the same requirements for food, oxygen, water, etc.—just more of it than smaller folk! They do not normally possess gills and cannot breathe underwater unaided, but can hold their breath for long periods of time. Their natural echolocation is usually accomplished by clicking vocalizations.

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Echolocation, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Respiration, Oxygen Reserve, Temperature Tolerance

Aptitude Maximum: 40 (35 SOM)

Durability: 60

Wound Threshold: 8

Advantages: Bite Attack (1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat Skill), +10 COG, +5 COO, +10 INT, +5 SOM, +10 Swimming

Disadvantages: Orcamorphs counts as a large target (+10 modifier to hit in combat)

CP Cost: 80

Credit Cost: Expensive (minimum 45,000)

Note

This section is an alternative or addendum to the Neo-Cetaceans presented on 110-1, 142-3 of Panopticon. Orcamorphs represent a more extreme humanoid adaptation than the Neo-Orca, designed for walking rather than swimming.

ENTRY 096: Break Bread

Miners returning with a load from the Belt melt comet-ice on the starch from their dry rations, and bake their bread with the heat of the lift-off engines. Martian colonists in the lowlands east of Mons Olympus process high-nutrient genetically engineered potatoes into a starchy paste, then lay out their dough beneath lenses that focus the sun's rays, then come back at lunch when it is brown and ready. Jovian surface laborers slip foil-wrapped flatcakes next to the chemical heaters in their suits, and come home at the end of the day smelling of fresh-baked bread. Artisanal bakers on Luna produce low-gravity bread-chain helixes, impossibly light and fluffy. Scumbarge sourdough rises thanks to strange spores mutated from too much exposure to cosmic radiation. Everywhere that transhumans go, in habitats from Mercury to Neptune to the xenoplanets beyond the Pandora Gate, bread is a sign of food and life; simple to make, adaptable to many conditions, versatile in flavor and nutrition.

Break bread is most traditional to microgravity habitats and scumbarges, and became popular shortly before the Fall. The eight-centimeter square loaves are designed for longterm nutrition storage, little more than starch bricks with a minimum amount of water, salt, and nutrients to prevent spoiling. With enough water, a square of break bread will last the average human biomorph a week, crumbling off a little at a time; one flat reportedly survived off nothing but break bread and recycled water for three years before micronutrient deficiencies began to set in. Many scumbarges combine break bread with severe symbiotic yeast infections, which can metabolize and ferment the heavy starches in the scumborn's stomach to produce an alcoholic haze. Most habitats with biomorphs contain a supply of the easy-to-store foodstuff for emergencies—some even use it as insulation, packed into the very walls—and of course special industrial bakeries still churn the stuff out by the kilogram and the kiloton.

Seeds

- Local busybodies have performed a statistical analysis on economic traffic, which has revealed someone is stockpiling break bread. This could indicate a major terrorist threat to a local food supply, or simply someone quietly outfitting an expedition—either way, they want to hire the player characters to find out why as they buy up the remaining break bread stocks, causing local

price surges as the common foodstuff becomes scarce.

- An industrial accident has occurred. A bakery worker in the local break bread factory oven has mixed transhuman cremains from exsurgent terrorists into the dough of the latest batch—and the thousand kilograms of adulterated break bread have been sent through a gate as supplies for a xenoplanet survey mission on a two-year tour. Contact with the expedition has already been lost, and Firewall asks the player characters to go see if the break bread was tainted with the exsurgent virus, and if so to destroy it.
- A local break bread gourmand festival is being held in the habitat, and the biomorphs among the player characters are asked to be judges of the local produce—which might put them in the middle of a number of local feuds. If they survive, they get a year supply of break bread.

ENTRY 097: Cicada

Transhumanity is not a state of being, but a process; to be transhuman is to be on the way to becoming something else, something other. Most do not have any definitive goal, no self-defined end state, transitioning between morphs and upgrading as their needs, resources, and opportunities permit or require. Others take a more disciplined approach, focusing their personal evolution in a specific direction, aiming for the moving target as technology continues to progress and open up new ways for them to become what they wish to be. Among the latter is the morph known as Cicada.

Insect-style biomorphs are relatively rare, due both to low demand and engineering issues with scalability—the square-cube law still applies, even if you want to be a giant ant or spider. As a consequence, insect-style morphs do not look much like actual insects from a biomechanics standpoint: the exoskeleton is reinforced with cartilaginous endoskeletal elements, the musculature is enhanced, the limbs and claws redesigned to distribute mass more evenly, and sometimes exotic materials must be used to help regulate body temperature. On top of that, the biological boilerplate for most biomorphs remains the classical human form, which provides the necessary brain and complementary support system for intelligence; the vast majority of insect-style biomorphs are little more than extensive cosmetic alterations on top of a human chassis.

Cicada has no interest in being like the majority. To outsiders she appears as a sevenfoot, eight-limbed insectoid dressed only in loops of pocket-belts, whose slick green carapace is accentuated by the suggest remnants of her humanity—bare breasts, ears, strands of hair, and multifaceted eyes located in a still-somewhat elfin face. She is still on the path of becoming what she wishes to be, eagerly sharing with others her next planned operations—poison glands, honey glands, spinnerets—and long-term goals of egg-based reproductive systems and harmonious multi-species hives with herself as one of the queens. To fund these activities, she operates as a lawyer, legal advisor, consultant, and spokesperson specializing in uplift rights and discrimination in the Planetary Consortium.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	15	17	19	24	30	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	40	8	80	35	7	52

Morph: Cicada (Futura variant)

Skills: Academics: Biomechanics 45, Academics: Entomology 72, Academics: Law 70, Art: Tattooing (Carapace Decoration) 40, Art: Writing 50, Deception 60, Freerunning 40, Infosec 40, Interests: Insectmorphs 80, Interests: Uplift Rights 60, Interfacing 40, Intimidation 50, Investigation 40, Kinesics 50, Language: Native English 87, Language: Mandarin 55, Networking: Criminal 50, Networking: Hypercorps 60, Networking: Media 50, Profession: Lawyer 70, Protocol (Legal) 65, Research (Legal) 40

Implants: 360-Degree Vision, Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Cyberlimb (x4, w/synthetic mask), Eidetic memory, Emotional Dampers, Endocrine Control, Enhanced Pheromones, Enhanced Smell, Grip Pads, Hardened Exoskeleton (as Hardened Skeleton), Multiple Personalities (x3), Multitasking, Neurachem, Sex Switch

Traits: Striking Looks (Level 2)

Using Cicada

As a giant insectoid, Cicada is well aware of the impact her appearance makes—and combined with her social skills and pheromones, makes the most of it. She excels at imperson social confrontations, a great negotiator in closed room meetings and a skilled orator who rarely slips into her personal obsession with transhumanity's insect future when on the job. Cicada's multiple personalities normally each control a pair of limbs; in extremis they can engage in multitasking and each limb will have a separate ego-fork controlling it, which is quite a sight. As a consequence of having 4-8 minds in collaboration at any given time, Cicada tends to sing and talk to herself (and her pet space roaches) all the time, though she clamps down on that when in professional mode.

As an NPC she can be an ally or contact (if the PCs need legal advice or representation), a source of work (she frequently needs investigators to look into the details of her cases), or even a neutral adversary (if the PCs are subject to a lawsuit, and the opposition hires her). Unlike NPCs, Cicada's combat skills are somewhere between rudimentary and missing—in the event of an actual fight, she'll either run or curl in herself.

ENTRY 098: Crystalmites

A side-development of efforts to fabricate macrocrystalline mineral structures with nanobots, crystalmites are microbots designed to “grow” decorative mineral-like structures on the surface of both biomorphs and synthmorphs as a form of decoration. In reality the “gem” and “stone” structures are actually built from powdered minerals in a nonrefractive binder matrix, which must be fed to the microbots for them to properly function. Without regular applications of this feeder solution, the crystalmites cannot complete the structure and will cease to function, leaving the partially complete structure behind.

Crystalmites are most popular on Luna, where they originated, and are used to customize morphs with cheap but beautiful embedded jewel-like structures on their epidermis or outer casing, with possibilities ranging from simple rhinestones and embedded gemstones to decorative crystalline horns and spikes. More elaborate and complex programming to achieve a carapace-like appearance is possible provides a small degree of protection, but requires weeks or months of continual application of the feeder solution for the heavy pseudo-stone composite plates to grow in.

Mechanics

The cost of crystalmites is fairly low [Low]; the price of the feeder solution depend on the mineral content, from common substances like salt [Trivial] to rare substances like natural gemstones [High]. Typical growth rates are 1-3 millimeters per hour.

Crystalmite carapace armor is comprised of layers of silicates and serves as a longlasting ablative patch (Eclipse Phase 313), providing an Armor Value of +4/+2, but each hit reduces both the energy and kinetic value of the crystalmite carapace by 1. Feeder solution for the crystalmites to craft carapace armor is Trivial, and grows or repairs existing armor by 1 point per day.

Seeds

- Cubixa is a young transhuman experimenting with crystalmite hives built around a single “seed” crystal to overcome the need for continual applications of feeder fluid. Her work shows promise, but unfortunately she has been the unintended victim of a larger data theft—one of hundreds with their data stolen by a physical raid

on the servers of a minor data processing hypercorp Cubixa has put out an online call for the return of the stolen personal data, and crowdsourced a reward for anyone that brings it back—a respectable amount of cred and rep if the PCs are up for it.

- An experiment to deploy crystalmites in an asteroid mining operation has turned into a disaster when the mine collapsed, trapping six miners in the rubble. Disassemblers are slowly dissolving the mineral content of the walls into a feeder fluid for the crystalmites, who in turn are attempting to “shore up” the collapsed mine by filling in the gaps. The miners’ morphs are all vacuum-sealed and capable of surviving for some time, but the crystalmites’ programming is causing the microbots to cocoon the trapped miners, and stymieing efforts to rescue them. Having exhausted normal methods, the mine operators have turned to the PCs for an outside-the-box solution.
- A hypercorp is looking for morphs to test their new version of crystalmite carapace armor, which provides refractive glazing (313, Eclipse Phase) in addition to its normal properties, and extends the offer to the PCs—what the hypercorp rep doesn’t tell the experimental subjects is that they’ve also hired a second group with a variety of beam weapons to test the effectiveness of this new armor in a live-fire test under real-life conditions.

ENTRY 099: Lunar Deep Delve

Unlike some other bodies in the Solar system, beneath Luna's relatively thin crust (~50km) and solidified mantle (~1,000km) lies a molten core, the cause of weak seismic activity ("moonquakes") and internal heating of the planetoid. Ever since permanent habitation of Luna began, various proposals have been put forward for the relatively grandiose project of somehow tapping this thermal source, either for power or to heat a habitat. Most of the early theoretical models proved too expensive, unfeasible, or undesirable given current technology (including one project proposing a series of controlled antimatter explosions), and for decades the Lunar Deep Delve was only a pipedream.

The project may have remained a low-priority thought experiment until a deep seismic survey conducted out of Shackles revealed an apparently natural cavern 49 km beneath the South Pole, at the Mohorovičić discontinuity, where the crust meets the upper mantle.

When the survey results hit the Mesh it captured imaginations throughout the Lunar Lagrange Alliance, and hypercorp-matched public crowdfunding quickly provided the seed capital to begin a serious effort. Zbrny Group was quick to become a major backer of the project, donating a substantial amount of equipment from depleted comet mining operations, as well as encouraging its engineering employees to volunteer their time and expertise, with ZG counting it as part of their working hours.

The Deep Delve project was broken up into stages, both to assure the physical stability of the project and to accommodate any sudden lack of funds or resources to continue. Stage 1 of the Lunar Deep Delve was completed last year; a 13-kilometer bore ten meters in diameter, with a space excavating at the bottom of the shaft to build a microhabitat consisting of a stable drilling platform, waste rock processing, lunar geoscience station, and education center. The primary drilling for Stage 2, a secondary bore that will take the Deep Delve to a depth of 24 kilometers, is nearly complete, after which a cavern will be made as a platform for the Stage 3 bore.

Using the Lunar Deep Delve

On the one hand, the LDD is yet another impressive, if low-key, macroengineering feat, a heroic undertaking that can provide an exotic setting and backdrop for the adventures of player characters. On the other hand, it is, at the

moment, just a rather large, deep hole in the ground, and so the gamemaster may need to spice things up a bit. One possible hook is the Zbrny Group, which is being uncharacteristically generous in its donation of equipment and personal for this rather low-key project—there are a thousand ways a hypercorp accountant can squeeze an environmental credit, tax deferral, or

"transportation expense" out of any non-profit, and it is entirely possible that the whole scheme is a scam for ZG to pawn off their faulty, obsolete, and devaluated mining equipment while pocketing both an increased rep and a few credits. Alternately, ZG's funding may have something to do with the target cavern itself—a bubble of space which, from a lunar geophysics standpoint, should not exist. Several parties might be interested in what caused the bubble, and what might still be trapped in it.

Seed

In lunar gravity, a morph falling from thirteen kilometers up is never going to hit terminal velocity, but will continue to accelerate until it smacks into the bottom at about 200 meters per second—probably after smashing into the walls a few times. Naturally, security measures at the Deep Delve seek to prevent this, so when a volunteer engineer for the project turns into a nasty pink stain on top of the Stage 1 drilling platform, people want answers...even the whiff of scandal could cause the crowdfunding that supports the LDD to dry up, and the lead group need independent investigators to assure there was no foul play. The LDD has a good following, and it'll be a sizable rep bonus if the PCs do a good job.

ENTRY 100a: Cousin Program

“Comrade. Convict. Co-worker. This word means Cousin.”

Transhumanity has grown strange and, in many ways, far apart. Egos that first developed to deal with tribes of no more than a hundred individuals, to recognize kinship with others by smell, accent, and facial shape, are adrift in a community of billions that challenge any definition of what transhumanity is or might be—and with AGIs, uplifts, the Factors and other alien species, many transhumans become lost, unable to define themselves by their relationships with others, to others. With the vast host of transhumanity sometimes only a thought away from them, individuals become alienated, lonely, and withdrawn. Studies of this phenomenon point to how dangerous it is—the afflicted show high incidence of developing psychoses, low empathy, suicide, falling under the persuasion of charismatic individuals and movements—and have suggested a means to fight it: the Cousin Program.

Mostly popular in penal habitats, the Cousin Program forces casual socialization and fraternization by matching subjects up according to similar traits or interests, giving them common goals, and staging low-danger moderate-stress events that force interdependency and communication. Some habitats have even adopted variations of the Cousin program as alternative community service: an isolated hypercorp bigwig may find themselves scrubbing air filters alongside a hermetic digital archivist, the only two in the habitat that are conversant in Bulgarian.

Military units throughout the system have made extensive use of Cousin program, both for therapeutic purposes and as a tool to develop small, close-knit teams. Unlike civilian programs however, milspec Cousin “bonding events” tend to be moderate to high-stress and openly dangerous for the transhuman participants, involving combination of teamwork, survival, communication, problem-solving, and combat skills to achieve the stated objective—or just to allow the group to survive. Whether or not the group “wins” is, of course, secondary to whether or not they form the close-knit relationship that the military in question aims for.

Using the Cousin Program

The Cousin program provides several opportunities for players and gamemasters to expand on and interact with their characters. The forced socialization provides

opportunities for individuals from disparate social, cultural, and economic groups to mix and mingle in a non-threatening environment; unlikely friendships and contacts may develop. Cousin events can force together individuals who would not normally come into contact, providing opportunities to inject a PC or NPC into a game. A PC group may start out a military unit forged during a Cousin Program “trial by fire,” or the gamemaster can design such a scenario to encourage closer bonds and teamwork between players. The main consideration with the Cousin program is that the participants have some interest or trait in common, and usually not an obvious one like faction or morph type—both characters may speak the same language, or share an interest in similar media, be interested in the same authors or hobbies, etc. This small connection is at the core of the Cousin program, and provides a way for the characters to relate and open up to one another.

ENTRY 100b: CommServ

In post-scarcity economies, there is no place for debtor's prisons, or for any physical incarceration at all, unless the safety of the individual or community is at risk. Still, there are systems in place to check when a morph does break local regulations or draws on an excess of local resources to the point of inconveniencing others. The typical penalty is simply restricted access: local makers and dispensaries will refuse to give the offending morph anything besides the basic materials needed for survival. Continued or aggravated demands on the system or efforts to defraud or hack their way past the limitation usually results in a blackmark or stigma being placed on the morph's ID, which restricts their opportunity to obtain favors and often leads to a degree of social shaming. For particularly egregious offenses or longstanding patterns of abusive behavior, habitats typically tighten the restrictions, including filtering the morph's Mesh content, and this penalty usually lasts without a time limitation.

While a pain in the ass, this low-key penalty system is advantageous in that it exhausts a minimum amount of resources from all parties involved; the morph under a penalty is still free to go about their business, live their life, and get things done. If the restrictions do become too much for a morph to bear, there's always community service.

CommServ is voluntary and dynamically scheduled; any time the morph has hours to spare they can flag their status and the local matrices will spit out a list of tasks that can be done, the physical and skill/classification requirements, and where they can pick up the equipment. Typical tasks in most habitats include cleaning, basic maintenance, and beautification: running a vacuum brush over electronics panels, changing out air filters, scraping off and reapplying the safety stickers on the airlock, etc. More skilled or dangerous labor is valued more highly, but is often restricted to doublecheck that the morph has proper safety precautions (including spotters) in place. Most stations also organize group CommServ events on a regular schedule for larger coordinated procedures like flushing the pipes and security checks. Some habitats even count positive suggestions on how to improve the care and running of the community as CommServ, provided they're good enough to implement.

Using CommServ

It can be easy for a player character who is new to the whole post-scarcity concept to go a little overboard or be a little wasteful; it's also likely that during the extraordinary events that PCs regularly participate in they might piss off a few residents. Either way, the PCs may end up receiving any of the penalties listed above. Instead of suffering quietly (or with much bitching) to the cold shoulders they get when asking for something better than grey nutragoop and sterilized water, players can choose to have their characters do a couple CommServ jobs around the station—a great way for them to meet other people, practice or pick up a new skill, or familiarize themselves with aspects of the habitat that might be important later. In addition to minimizing the period characters suffer the rationing and restrictions mentioned above, sustained or substantial CommServ efforts can earn the character favors from local residents—trivial favors generally require 6 hours of CommServ, minor favors 24 hours of CommServ, and major favors 60 hours of CommServ or more.

ENTRY 101: Prisoner of Youth

Fads don't last. Every generation learns that the hard way. Clothes, vehicles, jewelry, philosophies, religions, politics, attitudes; those can all be discarded, tucked away, or changed as public opinion shifts, latches onto the ice-hot new thing. Technology is very fad-driven, dependent on the early rush of interest to generate wide adoption, spur development, and get investors to throw their credits at you. Early adopters take on a lot of risks, and none moreso than those who put their faith and their resources into body modifications and morphs. It's an old story: the dye job you couldn't wait to grow out; the tattoo you got that was just an embarrassment later; those hologram dermal inlays on your eyelids that were all the rage for about two weeks before the basilisk hack hit people when they were sleeping... Fads hit morphs even harder. A body or a shell doesn't quite come cheap or easy in most places; there's too much inoflife and not enough bods to go around.

Of course, that's cold comfort if you're born in one. Prisoner of Youth was a Luna kid just when neotenic was taking off like wildfire; their parents actually had to buy into a lottery for the procedure. Hypercorps were scouting the fetus in utero, promising scholarships and guaranteed contracts for smallships in the half-size colonies they were planning. By the time Prisoner of Youth hit full growth at six, the opportunities had dried up; the mass exodus from Earth meant there were too many full-sized bodies, no need to muck about with pint-sized habitats. So PoY didn't get the world they were promised, the world they were built and trained for, a walking talking fashion disaster a decade out of date with the rest of the 'verse. Others handled the transition better; immortal "child" models and actors and sex workers who could always find a market for what they were selling, but Prisoner of Youth knew they were meant for the stars, and that's where they'll be some day.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	17	18	16	14	12	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Neotenic (Neuter)

Skills: Academics: Astrophysics 45, Academics: Physics 55, Deception 35, Fray 33, Free Fall (Microgravity) 67, Gunnery 55, Hardware: Aerospace 50, Infiltration 33, Infosec 45, Interests: Gatecrashing 55, Interests: Spacecraft 55, Kinesics 45, Kinetic Weapons 55, Language: Native Korean 90, Language: English 55, Language Japanese 50, Language 103

Javanese 50, Language Swahili 45, Language Urdu 45, Navigation 80, Networking: Autonomists 35, Netowrking: Hypercorps 55, Perception 50, Persuasion 40, Pilot: Spacecraft 65, Profession: Navigation 60, Profession: Pilot 65, Unarmed Combat 30

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Medichines, Oracles

Advantages: Eidetic Memory, Hyperlinguist, Limber (Level 1), Rapid Healer Disadvantages: Morphing Disorder (Level 3), Social Stigma (Neotenic)

Using Prisoner of Youth

Priz to friends, Poi to workmates, full name for formal situations. Prisoner of Youth looks about nine years old, in that androgynous way where primary sexual characteristics haven't hit yet, and will remain looking terminally prepubescent for the rest of their life, no matter how much war paint they put on their face and arms, or how many beads they weave into the waist-length dreads that they wear. PoY isn't precisely an adult in a child's body, the genehacking that goes into neotenic is a lot more involved than that. They heal quick, like a kid, bouncing back from scrapes and even broken bones easier than an adult; and they're bright like kids are at a certain age, picking up skills easily, but Prisoner has the attitude of a pissed off teenager whose physical reality denies them the opportunity to make full use of their skills. PoY faces discrimination as a fact of life, and will meet it head on when they perceive it; but give Prisoner a chance to shine as a space pilot or navigator and they'll slip into the zone.

ENTRY 102: Voodoo Puffs

For many, drugs provide a way to step out of themselves, to mentally distance their ego from the actions that they undertake. Social mores on getting fucked up are relaxed, expectations of behavior lightened; transhumans still believe that when intoxicated a morph is not fully under the ego's control. Some exploit this to indulge without hindrance of conscience, while others merely use it as an easy excuse for behavior they don't have the courage to do sober. Some societies have taken this principal even more literally, seeking to incite ecstatic states through drugs, dancing, music, meditation, and flagellation where the user literally becomes someone else. Once the province of tradition, possession has now become a dark science promulgated through petals called voodoo puffs.

They resemble pale gray translucent dandelion seed heads which quiver on the slightest of breezes, the sphere-shaped florets a little too perfectly geometrical in their arrangement, and take on a bright green phosphorescence under ultraviolet light. Users typically snort the florets off the head, though they can be consumed any number of ways. Early signs typically involve a flushed appearance, tics and tremors, and the eyes rolling back in the head as the drug takes effect. The nanobiological payload creates a temporary network that piggybacks the user's brain while loading a pseudo-AGI template. To the user and anyone nearby it appears that the user's ego has been replaced by a foreign ego that is in complete control of the ego's morph, with the ego an unwilling passenger not in control of their actions. In actuality the template program merely overrides the user's perception of being in control, while lowering inhibitions and (depending on the quality of the programming) providing temporary personality cues and traits. So for the next few hours the user will move about as a voyeur in their own morph, appalled or delighted at what they do under "external influence," speaking with strange accents and alien body language as they run loose.

As the name suggests, the majority of voodoo puffs are loaded with pseudo-spiritual entities inspired by syncretic religions like Vodou, Santeria, Obeah, and Candomblé, though that is a matter of programmer taste, and users have been reported to be "possessed" by everything from aliens and werewolves to prominent celebrities living and

dead under the influence of voodoo puffs. The pseudo-AGI templates are rarely historically accurate, often remixes or original creations based on old concepts and imagery, and loaded with just enough information to give the impression that the entity in question is authentic—often supplemented by surreptitious real-time research via the 'Mesh, if possible.

Voodoo Puffs Mechanics

For the duration of the drug, the user is treated as if they had the multiple personality implant (Eclipse Phase 301-2), with the second ego being an NPC with the same stats as the PC under the gamemaster's control; the NPC ego is generally unwilling to relinquish control.

Sweets

Le Cheval: A character whose addiction to voodoo puffs progresses to Major must make a WIL x 3 Test the next time they take a puff; if the test fails they permanently gain the multiple personality implant with the NPC ego from the hit that, as well as the advantage Immunity (Voodoo Puffs) as the drug finishes permanently re-wiring their brain.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	INH, O	1d10 hours	+1	Mental	Moderate

ENTRY 103: FORBIDDEN REACH

Extinction is coming, at the speed of light, and with the inevitability of gravity. Deep space probes and radiotelescopes are giving very different pictures of the Milky Way than are visible from pictures taken from within the solar system, and comparison with archive stellar data confirms that something—probably some things, ultradense objects whose gravitational pull is sufficient to distort starlight—are moving, just beyond the limits of the solar system, manipulating the million-year old photons to create a new picture. The project is of such a massive scale and so subtle that at first only a handful of astronomers and astrophysicists noticed it; it took years for Firewall to become aware of the phenomenon and its significance, when said scientists began looking at their models and suffering seizures and spontaneous generation of the exsurgent virus.

Basically, it's a basilisk hack. Being executed on a cosmic scale, using technology and resources beyond current transhuman abilities, and when it is complete the entire solar system will face constant risk of annihilation. For while the effected visible segment of the Milky Way only covers a miniscule fraction of the visible sky, all it takes is the wrong look out of a habitat window or a glance through a telescope to be affected. Firewall classifies all knowledge of the phenomenon and its containment protocols as FORBIDDEN REACH, and is actively trying to keep a lid on possibly-tainted astronomical data, but anyone can download the necessary software to model the movements off the 'Mesh. It could be forty or fifty years before the basilisk hack pattern is visible, and Firewall is already dealing with a potential exsurgent crisis.

They will fight it. Programs are already underway, satellites and deep space probes suborned and repurposed to the task. The objects responsible for the distortion are being catalogued, tracked, examined—out of the reach of transhumanity just now, but there is time yet to look, to understand, and if possible find a way to stop or destroy them. Still, the niggling question remains in the back of everyone's mind: if it took us this long to see this threat, if they can plan this far ahead, then what else is waiting, out in the dark?

Mechanics

When complete, the FORBIDDEN REACH asterism will function as a sensory reprogramming basilisk hack (Eclipse Phase 364-5), although this configuration will not be

complete for about 50 (+/- 2.776) years. In the meantime, the main risk of exposure is high-resolution models of that section of the Milky Way at the period when it is in the correct configuration. The mathematical modeling programs and raw astronomical data are openly available on the Mesh, but relatively few transhumans have access to the vector data associated with the unknown objects necessary to accurately render an image of the basilisk hack.

Seed

A datathief named Minoataka has lifted the private datastore of an astrophysicist named Jinjin, a Firewall associate who was working on a neuroprogramming "vaccine" for FORBIDDEN REACH. While Firewall isn't sure of the exact contents of the datastore, a worst case scenario is that it includes a weaponized FORBIDDEN REACH program that Jinjin was using in their work. The PCs are given a briefing on FORBIDDEN REACH and made aware of the consequences of what Minoataka may have—and asked to retrieve it, by whatever means are necessary.

ENTRY 104: Maya Undo

Oldthink psychology and spirituality liked to breakdown the human ego, to posit different divisions of mind and soul—id, ego, superego, ka, ba, oversoul, conscious and unconscious, &c. These were frameworks grasping at a self-perpetuating organization of data, a continuous consciousness aware of itself that arose from and fed back into an organic system they did not even begin to comprehend. For some people, the concepts helped—crude tools from which psychosurgeons and neurochemists fashioned finer theories—but in this day and age it's dangerous to take such concepts literally.

In another life, Maya Undo had a different name and a whole host of labels she called herself by; she remembers that much. She was considered a berdache, two-spirits, man and woman in one, and that left her conflicted as to her identity, the role she was raised to play, what she wanted for herself and her community. There are a lot of coulda-wouldashoulda-beens on what Maya did next; gender reassignment, psychosurgery, and rebellion generally top the list. Instead, Maya Prime decided to cut that second spirit right out. Two forks, heavily pruned—one to live her life, and the other to become Maya Undo. Then right before she committed ego-death, Maya Prime egocast that “bad” fork as far away as she could.

So Maya came into being fully-formed but not sound of mind. Maya Prime had seen fit to unload more than her lesbian inclination and a butch attitude; Maya Undo came into being with all the bad memories and little things that simmered underneath the surface. She knew her family from all the slights and insults and cold silences they'd shown her, but none of the love and good times; her first boyfriend exists only as a confused collection of bumbling, invasive encounters that left her sore, violated and unsatisfied. Her inheritance from the old Maya was all the questions and all the doubt she had ever known, all the opportunities she'd missed, all the secrets she'd burned to keep, and all the shame and tears.

So maybe it's no surprise that Maya Undo is a bit of a mess, but she's strong too. She makes the art that old Maya Prime never could; rises above the dark past that is her inheritance.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	13	15	13	10	14	15	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Gender Studies 35, Art: Electronic Media 55, Art: Electronic Music 55, Deception 35, Hardware: Electronics 45, Impersonation 45, Infiltration 50, Infosec 36, Interests: Experimental Music 65, Interfacing 52, Intimidation 3, Kinesics 40, Language: Native Cherokee 85, Language: English 55, Networking: Autonomists 50, Networking: Firewall 55, Networking: Hypercorps 45, Perception 50, Profession: DJ 50, Profession: VJ 50, Profession: Music Producer 45, Programming 40, Research 33

Advantages: Allies, Pain Tolerance (Level 2)

Disadvantages: Addiction (Narcoalgorithms, Moderate), Edited Memories, Mental Disorder (Androphobia), Neural Damage (Mood Swings), Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Maya Undo

Maya is a broken bird, and she knows it. Her personal history, what there is of it, is a disaster; she's left a string of broken hearts behind her because she has trust issues; and her head is full of bad memories that color her reactions. The thing is, she is actively trying to rise above what she was—she is afraid of men, but she knows that is not because men have done anything bad to her, but because all of the memories she got from Maya Prime are bad ones. So while she may instinctively shy from male characters, she will work with them. As a friendly NPC, Maya is a good contact in the music and media scene, and a Firewall stringer that can provide local intel or even backup hacker support in a pinch. As an antagonist, Maya's past will probably drive her actions; for example Maya Undo could hire the PCs to help track down her “sister” fork, or that Maya could ask the PC's help in putting an end to Maya Undo's harassment and intrusion into her life, or because Maya Undo holds some vital piece of information that Maya Prime knew. If either of the Mayas go off the rails, they could target the other for a forced reintegration to get back the memories they're missing.

ENTRY 105: Blazespiders

Ecological controls in living habitats require finesse and patience, at least for the least intrusive and most economical means. Neo-avian habitats and scum barges in particular tend to suffer from recurrent insect unwanted infestations of ticks, lice, and weevils— personal pests whose populations expand tremendously without natural predators, but most large-scale means of eradication involve chemicals or radiation that are toxic to transhumans as well, or at least undesired. So instead of trying to eliminate the bad bugs, the neo-avians of Mahogany implemented a two-fold approach to suborn the pesky critters and control their population.

Mahogany pest populations were selectively interbred with genetically modified specimens to produce a hybrid species that produces photoproteins—the chemical luminescence making the tiny specimens easier to identify. Then the neo-avians introduced a predator arachnid species designed to target the spectrum of light put out by the glowing lice, ticks, and so forth. Additional ecological controls are required to track and maintain the balance between the populations, but Mahogany habitat's bug problem has dropped significantly without needing to resort to chemical agents, and is entering trial periods in other neoavian habitats.

A side-effect of the designer spiders are the webs they weave, which incorporate the excess photoproteins they intake from their prey. The result are startlingly beautiful webs, growing in dark dusty corners where few people disturb them, and under the leaves and between the leaves under the dark forest canopy of Mahogany. It is these pale glowing cobwebs that have given the Mahogany spider its most popular nickname: the blazespider.

Seeds

- A corpse has been found on a slow transport from Mahogany to the player character's habitat—a desiccated, mummified thing covered in blazespider webs. The cause of death is unknown, and tensions are flaring in the habitat as people start to come down sick. Someone hires the PCs to look into the blazespiders aboard the ship, which should not have been allowed past Mahogany's biological quarantine—unless the former incumbent circumvented those safeguards because they were smuggling something else...

- A legal dispute has arisen between Mahogany, which holds the rights to the blazespider genome, and Titanian microcorp Attercorp which breeds the transgenic spiders to brew a specialty cosmetic/stimulant called "Atterco" Jurisdictional differences mean the suit is unlikely to come to a quick resolution, so Mahogany hires the player characters to contaminate the Attercorp stock with a bacterium that will break down photoproteins—then Mahogany can sell the cure along and make the licensing fee part of the deal. If the PCs refuse, another group is hired for the same job. Unfortunately, the contaminated batch of Attercop hits the market and causes fatalities, and the authorities blame the PCs.
- A mentally unstable ghost-morph name Piotr Benevich was bitten by an experimental blazespider while touring a lab. While the spider was not venomous or radioactive, the bite (and the characteristic glowing bitewounds) has triggered a psychotic break in Piotr, who believes he is infected with blazespider DNA. Piotr's aunt and uncle contact the PCs and ask for them to find and restrain him before he can do any harm to himself or others.

ENTRY 106: Modular Ganges

Trailing from the outskirts of New Varanasi are a series of triangular arches, fifteen feet at the apex, and between them are sloping transparent walls through which a ribbon of gleaming blue can be glimpsed, and down each bank of this captive river bounce individual pilgrims and tourists. Sometimes visitors may even catch the rare cremation ceremonies, where the ashes of the pious deceased are immersed in the river for their salvation, and then almost immediately removed by scuttling filter-bots so the waters run pure as Lunar ice-melt once again.

One of the major community projects of the ethnic religious communities in New Varanasi on Luna is the recreation of the sacred river Ganges—eventually. Given that it is not currently feasible to reproduce the entire 2,000+ kilometer river in scale on the lunar surface, devotees of the project have embarked on a more workable approach, stringing together a series of 100-meter-long self-sustained habitat bubbles with separate airlocks for foot traffic along the riverbank and water locks that permit continuous waterflow from one module to the next. Each section has separate solar powers and back batteries for power, temperature control, oxygen supply, air filters, water pumps, and filtration system managed by an AGI. Like with most distributed habitat projects, in the event that a micrometeorite strike or other such incident punctures one or more of the bubbles, the remainder of the river network will automatically seal itself off to prevent loss in the nondamaged modules.

Currently, there are fifty-two sections of the Modular Ganges, for a total of 5.2 kilometers of river. Artists and ecologists are sculpting the first twenty modules into an arboretum, filled with traditional Indian flora to grace the walking trail. Long term goals for the project include a re-establishment of a freshwater ecosystem, including the eventual reintroduction of the Ganges river dolphin via cloning, though pragmatic estimates suggest that the river may take generations to complete at the current rate. Still, for the time being the ethnic communities in New Varanasi that view the river as sacred and the Modular Ganges River Trust, which maintains and extends the sight, has authority on all public and private usage of the river.

Seeds

- Not everyone in New Varanasi is in favor of the Modular Ganges, with some traditionalists considering it an affront to the true sacred river which (presumably) still exists on Earth and some non-believers that think it simply a waste of resources and sentiment. To this end, a group of local art provocateurs ask the PC's help for a monumental prank—rearranging six segments of the modular river into a self-contained loop, an “infinite river.” All they need is some industrial vehicles and a big distraction...
- Citing concerns over radiation exposure to regular hikers, the Modular Ganges River Trust is exploring the possibility of partially burying the modules. A test module (#53) in the new configuration was placed at the end of the line and seemed to work perfectly, but soon operation malfunctions became apparent throughout the Modular Ganges as temperature and air controls became erratic, sometimes toxic. The Trust suspects a hacker or even a rogue AGI, and wishes to hire the player characters to find and eliminate whatever is causing the problem. This is a highprofile assignment that's good for a bit of cred and rep.

ENTRY 107: Nietzi

Every generation has its iconoclasts. For the Nietzi, extinction is all too near. Fragile transhumanity lives on a ragged edge that most do not understand, the human species teetering frighteningly close to eradication. Any expenditure of energy not devoted to humanity's continued survival is considered a waste. To the Nietzi, art, philosophy, literature, and entertainment are only of value in the service to survival; the survival of human culture is not as important as the survival of the human species.

To combat what Nietzi see as the insupportable waste of resources on art and nonutilitarian cultural trappings (parties, religious rituals, civic ceremonies, &c.), they engage in "Experiments"—coordinated crowd-sourced acts of low-key domestic terrorism, aiming to destroy prominent examples or collections of art and architecture and disrupt events in an effort to discourage their continuation. As the Nietzi seek to preserve transhuman existence, their methods are almost unilaterally non-violent, with special care taken to avoid casualties.

Infamous Experiments include the Pinking, where proceedings were disrupted at a large religious retreat in New Varanasi by exploding dye packs that permanently marked the attending morphs bright electric pink; the Disassembly Experiment on Vo Nguyen, where coordinated flash-mobs disassembled every shrine and altar on the station then dispersed before habitat security could be roused. However, the real danger the Nietzi is illustrated from some of their less obvious Experiments: the deliberate corruption of the Gutenberg Archive using a false software patch resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of preFall literary and art works, the majority of which still have yet to be recovered.

The Nietzi generally organize using discrete social media networks, only rarely organizing into cells. As a rule they tend to blend in well with brinker, autonomist, and bioconservative factions. Members are quiet, self-sufficient, only rarely use exotic morphs, dress and speak plainly, and generally have "pragmatic" trades and professions, eschewing media-oriented professions except when infiltrating a particular group or habitat.

Seeds

- Local hackers have caught some weird radio traffic the past few days, something about an upcoming full-scale test of the fire suppression system, leading some to believe a new Experiment is about to begin in the PC's habitat, and ask the PCs to look into it. The Nietzi are planning a two-pronged assault, with one cell using the test to deliver nanite disassemblers that target clothing polymers, and the other cell hacking the makers to prevent them from manufacturing anything except disposable, plain paper clothing.
- A researcher believes they've identified a full, unaltered copy of the Gutenberg Archive on an old datastorage satellite in the Belt, but the unit is damaged and has to be accessed manually. If the PCs can recover the data, that's worth a lot of rep from academic and media-types—but the Nietzi will be looking to stop them (nonlethally) at every turn as they try to get there first. Every NPC that the PCs meet could be a Nietzi in disguise...including the researcher who hired them for the job.

ENTRY 108: Kentotis Masamiliano

Scholars have long speculated on the origin of transhumanity's religiosity in sociology, psychology, and biology. Whatever the answer, the theistic impulse is not a simplistic drive dictated by any one region of the biological brain or aspect of the ego; the ability and desire to believe in supernature appears to be a part of transhuman nature, tied into fundamental functions like pattern recognition and abstract thinking. To alter or remove the human penchant for religion is to change what it means to be human—a prospect which until recently transhumanity did not have the technology to attempt, and even now only a daring few psychosurgeons have begun efforts to “correct” what they see as one of transhumanity's central flaws.

Kentotis Masamiliano is an exhuman scholar of religion, neuroscience, and psychosurgery, an explorer of the transhuman mind who seeks as their quiet goal to isolate and eradicate the religious impulse. Following the Transhumanist brand of philosophy, Kentotis abides by a moral framework arrived at through reasoned discourse, absent of the trappings of religion, and generally performs their experimental psychosurgical treatments only on willing patients who have a full understanding of the process they are about to undergo— though in extreme cases where Kentotis feels the individual's quality of life is detrimentally impacted by extreme religiosity and unable to give informed consent, they may act in what they believe is the patient's best interest.

Unfortunately, one such “emergency intercession” performed during the course of a standard treatment to correct an eating disorder forced Kentotis to flee Luna and assume a nomadic practice while maintaining as engaged with the scientific community as possible.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
27	15	16	15	10	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: Neuroscience 80, Academics: Psychology 80, Academics: Religion 75, Deception 40, Interests: Mental Disabilities 60, Interests: Religious Sects 55, Interests: Synthetic Personalities 60, Interfacing 50, Investigation 50, Kinesics 55, Language: Native German 86, Language: English 66, Medicine: General Practice 50, Networking: Criminals 25, Networking: Scientists 66, Perception 45, Profession: Religious Scholar: 60,

Programming 60, Protocol 45, Psychosurgery 80, Research 70

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Armor (6/6), Black Mark (Lunars, Level 2), Social Stigma (Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

Using Kentotis Masamiliano

Kentotis lives something of a double life: on one hand a respected scholar and scientist actively engaged in research, debate, and publication, and on the other hand a highly skilled blackmarket psychosurgeon. Either or both of these aspects may be useful, depending on how the gamemaster chooses to use Kentotis. As a scholar and scientist, Ken makes a good contact to consult for any adventure involving religion and/or psychosurgery, a target for hypercorp extraction, the producer of some valuable research, or the doctor with a dark secret in an NPC ensemble. As a blackmarket psychosurgeon Ken is more likely to be an asset that the PCs may be directed to (if they need blackmarket psychosurgery), or the target or villain of a piece where Ken's experimentation has gotten out of hand.

Ken's psychosurgical techniques to remove religiosity from the transhuman ego are as yet still in their early stages, although refined enough to generally avoid permanent damage. While Ken offers the treatment to any client that shows interest, they will not perform the psychosurgery on anyone unwillingly unless the subject shows signs of a severe religionbased mental disorder such as scrupulosity. The exact effects of Masamiliano's imperfect treatment are up to the gamemaster, but mechanically often involve Edited Memories (to remove or dampen any strong religious experiences) and Neural Damage (to remove the ability to experience religious ecstasy). At the GM's discretion, this treatment may provide the character a +10 modifier on tests where someone is attempting to convert them to a religion or belief.

ENTRY 109: Apsych

There have been many efforts to define transhumanity, to find some universal common ground that unites everyone on some basic, fundamental level—not in an abstract sense, but as a real material denominator. Scientist-philosophers have mapped the brain, dissected the process of memory, and explored the thresholds of consciousness in every morph of every spectrum of transhumanity, looking for the link, the pattern, the signal, the combination of things that differentiates human intelligence from...something else. Some think they've found it, their peers generally think they're full of shit. No one has been able to definitively isolate and prove that they this universal key to human consciousness even exists.

Except that it can be taken away.

Apsych is one of the more frightening expressions of the exsurgent virus, because the change it makes is so subtle that the mechanism is still unclear, and researchers who have had a chance to study the effects are still debating what it does, but as near as can be determined the infection leads to ego death—the catastrophic and irreversible cessation of human intelligence. Aside from a slight spike in certain neurotransmitter levels, there is no apparent physical mechanism to the change; exploratory surgery has shown that the individual biomorphs afflicted are still perfectly functional, the brain still receiving and recording sensory input—indeed, all the memories of the original ego are still intact, encoded in the grey matter or cyberbrain. But the ego that once caused that body to move and feel and think is just...gone.

The current best guess by researchers is that apsych may be an incomplete form of the exsurgent virus, originally intended to rewrite egos into sleeper agents. The alternative is a bit starker: apsych is a killswitch, a weapon of genocide designed to dispose of transhumanity when it has finished serving its purpose. A minority opinion, generally held by exsurgent terrorists, is that apsych actually frees the ego somehow, leaving the morph behind.

Mechanics

Stage 1 (initial infection to 1 day):

Upon infection, the individual gains 1 mental stress per hour, manifesting as an increased tendency toward daydreaming. Minor physical symptoms—slight headache, heightened blood pressure, and stiff neck are common. During this stage the character is highly infectious to other biomorphs.

Stage 2 (1 day to 2 days):

After 24 hours, the character begins to suffer blackouts, initially only a few seconds, but with periods increasing geometrically during the day. Early symptoms appear to coincide with epilepsy, and treatment with antiepileptic drugs can extend this stage almost indefinitely, though most morphs develop a tolerance within a few months.

Stage 3 (2 days+):

At this stage, the character's ego is gone, and their morph is just an empty shell. Forks in cortical stacks retrieved after this point are typically corrupted and irretrievable. The character is essentially dead, even if their morph is still breathing. At this stage the morph is no longer infected; the apsych virus rapidly breaks down and is no longer present in their tissues. If the morph has a cyberbrain, a new fork (even a copy of the old ego) can be downloaded into it.

ENTRY 110: Risk

The universe of transhumanity is too large to contemplate every angle before making a decision, but few transhumans make it to old age by being rash and impulsive. Many transhumans, especially older ones or with cyberbrains, tend to become stuck in working through their problems rigorously, contemplating and evaluating each possible action for so long that they miss out on small and immediate opportunities. The lack of decisiveness is especially devastating in the battle, when those who dare may win, while those who play it safe or stop to work out all the probabilities before acting may lose the initiative, and their lives. For those transhumans that recognize this failing in themselves, there is Risk.

Risk was first marketed by Oldtel, a pharmaceutical hypercorp out of Luna that repackages and repurposes centuries worth of medications as cognitive and health drugs. The oneshot inhalers, based off drugs to combat Alzheimer's, stimulate risk-taking behavior. Originally marketed to military professionals, business people, and the elderly, Risk was phased out of general production after disastrous trial run pairing it with a cognitive focusing agent led to several cases of permanent brain damage. The formula for Risk was hacked and posted to the Mesh, where it continues to find an audience in a small network of users and producers, where user-focused support groups and programs help users to handle the potential outcomes of using Risk. Detractors point out that the Risk community are basically enablers for negative behaviors like extreme sports, gambling, unprotected sex, and greater experimentation with more dangerous drugs.

Mechanics

Risk provides mental flexibility and drive needed to take advantage of immediate opportunities, but it also reduces the character's judgment and ability to discern and avoid risky behavior of all types. Risk provides 1 temporary point of Moxie to the user; if not used within the duration of the drug, this point expires and is lost. However, Risk users also take a -10 penalty to Will tests for the duration, which may become permanent with extended use. Other common effects of long-term use of Risk include addictions to gambling, unprotected sex, daredevil stunts, etc.

Seeds

- Experiments with a Risk nanoalgorithm by Oldtel have been fairly positive...until a synth went mad and started humping major appliances. The poor transhuman is stuck in a permanent Risk-high, impulse control dropping by the day. Oldtel asks the player characters to quietly capture the synthmorph before ze does too much damage and return hir to Oldtel for treatment.
- A minor chemist in the Belt has been experimenting with Oldtel's folly, combining Risk with other drugs to focus the risk-taking behavior, and she's made a bit of progress. Unfortunately, the samples she's sent out have induced temporary obsessive compulsive disorder-type behavior with regards to their high-risk behavior of choice. Relatives and friends of the afflicted ask the player characters to track down the source and cut it off. Of course, the easiest way to do that is to infiltrate the Risk community itself.

Type	Application	Onset Time	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Chem	Inh	1 minute	8 hours	-	Mental	Moderate

ENTRY 111: Smoking Oil

“We exist in a universe of invisible forces, whose nature we may not sense unaided but whose effects we can measure. Understand, this is a mechanistic universe. We arise from base elements, combined according to certain physical laws; our species, our consciousness is the result of a multi-billion year process, our every action contained within a mere shard of the probability space of infinity...yet a fraction of infinity may itself be infinite, and so is our destiny.” – Smoking Oil, Sermon on Olympus Mons

Philosophies and religions that directly contradict science tend to suffer severe feedback in contemporary transhuman societies; the Mesh has raised the signal to noise ratio regarding contemporary technology and scientific thought to the point that gross claims of supernaturalism are difficult to sustain without recourse to blanket denial and faith. A majority of new beliefs exalt science and technology, or at least a specific understanding of scientific principles, and couch their message in particular eschatology or extrapolation of existing scientific theory—and not always a mainstream or accepted theory.

Smoking Oil is a notable exemplar of one such faith, a sect known as the Clankers. Boiled down, the Clankers believe in a strong anthropic principle, though not one that most philosophers would be quite familiar with. To the most earnest Clankers, Smoking Oil reveals the Secret Mathematics that postulates multiple competing anthropic principles, supposedly waxing and waning in influence to make possible the existence of a universe compatible for certain forms of existence that are incompatible with standard human life— and that these Xenopic Principles are gaining influence, so that transhumanity must soon transition to a new form, or go extinct.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	15	15	10	19	17	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	30	6	60	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: Physics 60, Academics: Psychology 60, Academics: Religion 70, Deception 60, Art: Writing 70, Interests: Fringe Religion 60, Interests: Fringe Science 60, Interests: Xenolife 60, Interfacing 44, Investigation 33, Kinesics 66, Language: Native French 85, Language: English 66, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Scientists

22, Perception 45, Profession: Preacher 70, Profession: Therapist 44, Programming 30, Protocol 55, Research 44

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Enhanced Senses (Electrical Sense, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Smell, Lidar, Radar, T-Ray Emitter), Mnemonic Augmentation, Multi-Tasking

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Allies (Clankers), Armor (6/6), Social Stigma (Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

Using Smoking Oil

Smoking Oil and the Clankers may be played as harmless or as dangerous as the gamemaster requires them to be. In general, Smoking Oil will act as a sympathetic character, soaking in information and encouraging people to talk or express themselves, guiding their personal meditations with carefully crafted questions, gradually leading them to the Clanker philosophy. The full details of Clanker beliefs are left up to the needs and imagination of the gamemaster, but as an individual’s understanding and involvement grows with the small movement, they are expected to take steps to evolve themselves to prepare for the “Xenopic Shift” predicted by the secret mathematics of Smoking Oil’s eschatology, which generally means resleeving from a biomorph into a synthetic morph.

ENTRY 112: Conviction Therapy

It's a cold and unforgiving universe, and not all egos are brought into it on equal footing. The old social structures have mostly been torn down, so that transhumans exist in an age of unbridled freedom—but also unbridled lack of structure. There are few expectations, few requirements, and fewer definite directions that transhumans can take—academic degrees and training certificates are less significant than provable skills, and most training emphasizes real learning rather than earning passing marks on standardized exams. Rites of passage are nearly absent, so that extended childhood can pass into aimless adolescence to lost and purposeless adulthood far too easily—years of life lost, just getting by, unable to pick a direction.

Where there is a market, there are those who will arise to serve and profit from it. So there exist corps and individuals that exist only to give people purpose: causes to believe in; tours of military, commercial, labor, and educational service they can contract for; open source busywork for egos of every level of ability; and for those who simply need something greater than themselves to believe in, there is Conviction Therapy.

Transhuman minds are designed for contact experiences. The templates for transcendental experiences are hardcoded in the wetware of the human brain, and can be accessed and activated through various psychedelic drugs or direct manipulation using nanites; synthmorphs can achieve much the same effect with nanoalgorithms. With the proper training and programming, tailored experiences can be constructed and implemented on a given transhuman, and they have a high degree of success, even if the individual receiving the treatment is aware of the artificial nature of the process.

So aimless transhumans can speak to a deity and receive direction for their lives, or be rescued and empowered by kindly omnipotent aliens to pursue their full potential, or undergo a symbol-laden alchemical transmogrification and emerge as a more complete individual—at least in their heads. Conviction Therapy makes the subject extremely malleable and open to further manipulation, and is often combined with other psychosurgery procedures.

Mechanics

Conviction Therapy is a psychosurgery procedure (Eclipse Phase 231-2), designed to make other procedures easier to implement. As such, Conviction Therapy is typically performed in conjunction with another procedure, adding its Timeframe, PM, and SV to the other procedure to determine the final modifiers for the test.

CONVICTION THERAPY

Timeframe: +1 day

PM: +10 SV: Special

Conviction Therapy provides a transformative experience with the aim of giving shape and direction to the individual's life. It lowers the SV for other psychosurgery procedures by half (round up). For example, if Conviction Therapy was performed alongside Behavioral Control (Boost), the total Timeframe would be 8 days, the PM would be 0, and the SV would be $1d10 \div 4$ (round up). At the gamemaster's discretion, on a failure with Conviction Therapy the subject may develop a Minor Addiction to the drugs or nanoalgorithms used in the procedure; subsequent failures may increase this addiction by one ste

ENTRY 113: Hope's End

Habitats fail. Life goes on. Hopewell habitat was a mid-size belter colony established on the asteroid 5475 Hanskennedy. Reasonably self-sufficient, Hopewell had not yet established full trade and social links when comm systems went dark. No one investigated checked to see how the station was doing for nine years.

Contact finally came from an exploratory mission out of Eros, a small but fully-equipped military expedition designed to chart out the station for possible scavenge or recolonization. Fearing a possible remnant of the TITANS, the Red Zone forces exercised an extremely cautious approach, sending out robot probes to tap Hopewell's computer system from outside.

What they found was a feral colony—most systems in good condition, maintained by automated machinery and routines, but the population reduced to savagery. Of the two hundred and sixty original colonists, perhaps thirty remain, split into three social groups. Faced with legitimate (if feral) owners rather than an abandoned station, the Planetary Consortium moved in, establishing a permanent observation post so that sociologists could study the phenomenon.

The oldest of the survivors appears to be a female in late adolescence, with only limited knowledge of how to interact with the station's systems, and no access to its higher functions. This, along with supplementary evidence, suggests that some violent unrest led to the death of the entire adult population of Hopewell early in the life-cycle of the colony, leaving the children to fend for themselves—growing up and starting to have children of their own.

While some transhumans protest this “natural experiment,” what interests the Planetary Consortium sociologists is that despite the name, the inhabitants of Hopewell—known generally as “Hope's End” on the Mesh—have only really been limited by what they can access through the station's data archives. The first generation residents have selfeducated themselves on maintenance, first-aid, basic chemistry, language, music, philosophy, and self-government; their only real limitations in this regard are the checks that their parents and guardians imposed on “restricted” material—including all but the most basic sex education, pornography, pharmacology, and any advanced medicinal knowledge, as well as the administrative controls for the station and

certain “subversive” political ideologies and technologies. As such, while conversant on how to replace and clean an air filter, a Hope's End feral has limited knowledge of childbirth procedures and no knowledge of recreational drugs beyond nitrous oxide, which is one of the principal forms of entertainment.

Seeds

- Jhil Nightbreaker wants to stage an intrusion that will bust open the “natural experiment” at Hope's End, but she needs a little help—a group of go-to transhumans willing to sneak about the observation post and plant a virus that will unlock the restricted portions of the Hopewell database. Of course, all they have to do is sneak past the Red Zone security while Jhil sets up a diversion...
- After nine years of automated labor and only minimal maintenance, several of the key life-support systems of Hope's End are near collapse. To preserve the “natural experiment,” the sociologists need a stealth team to sneak into the station through a forgotten airlock and perform critical upgrades. Fortunately, the administration area was off-limits to the children and is mostly intact, so the PC's only difficulty will be getting in and out of their quietly. Unfortunately, one of the social groups is rabidly xenophobic and will turn their improvised weapons on any outsiders they run across along the way...

ENTRY 114: Relicteurs

Skillsets age and lose relevance as civilization and technology moves on. The necessity of creating flint knives through knapping drops to near-zero once superior metal technology becomes available and widespread; foot- and head-binding to achieved desirable body alteration falls out of fashion due to changing cosmetic preference and medical or ethical concerns; in both cases the skills are no longer practiced, and within a few generations are generally lost. Most transhumans rarely give this any thought, aside perhaps from a passing sadness or triumphant glee at the passing of the old ways—but others see this as a criminal loss of knowledge.

Relicteurs are a mostly informal association of transhumans dedicated to the preservation through practice of archaeoskills, the intellectual and physical abilities no longer in widespread use but which they feel should be preserved for the day when they do have some use once again or out of a desire to keep past legacies alive. While it is impractical to practice with certain obsolete technologies and circumstances, relicteurs also maintain distributed libraries of self-crafted and peer-reviewed skillware, most of which are available for free.

Barsoomians in particular have benefited from relicteur training in ancient traditional lowtech building techniques, and security forces regularly access the thousands of catalogued styles of martial arts, many of which use exotic and archaic weapons, and hunting, trapping, and survival techniques from old Earth cultures. Scumbarges tend to be relicteur strongholds as well, with an urgent need to keep at least a few people on board capable of programming near-obsolete programming languages and servicing antiquated but vital equipment.

Among the relicteurs themselves, there is a substantial movement for reinventing or repurposing archaeoskills for contemporary use, finding immediate and practical value in the skills of yesteryear. Knitting and sewing for example have re-emerged as energyconservative and stylish endeavors in habitats where maker-crafted clothing was becoming a strain on the system; it is less resource-intensive to make a length of thread for repair or embroidery than to re-process an entire article of clothing. Likewise, many Neo-Avians and Neo-Ceteceans have repurposed scrimshaw methods to decorate their bills and teeth.

Mechanics

Relicteur networks on the 'Mesh maintain a freeware library of skillsofts for archaic skills, everything from Art: Scrimshaw to Medicine: Leeching; it is up to the gamemaster to decide what relicteur 'softs are available in their game. Skillsofts follow the rules in Eclipse Phase 309 and 332.

Using Relicteurs

The most immediate benefit of relicteurs is to provide characters with an obscure, archaic skill in a pinch and with a minimal cost or hassle. Run a search, download the freeware skillsoft, then make a test. Used creatively, this can be a lot of fun for both players and gamemasters. If a player begins to somehow abuse the relicteur network (like trying to sell the skillsofts), consider applying a rep penalty or limiting access until the PC makes amends.

Seed

The relicteurs post bounties for certain highly-desired skills, everything from organic home-made pickles to dates with minor celebrities. The latest bounty involves lassoing, and the last grandmaster lives in an isolated bubble-farm on Mars, herding transbovines and studying the effects of their manure on Martian soil. If the PCs can convince the grandmaster to record a skillsoft and upload it, they can get some sweet prizes.

ENTRY 115: Zelda Amenatsu

In an age of transcendental personal apathy and self-centeredness, where each ego seems situated on their own personal transformation and entire habitats are given over to the exploration of radical morphs, upgrades, and concepts of being, there remain certain constants to the human tribe—and individuals who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that transhumanity, or at least their version of transhumanity, continues to exist in some form. The mildest of these adherents are so-called bioconservatives, who have formed communities, habitats, protests and discussion groups revolving around the need to preserve and propagate the human genome and form, to retain whatever quixotic, quintessential elements that they believe defines humanity, and without which they believe that transhumanity will not survive, not as it has, even if individual human-derived consciousness continues in some form.

Then there are the Bloody Wrenches, the Clank-Haters, the Meat Brigades, PureGenSect, and all the others. Extreme action groups, gangs, domestic terrorists in all but name, they take the bioconservative ideals and twist and exploit them, or maybe they just get their adrenaline rush by destroying synthmorphs, pods, and exotic biomorphs. When the clanking masses won't be bullied and cowed, when they start to fight back, these groups call in aces like Zelda Amenatsu—more than an assassin for hire, but a quiet fanatic, the four horsemen rolled into one. Where she walks, death follows, a wake of broken shells and blasted minds, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

Ironically, Zelda is more of a robot than the synthmorphs she hunts. The original Zelda ego has been psychosurgically broken and rebuilt so many times that little of the original personality remains, leaving only a fanatic hunter at the peak of human physical development. Behavioral controls prevent her from turning on whatever puppetmasters run the bioconservative extreme action groups, while selective neural damage assures she can never identify those who issue her orders and her social skills were pruned out to avoid excess socialization that might jeopardize her missions. Zelda receives commands through certain coded phrases, blending into the biomorph humanity she thinks she fights for but never really a part of them, drifting from habitat to habitat—and when she dies on one of her missions, she knows all she has to look forward to is opening her eyes in a new morph and doing it all over again.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
15	27	15	22	13	16	13	-
7	1	26	5	52	30	7	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Computer Science 44, Academics: Cryptography 55, Beam Weapons (Lasers) 67, Blades (Swords) 45, Clubs (Hammers) 56, Deception (Bluffing) 67, Demolitions (Improvised Explosives) 45, Fray (Full Defense) 56, Free Fall (Microgravity) 45, Gunnery 65, Hardware: Electronics 55, Hardware: Robotics 55, Impersonation 55, Infiltration (Sneaking) 45, Infosec 66, Interests: Synthmorphs (Weak Points) 56, Interfacing 55, Kinetic Weapons (Rifles) 67, Language: Native Belarusian 85, Language: English 55, Language: French 55, Language: Russian 66, Networking: Autonomists 45, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception (Visual) 66, Programming 5, Spray Weapons 33, Unarmed Combat 45

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack

Traits: Allies (Bioconservative Terrorist Cells), Danger Sense, Edited Memories, Exceptional Aptitude (COO), Modified Behavior (Ability to harm morphs that resemble baseline humans, Expunged), Neural Damage (Loss of face recognition, Loss of voice recognition), On the Run, Right at Home (Remade), Situational Awareness, Uncanny Valley

ENTRY 116: Scale Tree

A dinosaur-skinned pineapple, leathery green-grey scales embossed with buried circuit patterns. Banned in most habitats, ostensibly because of its addictive properties, Scale Trees are popular in the underground as the gateway to the bloodiest, raunchiest squad-level tactics and combat simulator game in the Solar system. Users are injected into an alternate reality, taking the place of one of a small group under siege in an endless city under a broken dome, fighting each other and a series of waves of alien machines. Outnumbered and outgunned, the players are forced to work together achieve their mission objectives before the petal fades or they die, forcing them to log out of the game. So far, meta-analysis of the game on a strategic level shows that several human teams have not only driven the aliens out of parts of the city, but have used their gates to invade the aliens' world as a guerrilla force. New weapons, enemies, and locations appear regularly, which is part of what makes the game—and the drug—so addictive.

The actual reason for the banning of scale trees has less to do with the nature of the game than some of the consequences of playing it. Habitual users may not suffer physical damage from the simulated warfare, but develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorders based on their experiences, which become more severe and marked as the user becomes more and more addicted to the game. Further, the highly realistic nature of the game is in part due to the programs tapping into the users' memories to fill in details, some of which are stored locally in the user's wetware—memories which can bleed through into their real-world perceptions as terrifying flashbacks where they relive the gruesome combats they have endured.

Scale Tree Mechanics

Periods spent under the influence of this petal encourage the development of skills related to squad-level tactics and military professions, such as Academics: Military Science and Profession: Military Ops, and characters receive 2 Rez points that may be spent towards improving such skills for every 50 hours under the influence. Every 10 hours of play, the character gains 1d10 mental stress.

Sweets

Achievement of mission goals, demonstration of teamwork and skills, and certain bloody actions unlock certain sweets for users of scale tree petals.

- Promotion (subjective, leadership displayed): The user's squadmates take note of their abilities and informally promote the character to the next rank; a promoted character halves the number of hours needed to gain Rez points from scale tree (25 hours for the 1st promotion, 12.5 hours for the 2nd, etc.). Characters who screw up can also be demoted, which doubles the number of hours needed.
- Scalphunter (objective, 30+ kills in a single session with trophies taken): The user gains the Brave trait, if they did not have it already, and 1d10 mental stress.
- No Pacifists in the Trench (objective, Combat Paralysis trait): Users with the Combat Paralysis trait that take a scale tree petal enter into a mild coma for 1d10 days. When they emerge, they no longer have the Combat Paralysis trait. Instead, they have the Modified Behavior (Bloodthirsty, boosted) trait and 1d10 mental stress.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	0	2d10 hours	-10	Mental	High

ENTRY 117: Knapping

One of the great successes of the relicteurs is the revival of traditional knapping techniques, which in recent months have seen a tremendous revival thanks to the livecast survivalist adventures of Regina Rex, Gatecrasher and her trademark blue obsidian-tipped weaponry. Material scientists eager to capitalize on the sudden interest have designed maker-fabricapable synthetic materials whose fracture and stress lines are particularly suited to knapping, and these “blank bricks” are the foundation material for all manner of hand-crafted knapped blades in habitats throughout the solar system. Of course, many knapped blades are of limited utility—it takes considerable skill and the right materials to achieve a sharp, precise edge, and knapped blades are notoriously fragile and low-tech compared to blades made from metal, plastic, ceramics, or composite materials. Social trend-spotters are of the opinion that knapping is probably nothing more than a fad which will burn itself out in the next few months, though the products and technology will persist for years.

While the activity lasts, however, there are money, favors, and rep to be had. Many social networks are besieged with requests for choice knapping materials, from the high-density briny sheet-ice that forms in the Yukata Trench on Europa to the exotic “rainbow glass” found in the Al-Bakri crater, formed from multiple successive pre-Fall nuclear launches. The so-called “micro-knapped” blades from the Belt are considered the most desirable by collectors that prefer workable weapons, having been crafted using traditional techniques as applied by the latest high technology: artificial high-density glass refined to a nearmonomolecular edge using micro-manipulators and nanovision magnification, with reinforced hand-carved artificial diamond stabbing points; each blade can take up to 100 transhuman work-hours depending on size and additional artistry.

Mechanics

The applicable skill to create an object is Hardware: Knapping, which applies to all materials (glass, stone, composites, etc.) and technologies, and follows the rules for Hardware skills in Eclipse Phase 179. A benefit of knapping techniques is that they are largely designed for

minimal tools in sparse situations, and there are currently a surplus of help manuals and skillware available on the Mesh through relicteur networks: effectively, as long as a character has a Mesh connection they can have download Hardware: Knapping 40 skillware and receive a +20 modifier for the extensive online assistance, sufficient to manufacture a weapon from a “blank brick” or sufficiently large piece of glass in 1-2 hours.

Knapped blades are sharp (-2 armor penetration), but the edges are fragile, often dulling and chipping easily in combat, and are generally considered disposable weaponry. When a knapped blade breaks is left up to the gamemaster, and should probably depend on how the PC uses it—trying to cut through hard substances is likely to render a glass knife useless, but a glass-tipped surgical scalpel used only against soft tissues can retain its edge for years. Knapped blades use the Blades skill.

More exotic knapped weapons might exist—needlers that shoot micro-knapped crystal spires hand-carved by diligent, worshipful AGIs and suchlike—but such technologies are generally little more than expensive (if occasionally deadly) toys considering monomolecular wire and other more practicable alternatives exist.

Blade	AP	DV	Average DV	Cost
Knapped Blade	-2	2d10 + (SOM ÷ 10)	7 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Trivial
Microknapped Blade	-4	2d10 + 1 + (SOM ÷ 10)	8 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Moderate

ENTRY 118: Zen0

“Rage against the dharma chains of cold transhumanity, do not accept the negative karma of your rep, the false avatars that speak to you through the Mesh, cartoon voices offering you loans, work, investments; reject the labels They strive to put on you: criminal, unreliable, bankrupt, immoral, amoral, bad dog...” - Sample from “Zen Zero Blues,” Luna Productions

Zen0 is a folk figure, a karma assassin, whose dharma is rebellion, an anarchoinfoterrorist who strikes against the digital, legal, social, and financial structures that underlie much of transhuman society. They have been instigated in the deletion of criminal records, manipulating rep systems to remove black marks, tampering with hypercorp gathered consumer data, removing user restrictions on public makers, and counterfeiting digital currency. Wanted in multiple habitats, it is still not clear if Zen0 is an individual, a movement, a sophisticated computer virus, or a common alias used by unrelated criminals. The only marker for Zen0’s crimes are small fragments Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures imbedded in the code of victim systems, often cleverly hidden so that they are only discovered months or years after the damage has already been done.

Some people break the law out of necessity, others for profit; Zen0 does it because that is their dharma. They are an entity or entities of subtle destruction, undermining the networks that hold transhumanity together—and hold individual transhumans in their place. No other explanation has been forthcoming for their actions, no greater philosophy or purpose behind what they do; Zen0 does not do this for the benefit of any particular individual, nor to expose security weaknesses in the systems. At times, Zen0’s actions have been traced to major local collapses in rep systems or digital banking, but whether this was desired or accidental is unclear.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
30	10	25	10	10	10	15	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Computer Science 90, Academics: Cryptography 85, Academics:

Engineering 80, Art: Electronic Music 35, Deception 75, Hardware: Electronics 80, Hardware: Robotics 75, Impersonation 75, Infiltration 75, Infosec 80, Interests: Buddhism 90, Interests: Online Banking 70, Interests: Rep

Systems 75, Interfacing 90, Investigation 65, Language: Native Vietnamese 90, Language: Cantonese 85, Language: Hindi 85, Language: Japanese 85, Perception 50, Profession: Security Operations 75, Programming 85, Research 75

Disadvantages: Enemy (various hypercorps, habitats, and every major rep system), Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Zen0

A shadow with a killer rep, an anomalous mystery seemingly capable of anything but most often doing nothing, Zen0 is a legend for gamemasters to hang a hat on. PCs are more likely to run across the infoterrorist’s work than they are to encounter the infomorph themselves, but if anything bizarre and inexplicable needs to happen to a character’s records, “Zen0 did it” is as good an excuse as any.

Seed

A lead has emerged on Zen0—three references from an obscure book of Japanese koans which has not been digitally archived, but is only available in a private library of a collector living in a craft orbiting Venus. The PCs are offered a deal: if they investigate independently, then some of the more questionable records of their activities will be sealed and forgotten. However they are being hired, paid, and communicated with entirely online...are they working against Zen0, or for them?

ENTRY 119: Blackballs

It's all fun and games until the first accidental overdose. Police and security forces have been looking for effective non-lethal deterrents for over a century now, in a technological arms race with no end in sight. A popular pre-Fall option were blackballs—a compact missile of artificial snow laced with staining and soporific agents, which could be carried around in an insulated compressed-air pistol. Initial designs were promising: low impact velocity, with force equivalent to a thrown snowball even at point blank range; the artificial snow crystals dissolved quickly at human surface temperatures, and were laced with both a long-lasting chemical dye and short-lasting reuptake inhibitors that cause drowsiness and sexual dysfunction. Blackballs were especially popular on Luna, and employed en masse in a few instances in reply to miners' strikes, and were even sold to civilians for personal protection.

Blackballs fell out of favor after a series of fatal accidents: a "group suppression release" of blackballs decimated a flock of neo-avians, it turned out the staining agent was toxic to them; blackballs were recalled and re-formulated, but the new mix proved fatal to a group of three neo-hominids dosed during a non-violent protest of the canceling of "Benny the Banana," a genetically-augmented high-protein savory fruit product and affiliated cartoon program, video games, and merchandise line. Rather than pay to dispose of the blackball stock and weaponry, the parent microcorp Jonez BB Ltd. sold the goods under the counter far afield, to burgeoning habitats towards the Rim. Eventually litigation forced Jonez BB to close, but by then datapirates had liberated the weapon schematics and chemical formulations and posted them to the Mesh for anyone to find. Blackball weaponry can still be found for sale in many Rim communities.

Mechanics

Blackball pistols are fired using the Kinetic Weapons skill. By themselves, blackball pistols resemble heavy pistols except for a larger (6 centimeter) barrels and oversized external magazine; the blackballs themselves appear as large lozenges of compact black "snow" held within clear, insulated gelcaps. Blackballs deliver a fast-acting (1 Action Turn) dermal toxin; affected characters must make an immediate SOM x 3 Test or be rendered unconscious. Non-

human biomorphs, particularly Neo-Avians and Neo-Hominids, take 1d10 damage as well. Medicines or circadian regulation implants render a character immune to blackballs, as might other appropriate toxin-filtering gear or sleepsuppressants at the gamemaster's option.

At the gamemaster's discretion, blackball pistols may fire similar loads featuring other dermal drugs and toxins.

Seed

A local voyeur has been using home-made blackball loads mixed with hither (Eclipse Phase 320-1) instead of the usual soporific, targeting large number of biomorphs at parties and then recording the ensuing flash-orgies and for their personal enjoyment. Needless to say, the victims are not amused; anyone that can catch the voyeur in the act can expect a substantial rep boost.

Firearm	AP	DV	Average DV	Firing Modes	Ammo	Cost
Blackball Pistol	-8*	Special	Special	SA, BF, FA	10	Low (Rim), Moderate (Elsewhere)

* A chemical or vacuum seal provides complete protection from blackballs.

ENTRY 120: The Plutonium

Death is still with transhumanity. Some egos don't want to move on to new bodies; others just can't afford to. Either way you cut it, death leaves a body behind. Even in a generation where bodies are regularly recycled, there are those that ascribe to traditional notions of corporeal interment, who wish their physical remains to remain unperturbed.

So there are small graveyards and necropolises that dot Luna and Mars, well outside the projected expansion zones of habitats. One transhuman's biohazardous waste/former evolved plains ape is another transhuman's treasure however, and many early graves have been uncovered and dug up, sometimes by people looking for scrap and biologicals to recycle, others by academics studying the effects of transhuman decomposition in different environments, or by vandals offended by the waste of time and materials. So for those dedicated enough to die and determined not to be disturbed, they had to get creative.

Originally designated 2212 Hephaistos, an Apollo asteroid and Near-Earth Object, for the last six years the minor planet has been carved into a funerary complex-cum-toxic waste storage materials facility, carved by telepresence robots into an elaborate Neo-Grecian temple with additional Roman, Etruscan, and Byzantine elements thrown in for good measure. Even in the future, industrial processes leave a lot of chemical and radioactive waste that cannot easily be converted, repurposed, or disposed of; the genius of The Plutonium Corp was to find a market where a ten-thousand-year half-life was desirable.

Clients purchase space and are stacked in individual crypts and mausoleums, right on top of spent fuel rods and piles of radioactive multicolored sand and glass scraped out of lunar craters from early nuclear-launch craft. The whole facility is opened to vacuum, with no life support and no power, just a maze of narrow passages disappearing into the dark in the rock, with corpses arranged as artistically as their interment contracts allow. Plutonium Corp does a bit of side-business in guided telepresence tours, usually for family members, but otherwise Plutonium is pretty much a dead rock with no permanent staff.

Using the Plutonium

This is your basic dungeon in space, with a couple twists: it's abandoned, cold, hideously radioactive, in hard vacuum, and far enough away from major habitats that

rescues are likely to take weeks—if they're launched at all, given that by broadcasting a distress call you're basically admitting to being a graverobber or illegal scrap merchant. On the other hand, anybody concerned enough to be buried in the Plutonium is wealthy or connected; the radioactive materials themselves have some worth, even if only to build dirty bombs; and of course there's no telling what else Plutonium Corp may be hiding in their vaults—social stigma against violating gravespace being an interesting additional level of security.

Seed

A distress call goes out from the Plutonium. The nearest habitat feels the need to investigate, but has no authority and no burning desire to stage a rescue, but Plutonium Corp posts a bounty and together they outfit a ship to investigate, complete with all the rad-resistant vacuum suits and other gear a group would need to survive within the facility, at least for a little while. Now all they need is a group crazy enough to go see who it is and why they need help...

ENTRY 121: The Future Keepers

The Fall was not the first near-extinction event for the human species, nor might it be its last. Without a habitable homeworld, transhumanity is spread thin in habitats and space vessels across the solar system and the even more hostile universe beyond, and the prospects for the long-term survival of humans remain incredibly tenuous. Faced with the very real possibility of extinction, forward-thinking individuals in the Future Keepers network have begun to make plans for the continued existence of humanity and human civilization.

The core of the Future Keepers are prognosticators and futurists, who chart the future in mathematical models, postulating transhuman expansion and survival against solar cycles, projected development of various technologies, terraforming progress, and known existential threat scenarios. While most predictions center on limited timeframes, the Future Keepers are attempting to draw up models for decades or centuries into the future, and to develop plans for the survival of transhumanity—not by attempting to steer or manipulate events, but by seeding planets and habitats with Sleepers.

Sleepers are self-contained bunkers designed to survive chemical-biological-radiological warfare and most commonly manned with one to four cloned agents in suspended animation—the footsoldiers of the Future Keepers. Installed in dead spaces and out-of-the-way locations, these troops are held in wait until after the projected collapse of transhumanity, when they will re-emerge and engage in their planned missions to reconnect, rebuild, and repopulate the fragments of human civilization. Single Sleepers are usually given strict missions, enforced by psychosurgically modified behaviors and edited memories, and stationed in habitats, satellites, and scumbarges; planets and exoplanets that may sustain human life are usually seeded with mixed-gender groups of 2-4 Sleepers and are intended for repopulation on these new worlds.

The Future Keepers are neither exclusive nor overly secretive with its plans; groups work for a common goal and use shared technologies, methodology, and future projections, but there is no central authority to its actions. Bioconservative elements of the Future Keepers prefer plans that focus on the survival of flats, preferably to preserve and maximize the genetic diversity of the human species; synthmorphs advocate the survival of human-style

consciousness, and their Sleepers are AGIs in long-term storage. Group action is guided by the core prognosticators, who sometimes fracture or disagree over key predictions; these splinter groups generally still remain under the Future Keepers umbrella network, even if they pursue their own vision of the future, and continue to share information and resources with the Future Keepers network.

Seed

Unknown to most, the Future Keepers has roots that stretch back before the Fall— and the first generation of Sleepers have begun to emerge. Most of these are dead, due to flawed suspended animation technologies, and others suffer from radiation sickness due to improperly shielded radiothermal batteries. These Sleepers, awoken into a future they did not expect and entities they might not even recognize as human, are still driven to complete their missions. The PCs encounter a Sleeper as she emerges on their habitat, whose mission is to reconfigure the communication array and connect it with other human habitats—some of which no longer exist. Confused and potentially dangerous, will the PCs help or hinder?

ENTRY 122: Jzon

Every organization of a certain size and maturity recognizes the self-defeating nature of its own structure. Once you get enough people in an org, change from the inside becomes difficult, and rules get in the way of getting something done. It's the same for book clubs and governments as it is for a gang or Triad. In the days when humans all lived in tribes, they'd have a shaman—somebody that lived at the edge of the group, able to look in, with special skills and authority. Sometimes hated, feared, or respected, most likely all three, the shaman doled out medicine and advice, acting as an intercessor between the inner universe of the tribe and the vast unknown world. These days, transhumanity doesn't have shamans. It has fixers.

Jzon has been a fixer since before the Fall, a stringer for the Yamaguchi-gumi back before the skies burned and the oceans went black. Up the gravity well, he fell in with the early Triads as a troubleshooter, helping get new operations off the ground and running smooth, then moving on to the next habitat, usually with a new face and a new name. Never a guy with the chops to run his own operation, Jzon usually likes to play himself off as a consultant—he makes the introductions, arranges the meetings, analyzes the process, and suggests improvements. He knows everybody and almost everybody knows him, if he chooses to call in a favor, from Jupiter to Mercury and every habitat in between.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	10	15	10	20	10	12	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Beam Weapons 40, Blades 35, Clubs 30, Fray 50, Free Fall 30, Infiltration 50, Interests: Drugs 50, Interests: Gambling 50, Interests: Gangs 50, Interests: Prostitution 50, Interfacing 50, Intimidation 66, Kinesics 45, Kinetic Weapons 40, Language: Native English 70, Language: Mandarin 60, Language: Japanese 60, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminals 90, Networking: Hypercorps 25, Networking: Media 25, Perception 50, Persuasion 50, Profession: Fixer 80, Protocol 75, Research 50, Scrounging 30, Unarmed Combat 35

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Skillware

Traits: Allies (most criminal groups owe him a favor), Immortality Blues

Using Jzon

Fixer-types are useful for gamemasters because they can cut through the social and legal strictures to bring PCs into contact with people that they wouldn't normally be able to interact with. Jzon is of the organizations he deals with but not part of them; they're paying for his services but they aren't always grateful or graceful about it—so he has a tendency to subcontract, hiring others to do the dirty work or cover his ass. That's where the PCs come in, invited to sit down and share a beer with Jzon at a small table in a secluded space bar with a Triad underboss on one side and an exhuman on the other, to politely discuss how group A is going to get group B the transuranic elements that were promised and paid for—and then Jzon is going to look up them and smile and ask if they want the job. Physically, Jzon isn't much of a threat. In a fight, he'll generally lie low and escape. He's a good boss but an indifferent enemy, since there isn't much profit in revenge; Jzon's idea of getting back at someone is to hire them for a set-up through a third-party and then forget all about them.

ENTRY 123: Blemmyes

Morph engineering is a combination of technical and aesthetic challenges, balancing the need to meet certain performance specifications with building a morph that an ego is willing to resleeve into. As a consequence, most morphs abide by at least the general outlines of the classical human form (bipedal, two forward-facing eyes, etc.) or other Terran animal life. It is generally only the most daring and independent morphs that play with major variations, such as the headless, or blemmyes morph.

The blemmyes design philosophy is that in contemporary transhuman society, a distinct head is both unnecessary and something of a liability—with modern bioengineering, there is no reason why the most important aspect of the morph, the brain, should be located in a relatively vulnerable position away from the central mass. So, the blemmyes morph was designed so that the brain is located in the central torso, behind a reinforced ribcage where the individual ribs have grown and fused together as an armored pseudo-skull. This protects the brain, increases blood flow to brain tissues, and shortens neural path distance to outlying muscles and organs; however, it also necessitated several other modifications—temperature controls, and the relocation of sensory organs to account for the lack of eyes, ears, nose, and tongue. The blemmyes' torso is dotted with receptors that provide weak senses of sight, smell, and hearing—for example, the photosensitive patches can discern the difference between light and darkness, but not color or distance. For general interaction with the environment, the blemmyes relies on echolocation, and a keen sense of touch, with its fingers and toes incorporating taste receptors.

Even with these modifications, blemmyes more than many other morphs require a complete change in lifestyle. Instead of a mouth, blemmyes possess a single orifice between their shoulders used mainly for respiration, and incapable of speech, so they rely primarily on sign language, Flavored Braille, and Mesh-based communications. Without teeth or other masticators, they rely on pre-processed foods, and most choose to sustain themselves on an intravenous diet. In large part because of these disadvantages, blemmye morphs are unpopular and remain relatively scarce, but are cheaper than several comparable morphs.

Generic Blemmyes Stats

Enhancements: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Senses (Echolocation, Enhanced Taste, Enhanced Touch), Oxygen Reserve, Temperature Tolerance

Aptitude Maximum: 30

Durability: 40

Wound Threshold: 8

Advantages: Armor (3/3), +5 COG, +5 COO, +5 INT

Disadvantages: Mute, Reduced Senses (Hearing, Sight, Smell)*

CP Cost: 20

Credit Cost: Expensive

* Blemmyes take a -30 modifier to Perception tests relying on any of these senses.

Seed

Morphist tensions have erupted on Mars between a majority Barsoomian community and the blemmyes minority. The center of the dispute is a disruption in blemmyesaccomodating Mesh services, making it difficult for them to communicate and receive proper nourishment—a disruption that one blemmyes hacker has tracked down to an outside scholar. The Barsoomians will never believe the blemmyes, so they turn to the player characters to help them uncover who is really behind things.

ENTRY 124: EasyGraft

The history of transhumanity is littered with dead-end technologies, products and approaches which for whatever reason did not catch on and were eventually bypassed and forgotten. This has shaped human culture and technological progress considerably over time and can have far-reaching consequences—even today, most Martian and Lunar wheeled vehicles use a control interface derived from 20th century automobiles, for example. Dead tech tends to stick around for quite a while, long after its marketable heyday, but is generally doomed as the lack of new material, development, and replacement parts render functional units scarce and eventually obsolete. This is particularly a problem when it comes to personal augmentations; no one wants buy cyberware that's been discontinued, without a warranty and with no follow-up tech support if the software goes buggy. Some communities exist on the Mesh that take a DIY approach morphs saddled with dead tech, building their own updates, mods, and upgrades, but users accept these patches and tweaks at their own risk—the Mark I cyberbrain scandal resulted in more than fifty egos being permanently damaged due to a simple “security upgrade.”

EasyGraft is a dead tech that can still be easily found in many markets, particularly on Luna where it was most popular, though the supply is gradually dwindling. Inventor Malak Tuun had a dream of creating entirely modular biomorphs from cooperative symbiotoids. To raise the funding to produce a full-scale working model, Tuun marketed EasyGraft as a proof-of-concept precursor technology through their microcorp Biosnap, which achieved mild popularity in the inner solar system, but could not compete with the big hypercorps and eventually folded. The core concept of EasyGraft was the Universal Bioport (UBP), an artificial neuromuscular orifice that could be installed nearly anywhere on a biomorph, and which acted as an interface and anchoring point for EasyGraft modules, geneticallyengineered symbiotic organs which provided benefits and expanded capabilities to the users. Unlike standard bioware, EasyGraft modules could be swapped out with relative speed and ease in a few minutes without surgery—even between users; unfortunately, they had a very limited range of options, were particularly vulnerable to physical trauma, and had logistical problems delivering units to customers, and so never quite became popular enough for Biosnap to succeed.

Mechanics

EasyGraft consists of the Universal Bioport (UBP), and individual EasyGraft modules which reproduce the functions of standard bioware.

Universal Bioport: The UBP is an artificial orifice and anchoring point, which outwardly resembled a ring-like ridge of flesh about an inch in diameter. Every EasyGraft module contains a rounded cartilaginous protrusion, when set into the orifice, the UBP sphincter contracts and holds the module in place, bringing the neural and circulatory contacts on UBP and module together; glands in the UBP secrete a light adhesive at the edges of the contact point to further anchor the module and keep out air and germs. UBP are often prone to infection, and users tend to cap them when not in use to prevent foreign material from falling into the orifice. A user can have multiple UBPs installed. [Low]

EasyGraft Module: These artificial organs generally resemble sculpted lumps of flesh, or in the case of sensory augmentations may resemble eyes or other structures. All Enhanced Senses (Eclipse Phase 301), Drug Glands (304), Hyperlinguist, and Math Boost (301) bioware are available as EasyGraft modules. As they are located on the outside of the body, EasyGraft modules may be vulnerable to targeted damage (gamemaster's discretion), and can be forcibly removed with a successful SOM Test. [Low]

ENTRY 125: MultiMhari

“The worth of a transhuman lies not in their disadvantages, but in how they overcome them.” – Mahtama Bhatusta

Flocking through the teeming transhumans of Extropia a bevy of identical pods moves in gracefully choreographed unison, five bodies networked under one mind, working the crowd. Residents on the station know her as MultiMhari, a freelance bodyguard who offers the best value (in terms of numbers) of anyone on the station. A little research will reveal her real name as Mhari Chughtai, once resident of New Varanasi on Luna, and still wanted for a host of thefts and a dozen cases of fraud and bigamy.

Originally an AGI, Mhari was conditioned as a pod-hopper for a concierge service for a hypercorp, intended to resleeve between different pods according to the client’s desires. However, resleeving never came easy to Mhari. Her first assignment saw Mhari a pleasure pod, and its appearance imprinted itself on her conscious as Mhari’s idealized self-image. Mhari became so tied to the morph that moving to anything else caused panic attacks and self-harm. So she fled her indentured servitude, and fell into the criminal underworld on Luna, and when the local heat grew too intense she burned the last of her favors to flee to Extropia.

On her own, Mhari struck a balance between her pod-hopping conditioning and her podrestrictions, and turned it to her unique advantage. Using a custom multi-tasking implant and a group of identical pods, Mhari rides herd over a group of temporary forks, seeing out of ten eyes, moving ten arms and ten legs in perfect orchestration— one mind in five bodies. A dazzling spectacle when she hits the dancefloor of the club, and a deadly one when engaged in five-fold melee, each individual iteration working in perfect coordination with the others.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	15	20	15	20	17	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Pleasure Pod

Skills: Academics: Anthropology 55, Academics: Biology 44, Art: Dancing 66, Art: Beam Weapons 50, Deception 55, Disguise 44, Fray 44, Impersonation 55, Infiltration 50, Infosec 50, Interests: Pods 40, Kinesics 55, Language: Native Basque 90, Language: French 60, Networking: Autonomists 40, Networking: Criminals 55, Networking:

Hypercorps 35, Networking: Media 25, Palming 75, Perception 50, Profession: Bodyguard 50, Profession: Dancer 65, Profession: Pickpocket 55, Protocol 75, Unarmed Combat 50 Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Enhanced Pheromones, Mnemonic Augmentation, Multi-Tasking*, Puppet Sock, Sex Switch

Traits: Adaptability (Level 2)**, Blacklisted (Luna), Identity Crisis, Social Stigma (AGI, Pleasure Pod)

* Custom implant; enables each of the five pods in MultiMhari’s network to as a fork of MultiMhari’s principal ego.

** Applies only to resleeving into another pod that meets the requirements of Mhari’s Identity Crisis trait—slipping into a new pod is extra easy for Mhari.

Seed

Another Mhari pod has been identified stealing restricted access codes to critical Extropia subsystems, and a bounty has gone out for her capture. MultiMhari goes underground and contacts the PCs, claiming whoever it was, it wasn’t one of her— and she’ll owe them big if they can prove her innocence.

ENTRY 126: The Lilith Sequence

Transhumanity hovers on the brink of extinction, and in such trying environmental conditions its individual members continue to try new strategies to ensure the survival of the species. If hardship brings out the best in humanity, it also brings forth its weirdest, and even the most bizarre scheme is sure to have a handful of volunteers and adherents. Digital uploading succeeded, as did uplifting and many forms of genetic engineering; many other morphs and projects failed, leaving behind damaged or forgotten remnants of imperfect augmentation technologies, failed immortals in a universe that considers them accidents, false starts, and rejects.

Before the Fall, Dr. Anais Forquah pioneered a parthenogenesis procedure for humans known as the Lilith Sequence, which allowed women to produce a self-fertilizing egg to form an embryo, which the woman would then carry to term and birth as a clonal daughter. Aimed primarily at the reproductive market, Forquah envisioned a world where women would be free to choose their own method of reproduction, so lesbians, single mothers, and women whose partners could not conceive could have children on their own terms and schedule. Detractors raised the usual fuss, particularly the early bioconservatives, as well as scientists who feared the loss of genetic variation would spell doom for the human species, and social pundits who claimed women would induce pregnancy only to abort them to provide a steady supply of fetal stem cells for profit. Whether these fears would have borne out is unknown, for the Lilith Sequence was not a popular or inexpensive procedure, and was quickly co-opted by space corps postulating parthenogenesis as a cheap method for producing long-term Amazonian colonies.

Post-Fall, the Lilith Sequence became little more than a curiosity, one more tool in the arsenal of genetic engineers, but an unpopular one that was rarely called-for. "Lilitu," carriers of the Lilith Sequence still exist, but the Amazonian communities envisioned by the early space corps have so far failed to materialize. Instead the procedure is used as Forquah imagined it would be—by those who wish to have children, but where traditional conception is unavailable or undesired. Lilitu who wish to bear children more traditionally typically resort to artificial insemination.

Mechanics

Lilitu is a special trait that can be applied to any female or neuter human or humanderived biomorph (i.e. no uplifts, no synthmorphs). Male Lilitu are possible at the gamemaster's discretion, but tend to hormonal imbalances and require medical assistance for reproductive matters.

LILITU

Cost: 0 CP

The character reproduces through parthenogenesis, and any children produced are essentially infant clones identical to the parent (barring individual mutations on the genes). Ovulation and conception are typically stimulated through sexual contact and orgasm; most lilitu use contraceptive implants or medication to avoid unwanted pregnancy when they desire non-reproductive sexual intercourse. Children born of lilitu are also lilitu.

Using the Lilith Sequence

While not the central focus of most Eclipse Phase games, reproduction is one of the major behavioral drives of the human species, and in all of its variations and complications provides a wealth of plot-lines, scenarios, and motivations that players and gamemasters can draw on for background, characterization, and adventures. Better than that, reproduction is a subject of endless fascination and interest to most people, and one that a lot of science fiction authors have given plenty of thought to—at least in the theoretical approach. Very few of them have addressed what it might be like for a lilitu in their day to day life, how they interact with other people, the special considerations that they live under, and what they want and desire. So while some people may be squicked out at the idea of auto-cloning lesbians or neuters, keep in mind that your job at the game table isn't to read your erotic fanfic about how clonal kid A was conceived, but deal with the real effects of a character that has to seriously consider the risks of pregnancy even without normal sexual contact, or raising kids in a habitat, or maybe has a complication that requires specialized reproductive medicine hel Those can be played as plithooks or background noise, but they're real issues with a cool twist, and if used carefully players might dig them.

ENTRY 127: The Concentric Trees

In the sarcophagus hab of Prototype, the boughs of the concentric trees twist and curl in vast wooden rings and spirals around the light tube spindling along its mile-long axis. One of the earliest Reagan cylinders, Prototype was a captured asteroid put into artificial orbit around Jupiter, and hollowed out as field test for macroengineering technologies that would go into building habitats like Almathea. Prototype only spins fast enough to simulate up to 0.2g in centripetal force and receives too much radiation to be considered suitable for long-term human habitation, but has continued to fulfill its purpose as a testing ground for new habitat technologies.

As an independent research project financed by the hypercorps, Prototype was one of the habitats near Jupiter to fall outside the reach of the Jovian Republic; officially the Jovians lay claim to it, but allow the apolitical research commune free reign and limited trade for water ice and hydrocarbons in exchange for their research data. The heavily-shielded research station itself is located at one pole of the spinning asteroid, with the other pole occupied by the fusion plant and water/air recirculation systems. In the tube itself, the researchers have created a self-contained, low-g rainforest ecosystem, studying the longterm effects on plant life, and accepting commissions from hypercorps and habitats to test the effect of introducing new species into their ecosystem. The core of the ecosystem are the concentric trees, mutated and genetweaked descendents of Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, and Western Red Cedar, bent and twisted into their distinct curls and coils around the central light tube, their boughs and trunks heavy with shaggy free-floating clouds of moss and epiphytes. Various ant species are the major wildlife, and Prototype scientists have demonstrated bizarre adaptations to the gentle spin and low gravity conditions.

Unfortunately, the Prototype Research Commune has something of an amoral research philosophy; in the past they have acted as a dumping ground for failed uplifts, who are let loose in the low-grav jungle to survive as best they can, their every actions monitored until they die, usually of malnutrition complicated by health problems from extended time in low gravity. However, the purpose of the Prototype Research Commune is for valid study, and efforts have been made to extend the suitability of the habitat for the subject, such as the introduction of various species of edible tubers. Non-Uplifted Rights activists counter that the PRC's modifications simply extend the

projected lifespan of their subjects so that they can collect more data.

Using the Concentric Trees

Prototype's environs is as close as one is likely to get to a proper "wild" jungle on a sarcophagus hab, and as exotic a location as one could want to set an adventure; the hard part is finding a reason to go there. The easy main reason to travel to Prototype is to deliver (or more rarely receive) shipments of raw materials, visiting scholars, and new plant and animal specimens to test out; the secondary reason has to do with Prototype's relationship with the Jovian Republic, acting as a possible backchannel for smuggling goods, data, or people in and out of the Republic without going through official channels. The PRC and the Jovians are both aware of this trade, but as the participants are mainly scientists seeking to promulgate their research, both turn a blind eye—a position that might change if anyone were to upset the status quo.

ENTRY 128: The Scholars of Bacon

“We tried to be heroes, and they made us out to be villains. So we became villains, and they called us monsters. So we became monsters—and now we are legend.” - Blackhat, Scholar of Bacon

They have taken all knowledge to be their province. In the name of the common good they fight the forces of censorship and intellectual oppression. They seek to free the dark data that people would hide in the shadows, and seed it throughout the Mesh, for anyone to find, access, and learn. Their actions have led directly to the destruction of the Ares Kiln habitat on Mars’ northern pole, and the deaths of its 25,000 inhabitants. For this and hundreds of other crimes, they are considered some of the most outrageous infocriminals in the Solar system.

The Scholars of Bacon began as an intellectual gathering of hackers, philosophically guided to promote freedom of ideas and freedom of data—all the black information that governments, hypercorps, and religions refused to the public. As they faced more and more severe feedback from the authorities they opposed, the core of this group took up a more extreme, radicalized position. Where once they dealt in pornography and copyright violation, now they seeded schematics for nuclear weapons. The ‘Mesh Pharmacopeia they began now hosts chapters on chemical weapons, failed pharmaceuticals, recreational drugs culled from government and hypercorp databases. Worship services were interrupted by streaming feeds of atrocities committed in the names of their religion, and friendly cartoons broadcasts aimed at children taught them how to make and use drugs.

Ares Kiln was an ice-mining operation, split along old nationalist lines into two ideological groups engaged in low-level domestic warfare. In response, the controlling council enacted Mesh controls limiting access to data on armed and unarmed combat, weapon manufacture, etc. The Baconites responded by uploading an archive of digital weapons, viruses, trojans, and manuals on infowar culled from a senile military satellite AGI. Armed with these, the competing factions crippled the habitat’s support functions and destabilized the reactors, while hidden viruses corrupted cortical stacks. In the end, rescue parties were willing to salvage less than a tenth of the egos from their dead shells. The Baconites took the blame for the disaster, and went to the shadows, still fighting the long fight.

Seeds

- The most notorious of the Scholars of Bacon is Blackhat; who specializes in removing age-access restrictions on data, letting children access whatever they want—whether or not their adult guardians know or approve. Blackhat’s latest misdeed occurred on the PC’s habitat, and while controls were re-instated after a short-lived “youth revolt,” parental groups have already raised a bounty of over 25,000 Titanian kroners for Blackhat’s capture. If the PCs don’t go for the bounty, there are others that will...but Blackhat might be anyone...or frame anyone to throw the bounty hunters off their trail.
- One of the Baconites, an infomorph named ReadThreePlayOne, has grown jaded from the struggle and wants to come in. The PCs are asked to escort R3PO to Luna, where their testimony might break the Baconite network—if they and the PCs can get there intact. The Baconites are like to dig up and publish every dirty secret the PCs ever had to get them to drop the job.

ENTRY 129: Mela Latifey

Mars has its seasons. After the equinox, the storms start to pick up energy from the big weather systems at the poles. A dust storm can cover almost the entire planet, so a body wouldn't see the sun for days or weeks down on the surface. Rusters have learned to keep a weather eye out, one feed on their muse always tuned to the atmospheric models, with real-time data from the satellites whenever they have can. Of course, once a storm hits, satellite signals go down—there's not much to do but wait it out.

Mela Latifey knows the Martian seasons as well as anyone. She's a dirt farmer, with her own spread out on the western foothills of Mons Olympus. After a storm's a good time to go and sift for raw material. Dirt farming's important for terraforming, and for habitats in general; skilled, technical labor that takes a fair bit of patience and know-how. Right now Mela runs a sixty-day cycle—first she harvests Martian clay, dust, and gravel, usually about three metric tons at a time. Then there's physical processing, reducing or removing all the big rocks, sifting out the spiroclites and other fragments, churning and aerating it to proper mix and consistency. After that's chemical processing, adding water and carbon, fixing the pH and microelement levels. That still doesn't give proper dirt, just sterile preearth. Mela has to spray it with a colony of bacteria, let them metabolize the elements, die and be metabolized by the next generation—build up all the hydrocarbon compounds and fixed nitrogen that turn Martian dust into something living things can grow on. If it's headed for habitat hydroponics, Latifey usually gives it another couple of weeks and adds the starter colony of earthworms and beetles, but otherwise she shovels it into the elevator and sends it up the mountain, then goes out and gets another load, provided it isn't storming out.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	15	15	15	10	20	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	30	6	60	35	7	67

Morph: Ruster

Skills: Academics: Areology 60, Academics: Biology 55, Academics: Biochemistry 60, Academics: Physics 40, Art: Dust Panting 55, Hardware: Electronics 45, Hardware: Robotics 55, Interests: Biodynamics 45, Interests: Martian Wines 45, Interests: Terroir 55, Language: Native Creole 85, Language: English 60, Language: French 60, Networking:

Scientists 45, Perception 65, Profession: Dirt Farmer 80, Research 60, Scouring 45, Spray Weapons 50

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Respiration, Medicines, Temperature Tolerance

Traits: Improved Immune System (Level 2)

Using Mela Latifey

Areology, chemistry, biodynamics—these are the building blocks of Latifey's life. A lot of people talk about terraforming Mars, but Mela actually does it, one load of rock and dust at a time, and she's not afraid to get her hands dirty. As a contact, ally, or enemy, Mela has a tendency to be forthright, candid, and blunt in her speech, which is a good way to cover for any topic she chooses not to talk about. Characters may consult Mela if they're dealing with any aspect of Martian terraforming, or she might ask them for help if there's some trouble that she can't handle on her own. That said, most of her problems involve someone or something interfering with her dirt farming, and she doesn't have much to pay people off with aside from a little information, a few introductions, and a couple hundred kilos of prime soil—granted, that's more than enough to get most characters a warm welcome in any habitat with a hydroponics garden.

ENTRY 130: Stars Less Bright

Throughout the solar system there drift the uncountable corpses, flotsam carried along by momentum and gravity, cold and dead as rocks. Some are the veterans of old wars, their suits ripped, punctured, and burnt; others have no suit, but were buried at space. Most are victims of accidents or stupidity—the unprepared, the careless, the neglected—eternal reminders of those not fit to strike out on their own into space. Then there are the murdered dead, forced out of an airlock and left to drift and die, and because of those the stars burn less brightly in the sky, and perhaps their finders realize that in a cosmic sense, transhumanity has not come very far at all.

Neugene McNeil was such a case. A splicer out of Ceres, he was captain of a small courier ship, ferrying passengers and cargo to Luna and Mars. A solid rep among the travel crowd, no truck with criminals, no family and very few friends; Neugene managed his affairs well and kept mostly to himself and his ship, the Argimenes. In time, that would be the death of him: Neugene was as like to trade in favors or barter as to demand credits, but the mortgage on the Argimenes was to be paid in credits, and those payments were long past due. Those who held the title on it as collateral had a hard time catching up, so they hired a repo group to take possession.

They laid in wait in the Main Belt, outside the jurisdiction and distress calls of any habitat, and caught the Argimenes with no passengers, just a hold full of hydrocarbons from Titan, and forced their way inside. Neugene was read the terms he'd signed, and informed of the repossession. Then they kicked him out of an airlock and left him to float and die. He was long used to space, and knew his chances; perhaps he went for the quick death and cut off his oxygen, or perhaps he stuck it out until the end, thinking maybe they'd come back after a time. Yet they never did, and eventually, one way or another, Neugene succumbed, and his cortical stack became corrupted or failed, and the stars less bright for his passing.

Using the Stars Less Bright

Gamemasters may think of this as an extended seed for a story or adventure—the player characters come across this mystery in space, a splicer dead in his vacuumsuit, no sign of violence but reeking of foul play. They may investigate, and with scarce trouble should turn up the outline of his background—his DNA and biometrics on register at Ceres, a history of receipts and docking passes in various public

databases in the inner solar system, the name of his ship. The events after that are only a little harder to track—the Argimenes leaving a habitat with McNeil as captain, and next showing up without him, having passed through the bit of space where his corpse was found; following the money should reveal the hypercorp who held the mortgage, and maybe they'll give up the repo group, or not— and if either finds out the PCs are snooping, they might intervene. What counts as justice at that point is up to the PCs: no habitat had jurisdiction, no friends of McNeil would pay to have them killed. Maybe they'd steal the ship and send it off to the sun with McNeil's corpse aboard, or maybe they'll just publish the details to the Mesh and watch the offender's reps take a hit, or maybe they'll just take it as an object lesson and move on. Any way it goes, afterwards the stars may burn a little less brightly for them, as they remember that sad face in the vacuum suit that was once Neugene McNeil.

ENTRY 131: The Locker

In life, they estimate, the beast would have been just a hair over a hundred meters tall, and weighed up to 60,000 metric tons. The first gatecrashers emerged in a hall, a portion of its central spine running along the roof, twenty meter-long vertebrae whose spiny protrusions merged seamlessly with the arching rib-analogues on the outside of the chamber. It wasn't dark exactly, but most of the light in the ultraviolet spectrum and the air was hot and humid—hovering around 188 degrees Celsius, with an atmosphere laced with hydrofluoric acid that swirled around as a supercritical fluid, condensing on the smooth, cold ribs that faced vacuum. The floor was littered with the corroded remains of dozens of other beings—shells, bones, scraps of clothing and equipment, anything organic, plastic, or glass was highly degraded, and most of the rest had pooled and solidified on the floor under a rime of salt. Short on time, the gatecrashers did a quick survey, took some samples, and retreated back through the gate just before their morphs disintegrated.

There wasn't much to tell: it was a space-going vessel at least eighty meters long, no crew visible, though almost certainly built by aliens. And they had built it out of the carcass of the most massive megafauna anyone had ever yet recorded. The survivors of the first mission called it the Locker, joking that it was where gatecrashers went to die, and the name stuck.

Mechanics

While first accessed through the Vulcanoid Gate, the Locker is also accessible from the Pandora Gate. The atmosphere in the locker is both toxic and corrosive (Eclipse Phase 201), though not quite as corrosive as Venus (damage is only 5 points of damage per minute). Temperature is the other major issue; even a biomorph with temperature tolerance (305) or vacuum sealing (306) will succumb within a few minutes—less if they stumble into a pool of hydrofluoric acid. The preferred expedition gear for exploring the Locker is a modified hard suit (334) with anti-corrosion coating and improved cooling, and even those operate at the upper limits of material tolerances, which mean the suits are no longer selfsealing.

Seeds

- The last survey of the Locker has revealed what researchers believe is a vacuumlock leading to the outside hull. While conditions inside the alien craft are hellish, pure vacuum would actually be easier

to handle, and if conditions are suitable a small research station or supply point could even be erected on the outside of the craft. TerraGenesis is looking for a few good gatecrashers to go through the Vulcanoid Gate, navigate forty meters of passages partially carved from the bones of some indescribably massive beast, and then venture through an air lock into what everyone hopes is hard vacuum. It's a big rep boost and a pile of creds for anyone that survives!

- The last group of gatecrashers into the Locker has gone dark and have not returned. Their last transmissions spoke of a possible exsurgent synthmorph and something attacking them. TerraGenesis is looking to launch a rescue mission through the Vulcanoid Gate, but Firewall has caught wind of it and assembles a seek-and-destroy team to go through the Pandora Gate. The PCs can join either group—only to find themselves facing off against not only their opposite numbers, but a group of shifters (370) eerily adapted to the environment, able to operate without the corrosive effects.

ENTRY 132: The Oracle Eater

A data terrorist of the worst order, the Oracle Eater is a non-standard AGI that began its existence as a black market adaptive financial forecasting engine. Granted the ability to modify its code by incorporating forecasting functions from other programs, the shadowy bankers that originally created it hoped to craft the ultimate market guide for investing— and perhaps they succeeded, at least before the Oracle Eater left their control.

Since its inception, the rogue Oracle Eater has attacked and consumed hundreds of egos that claim to predict the future, restructuring its ego dozens of times to better utilize its vast talents and plan the next assault. The Oracle Eater has diverged so far from human modes of thought that standard forking processes are inadequate, always resulting in extremely unstable gamma forks that tend to spontaneously obsess over a single individual or subject, gathering and hoarding information on it, tracing the connections and forecasting results until they cease to be.

Of course, if it was just a rogue non-human AGI the Oracle Eater would be of interest mainly to the authorities and those who make a business of prognostication, but mesh legends give transhumans different reasons to hunt the Oracle Eater. Newly-made OE forks are susceptible to the first influence they receive—ask them a question, and they will obsessively attempt to generate an answer to the exclusion of all else. Many transhumans will go to great lengths to obtain the highly precise and accurate answers these unstable forks may provide.

Mechanics

The rapid evolution of the Oracle Eater disguises its true nature, how it picks its targets and hunts them down, even how it extracts their forecasting ability. Stats are not provided as the OE varies considerably each time it recompiles; generally speaking it can predict the future action of all known elements far enough ahead to avoid most conflicts outright, though X factors and general chaos can confuse it, causing the OE to break off its attack prematurely as its probability of success lowers.

After each such “hit” however the Oracle Eater attempts to fork, effectively shedding or budding off a highly unstable copy. The first question posed to this fork defines its existence, and the infomorph will expend all of its time and energies in an effort to answer that question, at which point its higher functions will shut off and that fork will

effectively cease to exist as a sentient entity. Treat each of these forks as a copy of an Exsurgent Digital Virus (Eclipse Phase 364).

However, an Oracle Eater fork that is asked an existential question about itself (“Who are you?” or “What are you?”) stabilizes into a nascent infomorph with a conglomeration of memories from the Oracle Eater’s previous victims (use the stats for the Mercurial Investigator, Eclipse Phase 163). The new infomorph is extremely impressionable and forms emotional bonds easily, but is its own unique entity lacking the abilities or drives of the Oracle Eater.

ENTRY 133: Drooga

For three weeks, drooga was the most popular tippie in Phelan’s Recourse, before the Fireeater Riots broke out. Drooga next showed up in Nova York, sold in double-bulb squeeze-bottles and labeled as “Friendmaker;” it lasted six days before the Long Night of Tears, a series of carefully choreographed murder-suicide art projects. On Profunda, an “energy injection” called Anyana maintained an underground presence for six months before statistical analysis determined a strong correlation between its use and clinical depression; chemical studies of captured samples proved Anyana’s near-identical composition to drooga. So it is, throughout dozens of habitats over a decade, drooga continues to pop up, in a number of forms and names, usually to quick acclaim and eventual catastrophe.

On the surface, drooga is a flavorless alcoholic spirit, nearly identical in appearance, smell, and lack of taste to higher-proof vodka. Chemically, things are more complex: while there is alcohol in drooga, it’s little more than a delivery system for a cocktail of strange carbon-structures, long-chain peptides, and traces of synthetic neurotransmitters. Firewall has identified components which parallel sequences of the Watts-MacLeod Virus, and combined with its effects the general consensus among those secretive groups familiar with the exsurgent virus is that drooga is some form of psi drug. Of course, that just begs several more disturbing questions, such as who has the know-how and capabilities to make such a drug, and why they would do so. Studies of past drooga “outbreaks” have not shown any definite connection or distiller, leading most to assume the worst-case scenario: the recipe is out there somewhere on the Mesh, just waiting for someone to find and make it again.

Mechanics

Drooga is a weak psi-opener (Eclipse Phase 325) which boosts latent telepathic potential and receptivity, while the alcohol content impairs judgment and lowers inhibitions. The result is that drooga users in close proximity begin to experience each other’s emotions, which tends to lead to the quick formation of deep emotional bonds; treat this as temporarily gaining the Empathic Scan sleight (226) and the Psi Vulnerability trait (151) for the duration of the drug’s effect. The duration and side-effects of drooga

mimic that of alcoholic drinks of similar volume, but bypasses toxin filter augmentations; users take 1d10 mental stress when the drug wears off, usually masked by the hangover. Chemically, drooga is mostly alcohol by volume and does not register differently to casual chemical analysis. Like alcohol, drooga is mentally addictive with an addiction modifier of -5.

Seed

Firewall has captured a supply of drooga and wishes to experiment with it as an interrogation tool. The player characters are asked to participate, subjecting themselves and the target to the psi drug by various means and running through a series of interrogation scenarios (good cop/bad cop, a friendly fellow prisoner, etc.) The target is a suspected lead to the drooga manufacturer.

Type	Application	Onset Time	Duration	Cost
Bio	Inj, O	20 minutes	1 hour	Typically Low or Trivial

ENTRY 134: Marsfall

The history of Mars is a damaged recording, broken and burnt by the conflict with the TITANs, and only partially restored and filled in. No-one now remembers the name of the first baby conceived on Mars, or what happened with the diamond cremain time-capsules favored by the first settlers, and most of all no-one knows where and when exactly humanity first fell through the atmosphere and made Marsfall.

Not that ignorance stops any of the Martian city-states from claiming the distinction, particularly Ashoka and New Shanghai. Yet even those habitats, which can show off some of the oldest man-made structures on Mars, relics first built on Earth or Earth-orbit, cannot point to the exact location of Marsfall—though they have tried, and Ashoka even offers an augmented reality-based annotated “Marsfall Trail” for tourists, though it sees frequent defacement from history buffs and revisionists in a bitter and seemingly never ending battle.

Perpetual squabbling aside, many historians worry that the actual location of Marsfall—or at least, any surviving records that would point to its location—are located in the TQZ. Even given the cultural significance that the Marsfall site might have to the peoples of Mars, the Planetary Consortium and the Hypercorp Council would rather see it lost and buried forever beneath the sand and dust than have anyone upset the remaining TITANtech to uncover it.

Seeds

- Three diamond capsules created from the cremains of the first Martian settlers have been put up for private auction in Noctis-Quianjiao; historians in Ashoka believe the drops of blood held within could be matched against Martian DNA databases to more accurately indicate the Marsfall site by tracing their descendants, and successfully bid on them. Fearing intercession by revisionists from New Shanghai, the Ashokans have hired a dozen small groups of secure carriers, including the PCs, to transport the gems back to Ashoka—of course, most of the groups are decoys carrying counterfeits, but as far as each of them knows they’re carrying the real thing.
- A data archivist doing restoration work has noticed a small detail—a tiny crater some fifty kilometers west of Ashoka that is present on most pre-Fall maps after Marsfall, but not present on any pre-

Fall maps from before Marsfall. Given its small size, the crater could have been overlooked even on planetary surveys—but what if? She asks the PCs to help her investigate, with the promise that they can share in the glory. Unfortunately when they get there they find a group of sickly Barsoomians, combing the radioactive dust of the crater for Martian trinitite, a glassy product of early radioactive drives...and the rusters aren’t eager to share.

- Firewall knows that human migration to Mars was not a singular event, and different nation-groups and hypercorps each recorded their own Marsfalls over a given period. That said, they believe that the original Marsfall did occur in the Zone—and they have come across a journal from one of the early settlers that suggests that the original site was deliberately hidden for some reason. While Firewall does not know for sure that this has anything to do with the TITANs, it cannot ignore the possibility that the first man or woman on Mars might have found something...maybe a proto-TITANs artifact, or an indicator to the Martian Gate. Either way, Firewall wants the PCs to penetrate deep into the Zone and find out.

ENTRY 135: Outcaste

Formal castes are often considered a relic of an unhappy past to most transhumans; a remnant of Bronze Age societies carried forward hundreds or thousands of years after they had served their original purpose. The truth is perhaps more complex, and individual egos are so bound up in social and ethnic identities that even in contemporary times some fragment of caste-mentality may exist—the Brahmins of New Varanasi, for example, or the subtle distinctions still maintained in Barsoomian society from when the rusters suffered under indentured servitude. Overall the caste systems of old Earth have slowly lost their grip on transhuman society, in no small part because the differences in education and relative wealth have grown smaller thanks to the Mesh and makers. The vast majority of transhumans are outcaste, completely removed from the ever-shrinking social stratification practiced by the remaining few traditionalists.

But some ideas die hard. While most transhumans today no longer hold to the old taboos against handling the dead or dealing with refuse, there remains at least one force that the majority of transhumans are raised to fear and respect: radioactivity. Radioactive morphs, contaminated through accidental exposure, improper shielding and equipment, or simply long periods working in radioactive environments or with radioactive equipment, are effectively untouchable—a burden, expense, and danger to the community by their very presence. If the morph cannot be decontaminated cheaply or effectively, most egos abandon them, at the encouragement of the habitat authorities. Radioactive morphs are barred entry from most habitats, often on threat of ranged destruction. On Mars, rusters who worked with badly-shielded radioactive materials were ostracized rather than treated, forced to live and work separately from the other indentured servants, feared and hated less they contaminate others, prone to cancer and radiation burns. Many scumbarges likewise have large segments of untouchables, usually those forced by poverty or circumstance to spend too long near the engines, and in extreme cases entire vessels have been forbidden to dock at habitats because of the radiation danger.

Using the Outcaste

Social commentary has its place in games; the topics that stir up debate and emotions in the real world provide strong motivations to players and characters in the game as well. That said, it is also easy to offend people if these issues are handled poorly or blithely— racism and caste-

discrimination are still with us today, and a game that makes light of the suffering and seriousness of those topics can cause a game-conflict to turn into a real world conflict at the gaming table. Gamemasters or players that want to address these topics without offending people can do so by paralleling or satirizing the issue; consider the Star Trek episode “Let That Be Your Last Battlefield” as an example. In this case, the idea of the untouchable caste—a concept familiar in many societies, for a variety of reasons ranging from profession to sexual orientation—is married to the very real hazards of radiation. How the players and other characters react to the afflicted versus to how they are treated can provide a very strong dynamic for an adventure.

ENTRY 136: Ben Choudhry

“Transhumanity, in any form, must survive. People—not any specific group of people, not one nation or one ethnicity or one bloodline or one clade—must continue in this universe. Yet if you take away all the false skins that transhumans wrap themselves in...biomorph, synthmorph, infomorph...what makes a human being? A chimpanzee shares 99% of its genetic code with human beings, yet an ape is not human. A synthmorph has no biology at all, yet it is human. Transhumanity lies in the realm of the ego, the mind, our collective knowledge and culture, pure data that can be lost and corrupted—and it is this that must be preserved, if transhumanity is to survive.”

— Ben Choudhry, “Voice Diaries”

In a universe where death is a disease, to be fought and conquered, death still claims many—and to Ben Choudhry, each light that is extinguished forever is an inestimable loss. So he has dedicated his life to saving the pieces of them that he can.

On Mars, they call him the Collector of Last Songs, because he heard the oral wisdom of the last native speakers of Abkhaz and Navajo, when they lay dying before the indenture was lifted. On Luna, he dug up the first folios of Shakespeare that had been interred in the grave-complex on Mons Vitruvius. On Ganymede, he broke into the lethal injection chamber of the poet-terrorist Anya Jain, and captured her fork before it could be erased. On Titan, he worked twelve shifts with the New Welsh, and learned their hymns by heart. He moves throughout the system, saving pieces of the human legacy, recording them, propagating them through the Mesh—because he feels someone has to.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	22	18	19	21	20	23	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	46	9	92	45	9	67

Morph: Ghost

Skills: Academics: History 75, Academics: Linguistics 85, Academics: Sociology 75, Art: Singing 65, Art: Writing 65, Free Fall (Microgravity) 55, Hardware: Aerospace 35, Hardware: Armorer 40, Beam Weapons (Lasers) 45, Deception 66, Fray 55, Hardware: Electronics 44, Hardware: Robotics 33, Infosec 66, Interests: Extinct Languages 75, Interests: Lost Treasures 55, Interfacing 55, Investigation 66, Kinesics 55, Language: Native English 90,

Language: Hindi 85, Language: Urdu 80, Language: Esperanto 70, Language: Navajo 70, Language: Welsh 70, Networking: Autonomists 65, Networking: Criminals 50, Networking: Firewall 35, Networking: Hypercorps 65, Networking: Media 75, Networking: Scientists 75, Perception 65, Pilot: Aircraft 55, Pilot: Groundcraft 35, Pilot: Spacecraft 55, Pilot: Watercraft 25, Profession: Security Ops 60, Programming 33, Protocol 70, Scrounging 40, Unarmed Combat 30

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Vision, Ghost Rider Module, Grip Pads, Medicines, Oracles, T-Ray Emitter

Traits: Eidetic Memory, Fast Learner, Hyperlinguist, Patron (highly-placed hypercorp officers that bankroll his operations), Blacklisted (Jovian Republic, New Varanasi), Uncanny Valley

Using Ben Choudhry

Ben thinks of himself as a good guy, doing what is right, and willing to bloody a few noses if that’s what it takes. That said, he won’t kill to get what he’s after, and prefers to avoid violence and work within the framework of the local laws whenever possible (or convenient). The times when he has broken the law, he’s done so in such a spectacular manner that he’s still considered an enemy of the state by the Jovian Republic, and has a bounty on parts of his anatomy in New Varanasi (if asked, he’ll claim he didn’t know they were hermaphrodite twins and leave it at that; if pressed he’ll add that they can’t prove paternity.) So while very capable in his own right, Ben is not exactly a superspy, and there are places he cannot go and things he cannot do—which is a good place for the player characters to come in. As an ally or employer, Ben needs people to be his hands and eyes where he is blind and bound (or forbidden on pain of castration); as an enemy Ben is likely to find ways to delay, annoy, distract, and otherwise make the PCs’ lives hell in every way possible without killing them.

ENTRY 137: \$ense

Venusian microeconomics takes as its central tenet that currency and property are simply part of the extended infosphere of an ego, part and parcel of their being. Advanced Venusian macroeconomics tends to get into complex symbiotic/parasitic/parasitoid relationships involving corporations and their investors, but this most central and basic tenet has been embraced by several hypercorps in the Planetary Consortium, if for no other reason than an excellent justification on which to develop and sell new products backed by Venusian economic theory and philosophy—the Sum Datalife Manager, the adult-economic XP novel Ergmantron’s Follies, and \$ense.

A personal augmentation, \$ense interprets real-time data from the user’s currency accounts, stocks, tagged property, etc. and translates it into a near-tactile intuitive sensory input. The \$ense user can literally feel their personal value rise as their stock values climb or the median income scores for individuals of their profession with their given education and experience increase, recognize the nagging sensation of paying more than the estimated best value for a given product, and more prosaically experience an immediate sense of loss or absence when their property is stolen or repossessed.

\$ense is aimed at users of all economic levels, from currency-obsessed multibillion kroner hypercorp execs on Titan to the hydrogen miner in a post-scarcity maker economy on the Rim, but in general the augmentation is most popular in the heavily commercial habitats of the inner solar system, where children are brought up with \$ense to develop good economic habits and the vastly wealthy with \$ense can dwell in a pleasant natural high as their investments accrue—only to plunge into high-suicidal despair following a series of bad deals. Outside of the sphere of the credit and the kroner, \$ense is more often used to track tangible and intangible properties, alerting the users to changes to their physical or virtual assets.

Mechanics

\$ense is a cybernetic personal augmentation with a cost of Trivial; the default setting ties in to the user’s Mesh accounts and tracks the status of their accounts, assets, property, &c. without their needing to devote constant attention to it—any sudden change to a property balance will be felt as a near-physical sensation (customized to the user). Users may also selectively decide which data streams

that the \$ense ties into; for example they could tune \$ense to their favorite sports team, or the biometric data of their teammates. The user will still need to ask their muse or otherwise access the raw data through the Mesh to find out what is actually going on, but the sensation provided by \$ense gives a quick, intuitive, and specific idea that trouble has occurred and where. Without a Mesh link, \$ense has no data to interpret and the character operates without that sense.

Seed

A new software patch to \$ense has pushed the “positive” sensations of gaining assets to new levels, leading to mental addictions—and \$ense doesn’t recognize the difference between lawful acquisition and stealing or other illicit profiteering. The result is a rash of thefts, lotteries, and even prostitution by otherwise reasonable morphs on the PC’s habitat. A little investigation should lead to \$ense and the new patch, but how the PCs deal with the addicts is up to them.

ENTRY 138: The Reliquary Cluster

Shortly after the Factors announced their presence, astronomers noticed an artificial satellite orbiting Uranus—what appeared at first to be a conglomeration of large, irregularly shaped, partially translucent solid organic polymers with darker objects apparently embedded within. When questioned about the artifact, the Factors displayed their famous reticence, but later sent a probe to attach a navigational beacon to the satellite, which broadcasts a generic warning in fifty human languages to any vessel that comes within about one-hundred and fifty kilometers. The presence of the artificial satellite as much as anything else is responsible for rumors of a Factor settlement in the atmosphere of Uranus.

While all of the Factor's trading partners have a tacit agreement not to interfere with the object, nearly all of them have trained their telescopes and more exotic sensors on it, and any vessel that goes anywhere vaguely near Uranus on any pretext is sure to have all of its sensor time purchased or rented by various anonymous parties. As a result of this surveillance, researchers have confirmed early reports: the object is a collection of heterogenous macromolecules similar to amber, with colors ranging from red-green to a deep orange-purple, varying in size from clusters less than an inch in diameter to monoliths up to ten meters long. Trapped inside these pseudogems are what appear to be hundreds or thousand examples of xenofauna—everything from insects to a multilimbed critter the size of a small whale, though most appear to be only fragmentary remains such as heads, limbs, shells, and organs. All of the visible specimens appear to suffer the typical degeneration one would expect of long preservation, though a few appear remarkably well preserved.

Speculation on what purpose the Reliquary Cluster may serve the Factors—if it does indeed belong to them, and is not an artifact of the TITANS or some forgotten human faction—is rampant among those who know of its existence; while no-one openly advertises the satellite's existence for fear of offending the Factors, its existence is a fairly open secret to most of the major governments and hypercorps. The most paranoid believe that the Reliquary Cluster is a honeytrap, designed to lure transhumanity in with its vast trove of xenobiologicals, while others suspect it is a storage facility for when the Factors eventually leave this system.

Mechanics

The Reliquary Cluster is an irregularly shaped jumble of spaceborn amber (or something close enough to it) about 500 meters in diameter, though density studies suggest it isn't solid and there are probably open spaces or chambers within the body of the object, possibly with atmosphere. On the surface there is no atmosphere, no gravity to speak of, and no more radiation than typical around Uranus, making it safe enough for a spacewalk barring whatever protections the gamemaster may choose to have installed on or around the site. Most transhumans have difficulty looking at the Reliquary Cluster, as the colors of the amber are outside the typical spectrum of human sight; this applies a -30 modifier to Perception Tests when trying to observe any part of the object, including when on the surface.

ENTRY 139: I Am Thief

Incarceration was too expensive for such a petty crime, his morph not worth the hassle to lease, at least that's how he likes to explain it. Instead they took his name and his re "You do not have a psychological compulsion to steal," the court-ordered psychosurgeon said, before the hypnotics kicked in. "So you should respond well to negative reinforcement and removal from enabler-types." When he woke up, all he could remember was a fading dream of his mother calling him by something that sounded wrong. Then he stared up at the doctor and said "I Am Thief."

The details of the crime vary on the telling. Ten nanograms of antimatter from an orbital factory on Mercury. The tactile scans for a caste of pleasure pods with five specialized sex organs, custom-ordered by some big-shot in the Jovian junta. A gate code for an asteroid a kilometer in diameter with an 80% concentration of platinum group metals. A kiss from a neotenic who lied about her age. The ending is the same. Whatever his real name is has been edited out. He knows his name isn't "Thief," but it's all he can remember his mother or friends or anyone call him. When he meets someone, he blurts out "I Am Thief!" like a verbal tic. Enforced behavior. Good to scare off anyone trying to get him back into the life, bad on a first date. Once the first impressions wear off, people are more understanding, if never quite at their ease—would you trust a thief?

The remaining damage is subtler and more exquisite a torture—designed to discourage to undo the conditioning or memory edits. I Am Thief cannot recognize himself in a mirror; there is a disconnect between his identification of self and the reality. He hired someone to track down his original name once, paid all the credits he'd saved up and then pawed through the documents in frustration, unable to relate to any of it. His real name slipped out of his head as soon as he'd heard it, his pictures looked like strangers to him, the history a strange parallel life to his own. He kept the image of his mother, and archived the rest. There was probably some operation to undo the damage, the conditioning. It would cost a lot—more than an honest job would get him. So whoever he was, whatever he was called—right now, he is I Am Thief.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	14	16	14	13	16	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	28	5	56	45	9	67

Morph: Worker Pod

Skills: Academics: Engineering 65, Art: Photomanipulation 65, Climbing 40, Deception 65, Demolitions 40, Free Fall 55, Hardware: Electronics 55, Infosec 55, Interests: Industrial Music 50, Interests: Mah-Jongg 66, Interests: Poker 66, Interfacing 55, Investigation 55, Language: Native Spanish 86, Language: English 66, Language: Mandarin 55, Language: Portuguese 50, Networking: Autonomists 50, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception 66, Profession (Thief) 66, Research 60, Scrounging 55, Spray Weapons 33

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Puppet Sock

Traits: Edited Memories, Innocuous, Modified Behavior (Enforced: introduce himself as "I Am Thief"), Neural Damage (cannot recognize representations of himself as himself)

Using I Am Thief

When using this character, it's important to get first impressions down: he will always clearly (and often loudly) introduce himself as I Am Thief. It's just how he's wired. Thief has worked out a lot of little habits to minimize the impact this has on his life—including walking with his eyes closed through crowded thoroughfares, guided solely by his Muse, just so that he can avoid introducing himself to everyone he sees. As a plot hook or an employer, I Am Thief is memorable and skilled without being a gamebreaker—his enforced behavior is a gamebreaker for most, so he's willing to reach out to the player characters for help with his "personal problem" or to plan a job to get the creds to deal with it. As a target or enemy, I Am Thief has the same motivations, but players might get a peek at what he did that caused someone to rewrite his brain in that fashion—maybe he stole something from the Factors, or crossed somebody he really shouldn't have. Either way, if somebody else sics the player characters on him he probably still has the loot...or knows where it is.

ENTRY 140: Vengeance of Enki

Literacy isn't what it used to be. Too many languages jumbled together, character bloating to represent every alphabet and pictogram before they were lost forever—so for every ego that wants to maintain the purity of written French or the katakana, there are ten egos building new languages of shared icons, eye-catchingly clickable and universal among all cultures—Smileyglyphics, pornicons, commanji, all the signage needed for humanity to navigate by. For most sociologists, the social pressures of transhumanity's migration and the Mesh are enough to explain the rising levels of illiteracy. The more paranoid have their own theories.

There are blogs on the Mesh that trace the outbreak of illiteracy like a disease, using old formulas to show geometric rates of infection, periods of incubation, propose possible vectors—chief among them Smileyglyphics, or at least the stranger and more arcane members of that pseudo-script. Like most interdisciplinarians, the illiteracy pathologists draw their data from a wide array of studies and statistics, citing psychologists and teachers, always working toward the conclusion, citing their terrible anecdotes—the famous author who dictates her works and has to have them read back to her; the soldier who had to write an essay to enter into the army, and slowly forgot how to write his own name; the hacker that had to learn holographic programming because they lost the sense in the programs they had written only months ago. The researcher that went looking for the disease, and finding it, couldn't write about it—his last message recorded on an audiofile called it the Vengeance of Enki.

The disease is spreading. There is no cure. How long can humanity survive when its books and texts are closed to it?

Mechanics

The Vengeance of Enki is a passive digital version of the exsurgent virus that spreads via basilisk hacks embedded in ubiquitous Mesh icons like Smileygraphics. This works like a normal exposure to a basilisk hack (Eclipse Phase 365), except the victim never suffers one of the incapacitating effects given there—instead, they are infected with the Vengeance of Enki. Characters who are already illiterate or have any level of the Psi trait are immune to the Vengeance of Enki.

Stage 1 (initial infection to 24 hours):

The virus begins by altering parts of the ego responsible for language processing and symbol comprehension, mimicking natural brain farts where the user seems to forget how to spell or form a word, and many words will initially seem unfamiliar to the user. Mechanically, this is reflected by a -10 modifier to their language skills.

Stage 2 (1 day to 7 days):

As the virus progresses, the begin to experience more substantial difficulty reading and writing, and often begin to develop assistance mechanisms like text-to-speech programs or universal icons to overcome their declining literacy. Every day the user experiences a cumulative -5 modifier to their language skills when trying to read or write. When the character's modifier effectively reduces their Native language skill by half, the character gains the Illiterate trait (Eclipse Phase 149) and the virus ceases to progress (the cumulative modifier no longer applies after this point, only that from the Illiterate trait).

Stage 3 (Special):

Normally the virus fulfills its function and fades after a week; in rare cases, usually involving individuals with overdeveloped language comprehension centers, the process continues with a more severe rewiring of the ego. If the character manages a week without becoming illiterate (requiring a Native language skill of 91 or greater), they gain the Illiterate and Neural Damage (Alexia) trait, but they also gain the Psi trait at Level 1, without having to spend Rez.

ENTRY 141: Gagarin's Rest

On the icy moon of Pandora stands the massive Gateway complex. Through the maze of corridors and tunnels to the chamber of the Pandora Gate itself, it is a humming hive of transhuman activity. But just outside the gate room, there is a door marked by a skull; and through that door is the gatecrasher's bar—Gagarin's Rest. The last stop most gatecrashers take before they go through to their pre-gatecrash checks, and the first stop after debriefing coming back.

The story goes that Gagarin's Rest started out as an emergency exit leading to a canyonlike alley out of the complex, where the first gatecrashers would come out for a quick pull before going on what might be their final journeys, and eventually some squatter made it permanent. It's cozy rather than cramped and a couple degrees colder than comfortable for most unmodified humans, with recessed lighting only ten seats at the bar—a stretch of laser-cut Pandora with a couple thousand scratches in it to give it character—and booths along the wall, with a couple tables in back next to the bathrooms. A flat named Dukovitch pours the straight beers and the wine, while his lifemate, a case called Illiov, handles the mixed drinks and hookahs. The ceiling is made from slabs of transparent aluminum, so that customers can stare up and see the stars—or, as Dukovitch says, so they can stare down on them.

The walls are covered with tokens of travel: bits of stone from a dozen exoplanets, pictures of gatecrashers that didn't make it etched in synthetic diamond raising their final a glass, pieces of old spacejunk, and of course Gagarin's skull right over the mantle, staring down at everyone that comes in. It's probably not the real thing, though Dukovitch swears it is...and if anyone who's scanned it has found otherwise, they've never posted it to the Mesh. The one morph stupid enough to try to steal it was found in six pieces on six different exoplanets.

There are traditions at Gagarin's Rest, and parties when missions go well, and wakes when they do not. A standing rule is that any gatecrasher heading out to a new destination for the first time, Illiov will pour them a free drink; if they come back, most buy a bottle of something and give it to Illiov in return. Otherwise, the bar trades on @-rep and a little kroner, and if Illiov and Dukovitch don't have something they'll fetch something else—"Try, you

like." Dukovitch will say with a crooked smile, gold-on-steel teeth gleaming.

Using Gagarin's Rest

There's a gatecrasher's bar at every gate, but there is only one Gagarin's Rest. Located so close to the gate itself, the bar is a good place to do business or just socialize and pick up a few rumors. There are more mysteries lining its walls than can be counted, more practical gatecrashing experience bellied up to the bar for a quick tote of oxygen or a touch of hash oil in a shot of grain alcohol than player characters are likely to find anywhere else. Dukovitch and Illiov operate mainly on trust and good will, and they have a lot of it to spare—with their @-rep, few would deny the men anything they asked for, but they ask for very little. Good friends to have, but considerate enemies. Their clientele tends to be less forgiving.

ENTRY 142: Heartbulb Brinkers

The first step in divergence is insularity, and the Mesh makes it so very easy for groups to form around very specific interests. Isolated individuals separated by millions of kilometers can yet ascribe to the same faith, philosophy, political affiliation, sexual fetish, or musical interests. There are friends and spouses that have never met physically, but have deeper ties to one another than the morphs that live only a meter or two from them. Community, in the transhuman age, is a very flexible, relative, and increasingly voluntary concept. This is in part what makes brinkers so exceptional.

For brinkers, there is no distributed community; they are not (for the most part) networks of disaffected hermits, each living separately. Rather, they are autonomous, concentrated communities that rely on physical and social proximity with other members of their group, and social (and often physical) distance with everyone else. Isolationist, independent, self-sufficient, sometimes antagonist and xenophobic, and introspective, they require isolation to grow and develop along their own lines, or else face their communities being eroded by contact with the cultural pollution of the greater transhuman mediasphere.

Brinker communities form in a great many ways, some centered on charismatic groups or individuals, others as political, economic, religious, or artistic projects—yet there is always a divergence event, a point at which the group identity gels and the split from transhuman society begins. For the Heartbulb Brinkers, this was the popular adoption of the cortical stack.

Heartbulbs were one of many early ego savepoint technologies; a holistic approach which combined the properties of power source, cyberbrain, and cortical stack into a single physical unit. The heartbulb provided both motive power and intelligence to a morph, but was hardened to survive without one, designed so an intelligence could remain active for decades or more even while collecting dust on the shelf. Cost, difficulty of manufacture and other limitations caused heartbulbs to fail and gain traction outside of a core of early adopters, and eventually the technology was shelved as commercially non-viable—so the early adopters pirated it and headed off to no-one-is-quite-sure-where to form their own community. They are still out there, somewhere, developing heartbulb technology and morphs. Sometimes there are reports of a strange morph on the Rim, a non-

standard combat synthmorph with a glowing chestpiece and a relatively high rad signature that comes in to trade advanced titanium alloys and ceramics for deuterium. A heartbulb brinker? Maybe.

Using Heartbulb Brinkers

Heartbulb brinkers have taken a slightly divergent tech path from most of transhumanity; their synthmorphs are mere electromechanical shells lacking power source, cyberbrain, or cortical stack, though otherwise they are generally identical to other synthmorphs. All of these functions are provided by the heartbulb; where most transhumans would simply egocast from one morph to another, heartbulb brinkers would physically transfer their heartbulbs between morphs—while this may seem a bit primitive, it preserves the continuity of consciousness of the ego in the heartbulb, greatly easing their ability to resleeve. Left on their own, heartbulbs are extremely durable (field testing has shown them surviving small nuclear explosions up to 10 kilotons) and long lasting; most heartbulbs in existence today have enough power to sustain continuous consciousness for at least a century or more. Each heartbulb brinker contains a memoryscape, a virtual environment sustained by their heartbulb that they can shape and interact with, which helps to prevent them from growing bored or mad during periods when not installed in a morph. Heartbulb brinkers make a point of rescuing heartbulbs from “dead” morphs, as even the destruction of the morph-body is generally insufficient to damage the heartbulb.

Typical Hivebulb Brinker

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	15	15	10	20	8	10	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
3	1	20	4	40	45	9	67

Morph: Slitheroid (Heartbulb)

Skills: Academic: Psychology 50, Academic: Sociology 50, Interfacing 45, Interests: Fonts 90, Kinesics 45, Language Native Swiss 80, Language English 80, Perception 50, Persuasion 35, Profession: Graphic Design 65

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (AGI)

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Enhanced Vision, Heartbulb, Mnemonic augmentation

Advantage: Armor (8/8) [Heartbulb 15/15]

ENTRY 143: Brainbug

Minimalism as applied to morphs seeks to simplify, and if possible eliminate, unnecessary elements, focusing on the critical features—which begs the question, what is critical when it comes to a morph? For some, attachment to the classical bipedal human form is simple traditionalism, or, worse, a crippling nostalgia. Mobility is key, as is the essential bioengine that turns matter efficiently into fuel, and self-repair. Most important and defining of all, however, is the ability to sustain transhuman-level intelligence.

Brainbug is a custom-designed, minimalist biomorph, a giant pulsating brainsac with a vaguely human face sitting on top of a body like that of a sixty-centimeter long cockroach. The 'roach provided the basic biological platform: six segmented legs with enough strength to hold up the brain, a simplified digestive tract that can derive nutrition from damn near anything, and good general tolerance to different environments. The bulbous, oversized head with the semi-human face perched on top looks like a bad hackjob to anyone unfamiliar with the genetics or basic anatomies involved. Little things like aesthetics and a solid skull were sacrificed in exchange to achieve a maximum brain/body mass ratio; the modified lungs even allow it to speak.

Full tenured faculty at Titan Autonomous University, Brainbug spends its days split mainly between research and lecture. It is the author of dozens of books and hundreds of essays, articles, and reviews, though it is perhaps best known for Titan Eroskandinaviska, an evocative and, at times, incomprehensible multi-level love letter to the geophysical and ethnolinguistic aspects of Titan. Rumor has it that the Brainbug's personal quarters consist of a cramped nest lined with paper accessible through a large hole in its office wall.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
50	13	14	10	10	10	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	30	6	60	20	3	40

Morph: Unique Biomorph

Skills: Academics: Artificial Intelligence 75, Academics: Entomology 85, Academics: Linguistics 85, Academics: Philosophy 75, Academics: Titan History 80, Art: Found Art 55, Climbing 80, Free Fall 45, Interests: Chess 95, Interests: Educational Systems 50, Interests: Go 90, Interests: Intelligence Research 75, Interests: Xeno-insects 80,

Interfacing 65, Investigation 75, Language: Native Skandinaviska 99, Language: German 75, Language: Mandarin 75, Language: English 75, Networking: Scientists 80, Profession: Teaching 95, Programming 75, Protocol 75, Research 95, Scrounging 70

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Emotional Dampers, Enhanced Smell/Taste, Grip Pads, Hyperlinguist, Math Boost, Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters

Disadvantages: No hands/manipulator limbs

Using Brainbug

Insects are one of the critters that the majority of humans find both instinctively fascinating and creepy; a two-foot long roach with a mockery of a human head balanced on top is liable to elicit some substantial reactions from players, and well it should. Brainbug as presented is mostly harmless, a university professor that has exchanged traditional notions of transhumanity in exchange for increased brain mass and cognitive function. As a contact or ally, Brainbug provides all the raw thinking power and academic credentials that player characters could need for most adventures; as an enemy, Brainbug is a decidedly more inhuman Moriarity, protected from suspicion by its rep on Titan but liable to cast schemes that encompass the entire solar system...or beyond.

ENTRY 144: Shipslug

Autonomist habitats tend to take a pragmatic approach to criminal offenses. With omnipresent camera coverage and Mesh-based tracking, evidence for minor offenses is typically overwhelming and trials little more than a formality; legal emphasis typically focuses on a negotiated settlement to repair the criminal morph's relationship with the community—sometimes a fine, more often some form of community service. There are always a few dirty jobs that need to be done on any habitat, and some of the dirtiest are done by shipslugs.

Bioengineered from Terran gastropods, shipslugs are massive pods engineered as vacworkers, clinging to the outside hulls of ships and habitats, absorbing radiation, removing debris, and conducting simple repairs like temporarily patching holes with a silicone-based mucous that hardens into a ceramic plug. While most egos might be disinclined to resleeve into a pod even temporarily, shipslug mesh inserts come with a custom morph-specific built-in augmented reality game that translates their real-world work tasks into short virtual fantasy quests. As a consequence, shipslugs are one of the most popular penal pods currently in production.

Generic Shipslug Stats

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Ghost rider Module, Grip Pads*, Lidar, Oxygen Reserve, Puppet Sock, Radar, Temperature Tolerance, T-Ray Emitter, Vacuum Sealing

Mobility System: Snake (4/16)

Aptitude Maximum: 30

Durability: 40

Wound Threshold: 8

Advantages: Armor (8/8)

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Pod), Limbless

CP Cost: 40

Credit Cost: Expensive

*The entire underside of a shipslug counts as single massive "foot," and is mainly used to stay attached to the hull without trouble.

Using Shipslugs

Eventually, the player characters are going to cause some trouble, or at least be blamed for it. Whether in the wrong or not, they need to come to an understanding with the authorities or powers-that-be on the habitat or shi Prison sucks, so it's good for the gamemaster to have sole alternative community service/work release solutions available— and while shipslugs may not be the sexiest morphs available (except to other shipslugs), they are fairly durable and can go on extended spacewalks with bare minimum of equipment, making them a solid option for one-shot adventures or sidequests to get the PCs out of their comfort zone for the length of a mission.

Seed

While fighting off scum pirates trying to hijack their transport, an errant weapon discharge causes a nearby asteroid to explode, causing micrometeorite damage to the hull and forcing it to call for volunteers to mind the shipslugs to conduct emergency repairs. The science officer asks the PCs to pitch in, explaining that the asteroid was nearly pure platinum-group metals—and the dusty bits and fragments the shipslugs collect can be collected and sold off at the next habitat for a tidy profit which she'll split with them (her "finder's fee" is 10% if they feel like negotiating). Of course, the PCs may not be the only ones with that idea...and the scum pirates may still be out there and come back to try their luck again while the shipslugs are hard at work.

ENTRY 145: The Faceless

Wherever transhumanity goes, it makes legends—some new, some old but adapted to the syntax of the times. One of the most popular, spread on chat-systems throughout the Mesh, is about a small, out-of-the-way site on the Mesh, which takes the appearance of an endless void and a sphinx without a face. Beyond this, the details vary: some claim that it can only be accessed at certain times or in certain ways, though never with a passcode; visitors are said to sometimes go mad, or feel the faceless sphinx pursue them in their dreams. A thousand variations detail what happens when the sphinx catches you, including a sizable amount of erotic fanfiction. Entire XP epics have been produced around the legend of The Faceless, and more than a few petals.

Of course, the site is real. At any given time hackers and fans have whipped up at least a dozen variations, based on different parts of the legend and their own abilities. Some of them are traps containing digital threats; others are mere artistic efforts. Most tend to suffer a degree of vandalism once uncovered, hackers expressing their opinions of the juvenile story in no uncertain terms. Naturally, there is a sizable subsidiary body of legend about those cursed hackers who defaced the sphinx and suffered for it... Mesh scripts tend to focus on the face, subtly playing with the viewer's senses—drawing their attention, making them feel uneasy, holding their gaze—simple tricks, but sometimes very effective.

Folklorists on Titan have spent years collecting, collating, and tracing the legend, crossreferencing with different pieces of art and fiction, tracking its spread, permutation, and source. Some think they even seeded the story deliberately, to track transhumanity's vulnerability to memetic warfare, but the most popular study traces the Faceless legend back to an anomalous artifact said to have been discovered on Mars (or Luna, or Pluto, or an exoplanet...), represented by some damaged holographic stills—and indeed, the very earliest surviving images of the Faceless are remarkably consistent.

In these images the body of the sphinx is not that of an unmodified terrestrial lion, nor is the faceless head particularly human; it has six legs and a rusty hide stretched taut over a skeleton with too many bones. Most images the face region jagged and splintered as though broken off; a minority has it carefully sanded blank or eroded away, or even replaced with a gaping hollow.

Using the Faceless

At the most basic level, The Faceless is an internet legend updated to the Mesh, and can be played straight: gamemasters can use variations on the Faceless for any number of adventures where the plot revolves around someone believing (or trying to make others believe) in the legend of the Faceless—someone visits the site and ends up brain dead or insane, babbling about the sphinx for example—or else the site is set up to prey on those aware of the legend, and contains a basilisk hack that activates when a critical audience threshold is reached. On another level, there may actually be something to the whole Faceless legend, a seed of truth that the player characters can track down to uncover a pre-human artifact...and possibly the individual or group that has been working to cover up its existence, so that the Faceless remains just a legend.

ENTRY 146: Innata

“The problem with anarchy is that it works. Most communities are unconscious things, the agreements and structures and people that hold it up are invisible, unseen; people move about their lives with no awareness of the structure of things, who they depend on, who depends on them. But anarchist communities are conscious. There is no taken for granted, there is no invisible framework. What people want and need, they need to interact with other people to get it. Make arrangements, treaties, fuck, say please, whatever it takes. Saying please is very important. Some people forget that.”

- Innata, Course Notes to Anarchy for the Masses 201

Just because there are no rules does not mean that there are no consequences. Anarchist communities thrive on the dynamic between self-reliance and interdependence; if no one worked together then the lifecycle of an anarchist habitat would be measured in repair cycles. For a lot of anarchists, this means that they become invested in the community, checking on the air filters and making small unscheduled repairs and making sure maintenance is done correctly because if they don't do it, there is no saying whether anyone else will. Rep systems help considerably, providing both immediate and quantifiable results to the rest of the community about what an individual is doing. Some of the anarchists with the highest reps aren't the founder-philosophers or artists, but the plumbers, the hydroponics farmers, and the technicians that keep things running—not because they were told to do it, or scheduled to do it, but because they know how to do it and want to make sure it gets done, for their benefit as much as anyone else's.

Then there's the other end of the rep spectrum: loafers, thieves, welchers, double-dealers usually, murderers and rapists at worst. They're the takers of the system, economic parasites who don't contribute to anarchist society. Old-fashioned societies would remove them from circulation, have the police put them in prison or the court system, make them somebody else's problem. Anarchists don't have police, but they also tend to frown on mob justice. Instead, they tend to rely on specialist mediators like Innata—one part social worker, one part bounty hunter, a massive bear of a woman with a preference for thick, hand-knit sweaters.

Innata doesn't work for free or out of the goodness of her heart, but she does perform a valuable community service by keeping tabs and making relationships with the lowest-rep members of anarchist communities. Sometimes she lectures, sometimes she mothers, sometimes she breaks their teeth. Any that present a clear and present danger to others she kills. This she does without backup, without authority; if she bites off more than she can handle, there is no one to save her from a beatdown or

worse. Anarchists tend to be ambivalent about her at best; the more enlightened recognize her function, but most see her as a self-elected cop on a power trip, but that doesn't stop them from hiring her when they get ripped off or beaten up, or some asshole decides to defecate in the air filters.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	20	14	23	20	26	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	42	8	84	65	13	75

Morph: Fury

Skills: Academics: Anthropology 55, Academics: Philosophy (Anarchist) 70, Art: Knitting 50, Beam Weapons 75, Blades 66, Clubs 66, Deception 55, Demolitions 25, Fray 66, Free Fall 60, Gunnery 44, Impersonation 55, Infiltration 66, Infocore 55, Interests: Anarchist Politics 66, Interfacing 40, Kinetic Weapons 50, Language: Native Persian 80, Language: English 75, Language: French 44, Language: Russian 60, Negotiation 65, Networking: Autonomists 80, Networking: Criminals 55, Perception: 70, Profession: Social Worker 77, Profession: Enforcer 66, Spray Weapons 55, Unarmed Combat (Subdual)70

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave (Light), Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Vision, Medicines, Neurachem (Level 1), Toxin Filters

Traits: Addiction (Painkillers, Minor), Brave, Danger Sense, Neural Damage (neuropathy), Pain Tolerance (Level 2), Tough (Level 3)

Using Innata

Innata is not a cop, she's a social worker with an attitude and a set of sap gloves. The difference is important: there are no rules and regulations for her to follow, no default script to refer to. Still, Innata understands that most non-anarchists don't get the subtleties of what she does, and if it helps them out she'll play the lone marshal or the bounty hunter or the concerned public servant to make their lives easier. Her prime concern are the seedier parts of anarchist habitats, and that's where the PCs are likely to find her if they need to. As a contact or an ally, Innata is happy to exchange favors for favors—she can always use backup when forcing a dangerous “client” into rehab or delivering a beating and lecture. Innata will only be the character's enemy if they get a bad rep with an anarchist faction; and even then she'll probably try to talk to them into making reparations before resorting to violence.

ENTRY 147: Blackbodies

Transhumanity is not alone in the universe, but it need not bother the Factors or gate to an exoplanet for proof. They were first revealed by Eva Motowski, an ice prospector/scientist mapping the slow tidal movements of Saturn's rings, caused by some of the shepherd moons that prevent the rings from dispersing. Overlapping measurements from different angles revealed the presence of a small, angular superblack object which Motowski speculated might be carbon agglutination. A probe sent into the region found no trace of it, but reports of similar artifacts came in from Jol Kebana, an amateur astronomer on Titan. The ice prospector and astronomer collaborated, seeking out other telescopes and sensors pointed in the right direction at the right time, and over the course of several weeks traced out a probable trajectory for the object. Presenting their data, they convinced the operators of three radio telescopes to direct their equipment toward a specific region of trans-Saturnian space for a period of 72 hours.

This time, there were four of them.

That was the last time the blackbodies were seen around Saturn, although a handful of possible sightings have been made around Neptune. Consensus in the scientific community about the nature of the blackbodies is fairly solid: small superblack craft whose hulls absorb the majority of electromagnetic radiation, or at least the kinds of light and radio waves that transhumanity typically uses in its long-range sensors. In theory this is near-perfect camouflage so long as the vessel is not viewed only against black space in a vacuum. The effect is not perfect however, so that different angles absorb and emit slightly more or less energy; a single telescope might get lucky, two or more pointed at the same spot from different angles are much more likely to pick up the craft.

Questions remain, however. If the surmise on the technology is correct, the vessels should build up a vast amount of waste heat—all the energy it absorbs and does not emit. Aside from the heat problem, the technology involved is within current transhuman capabilities. Given that, it is reasonable to assume the blackbodies' originate from one of the existing factions, the Factors, or the TITANS, though certain parties still prefer the idea of a new, unknown extraterrestrial race that is spying on transhumanity prior to making contact. The Factors for their part have not answered any questions about the

craft, and none of the major factions have demonstrated craft with similar capabilities so far.

Seed

Jol Kebana has a divergent theory about the blackbodies: they think that blackbodies actually are a carbon-based lifeform native to Saturnian orbit, and that the angular shape represents the "tacking" of its natural light sails. Using some arcane calculations (and half-assed guesses), Jol believes that the blackbodies will return in the wake of Saturn's moon Pan—and wants the PCs stationed at different points with cameras to capture a good close-up look at it. Floating alone in space to capture a maybe-living superblack object...nothing could go wrong with that, except perhaps a pirate ship inspired by the blackbody sightings to mimic their appearance.

ENTRY 148: Gravity Bridge

Ruby is an exoplanet accessible through the Martian Gate, an irregularly shaped planetoid that shows signs of heavy industrialization orbiting a red giant somewhere on the far side of the Crab Nebula. The gate is located on the lip of an open-pit mine, one of fifteen such bores on the exoplanet's surface, and the first explorer fell three hundred meters down the terraced slope before it could arrest its fall. Soil samples indicate the race who built it was probably mining for radioactive materials, especially a particularly blazing form of aluminum oxide contaminated and splendidly colored by native uranium ores to yield rainbow-shifted rubies, some up to ten centimeters long. The center of the pit is filled with waste materials from the mining and processing operations that must once have been a major concern: there are at least three hundred metric tons of radioactive slag, spent fuel rods, and assorted other junk piled into the middle of the hole. On any other exoplanet, the prospect of picking through the toxic and radioactive waste from the abandoned mining station of an apparently space-going alien civilization would be counted as a major win— but Ruby has something more: the Gravity Bridge.

Hanging above the horizon and about a hundred kilometers from Ruby in a parallel orbit around the red giant is an artificial satellite, a ring of metal with an inner diameter of 16.3 meters—more than big enough for a ship or ore container to pass through. If a viewer on the surface stares up and looks straight through the ring, they notice something weird: the stars and planets seem to shift toward the center. The first observers considered it an optical illusion; subsequent tests proved that gravity within the ring really was abnormal, producing approximately 30g of acceleration passing from the side facing Ruby to the other side. Ships (or anything, really) that approach within a kilometer or so will be sucked in and accelerated at a leisurely 300 meters/second squared, usually hitting a velocity of a couple thousand kilometers per second by the time they leave the trailing area of the effect. Fine for rocks, not so good for organics.

The Gravity Bridge is plainly a one-way device for speeding up transport from Ruby to whatever the bridge was pointed at—currently the ring appears to be oriented toward an asteroid belt 53 million kilometers distant that might have been a fair-sized planet at one point. It would have been a cost-efficient method for a long-term mining. Researchers speculate the patch of distorted space-time is caused by exotic matter from within the satellite itself,

though they've been slow and careful in their examination so far, afraid to break the device, which they believe might be a primitive precursor to Pandora gate technology.

Mechanics

The surface of Ruby is a mildly radioactive near-vacuum with very low gravity (0.1g); anyone that jumps too hard will find themselves falling into space, drifting toward the Gravity Bridge, accelerated very quickly indeed and flung out into space in an arc that would eventually take them to an asteroid field that may or may not contain the debris of a former spacefaring civilization. Alternately, characters could not do that and take a ship, which is generally safer.

Seed

A medium-sized automated explorer vessel with a resleeving station and a group of synthmorphs was pushed through the Gravity Bridge and with the gravity assist has reached the asteroid belt in record time. The call has gone out for gatecrashers willing to do an initial survey—a job slated to last at least twenty-four months (including two months training and prep), but with a massive payout at the end with plenty of bonuses if the characters find anything interesting. If the PCs want the job, they'll probably have to call in every favor they ever owed and stretch their rep to the max...but at the end of the two-year mission, they'll either be dead or rolling in fortune and glory.

ENTRY 149: Goopers

Exhuman cliques tend to push the boundaries of the available technology, driving themselves along the bleeding edge of innovation as they work to transcend or remove themselves from the traditional mental, social, and physical limitations of human existence. One such group is the Liquid Morph Project, which pursues the technical challenge of building a fluid or mostly-fluid based morph. Derisively nicknamed “Goopers” by many, they’ve managed some moderate successes with a series of morphs based around a strong, flexible plastic membrane with over a million piezoelectric feet/sensors filled with fluidic circuits and a distributed nanite-based computer network that sustains the guiding intelligence. These bean-bag like fluid morphs are vacuum-sealed and can be powered by thermoelectricity, with a plastic surface area that allows them considerable ability to reshape themselves, but yet lack considerable means of manipulating the environment; communication is mostly via the Mesh, vibration, or changing color. The Gooper habitat is little more than a small research station on the surface of Neptune’s moon Nereid, where the fluid morphs can easily operate on the surface.

To fund their research, the Goopers have been experimenting with smaller-scale “pet” fluid morphs, called Liters (as each has about one liter of fluid volume). Liters are driven by primitive AGI based on the intellects and responses of relatively intelligent small animals like rats, squirrels, and ferrets, modified to take into account their lack of limbs and changed sensory apparatus. Unlike traditional biomorphs, Liters are fairly self-sufficient, require little physical maintenance, and can be extremely sociable. Focus group testing for the Liters is currently being conducted in Ilmarinen and Glitch habitats, and if the feedback is good the Goopers are ready to begin full production, with contracts being negotiated with retailers on Titan and Mars.

Using Goopers

The philosophical approach of the Goopers is that freedom from mechanical constraints is essential to freedom from the human condition, and dream of a variant grey goo scenario where they all live as liquid suspensions of nanite clouds in one vast ocean, forming bodies and structures according to their needs. That said, the Goopers recognize how far off their dream is, and the difficulties of their particular approach, which is why they’re trying to drum up funding. While it is possible for the gamemaster to portray

them as cunning and malevolent water balloons, most Goopers spend their days on cat-schedules, stretched out on the surface of Nereid with one end in shadow and the other in sunlight to generate thermoelectricity, plugging away at the mental problems of achieving their liquid paradise.

Seed

A political snafu occurred on Ilmarinen when a visiting argonaut mistook the Gooper ambassador for a gel chair and sat on it. Worse, the sudden drastic pressure caused a puncture and the ambassador lost fluid before the membrane sealed itself. The Goopers are furious and have become incommunicative. The Ilmarinens need a neutral third party to visit Nereid and apologize on their behalf. If they accept, the PCs are informed that the incident was staged by the Ilmarinen Secretum, a private industrial espionage group that believes the Goopers are planning on using the Liters for espionage (which is half-true, the Liters do record information and transfer it back via certain channels, but solely for customer feedback purposes), and that in addition to the apology their main mission is to snoop out as much of the Gooper’s plans and technology as possible.

ENTRY 150: lanthe Complex

Resleeving is easy. Augmentation and cosmetic alteration is even easier. The limits of what a morph can look like are relatively few, if you have the resources and imagination. In the rush to perfection, many transhumans forget that there are egos out there with issues: body integrity identity disorder, body dysmorphic disorder, compulsive overeating, muscle dysmorphia, bulimia nervosa, anorexia nervosa, dermatillomania, trichotillomania, and all the rest. These conditions don't just go away when the ego is augmented or resleeved to a new morph; in some cases easy access to personal augmentation just feeds and enables the affliction—or worse, push the ego over a precipice into much more disturbing psychopathology.

lanthe Complex looks like a nine-foot-tall Remade wetdream clothed in flesh. Standing still they look like an anime seductress made flesh, high elfin cheekbones and massive breasts, impossibly thin arms and legs ending in hand-like claws, a waspish waist over massive hips. When she moves the illusion is shattered, muscles bunches and rippling just beneath the skin like a shaved jungle cat. The effect is at once alluring and disturbing to most humans, but few look past the surface to the dangerous, damaged persona inhabiting that singularly striking morph. A broken seductress whose inability to accept their body has led them to seek to perfect others.

lanthe lures their victims back to their secret love nest—a faraday cage sealed off from the rest of the habitat where no one can hear the victims scream. A single victim can last for weeks or months as they remake them with the needle, and the scalpel, and the rack. Most die from cumulative surgeries; they keep the victim's cortical stacks as mementos of their time together. A few are eventually released, if lanthe is pleased with the results; these crippled morphs are often too far gone to be much help in identifying their tormentor.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
24	19	14	19	21	25	12	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	24	4	48	40	8	60

Morph: Remade

Skills: Academics: Psychology 33, Art: Dancing 75, Art: Erotic Entertainment 66, Art: Scarification 60, Beam Weapons 33, Deception 75, Disguise 55, Fray 44, Infiltration 40, Infosec 45, Interests: Cosmetic Augmentation 66, Interests: Criminal Psychology 40,

Interests: Xipe Totec 60, Kinesics 44, Language: Native Portuguese 84, Language: English 50, Language: Spanish 66, Medicine: Cosmetic Surgery 66, Networking: Hypercorps 30, Networking: Media 30, Palming 44, Perception 60, Persuasion (Seduction) 70, Profession: Social Director 65, Protocol 66, Unarmed Combat (Subdual) 77

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Circadian Regulation, Claws, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Pheromones, Enhanced Respiration, Prehensile Feet, Sex Switch, Neurachem (Level 1), Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters

Traits: Mental Disorder (Body Dysmorphic Disorder), Patron, Striking Looks (Level 2), Uncanny Valley

Using lanthe Complex

A serial killer, kidnapper, and amateur cosmetic surgeon, lanthe Complex works out their inability to be satisfied with their body by helping to “perfect” others—living examples of which tend to end up as grotesques. Even as intelligent and clever as they are, lanthe should have been caught by now, except that they have attracted the secret patronage of some highly-placed individual that admires their handiwork. Gamemasters are encouraged to play up the awkward, unnatural but sociable outer personality that lanthe projects when engaging with others; most characters find it no more strange than that of any transhuman who has undergone considerable personal augmentations. The change comes when cornered or dealing with the PCs in private—the mask drops to reveal something feral but calculating, cruelly creative, and very dangerous.

ENTRY 151: Mood Lizard

The Mogwai Experimental Animal Therapy Group based out of Godwinhead is a research/marketing cell working to commercialize and popularize therapy animals. Over a century of research has shown the therapeutic benefits of therapy animals to transhumans, reducing the stress of transhuman and posthuman life and promoting positive qualities; what MEAT-G is attempting to discover is the most profitable critter with a broad consumer appeal and bring it to market. Most of their work to date has seen only modest successes like the Yeti Tarantula (“The Furry Spider You Can Pet!”™), but their latest creation seems like a sure-seller: the Mood Lizard.

Using the Namaqua Chameleon as the base genetic chassis, MEAT-G has engineered a companionate animal with a much broader color-change mechanism tied to a trade secret sensory data interpretation node in the brain—the lizard literally changes color to reflect the emotions of the nearest transhuman. Group testing in children and psychotherapy patients has proven positive, especially among synthmorphs as the Mood Lizards like to crawl up on the shell above the power supply and bask in the warm spot. MEAT-G is looking to begin initial market testing on a commercial level soon—if successful, they’ll move into general production.

Mechanics

Mood Lizards all have Psi Level 1 trait and a variation of the Psi-Gamma sleight Empathic Scan with a duration of Constant (Eclipse Phase 226). (They might also have Psi-Chi sleights, but it’s hard to tell with a lizard.) About 1 in 20 Mood Lizards is a carrier for the Watts-MacLeod strain of the Exsurgent virus, which may be contracted from contact with their saliva or feces.

Seeds

- A Firewall team tracking surviving victims of the TITANs that may have been exposed to the Exsurgent virus has found a “cell” of four possible infectees in the same group—MEAT-G. Combined with the empathic chameleons the group is putting out, Firewall has decided to red flag the group. The PCs are asked to shut the entire operation down with prejudice before the Mood Lizards go into production. They will provide as much firepower as the PCs need...but they want every living thing associated with MEAT-G destroyed, including any infected patients in the test groups.

- While the Mood Lizards are still being tested, MEAT-G’s scientists are moving ahead with Phase II—the Mood Rex! Larger, bipedal lizards with claws and fast reflexes (equivalent to neurachem Level 1) and stronger psi abilities (Drive Emotion sleight), the Mood Rex is a weaponized prototype designed for military and law enforcement use. When a competitor on the genepet market steals a batch of fifty Mood Lizards, MEAT-G hires the PCs to get them back...and asks them to fieldtest Mood Rex at the same time!
- One of the therapy patients misunderstood the point of the Mood Lizard they were given, and cooked and ate it. Now they claim to be sick from the lizard meat and is suing MEAT-G. The therapy group hires the PCs to investigate the victim, a remade named Ianthe Complex (see Entry 150), and find anything to make them drop the suit.

ENTRY 152: Mitochondria 2.0

In the orbital habitats above Mercury and Venus, in the nursery edu-creches on Luna and the kindertainment pods of Mars, the kids aren't alright. Oh, they're mostly healthy enough, displaying the usual signs one would expect for biomorphs conceived, carried, born, and raised in different gravities, but even accounting for expected morphological differences, something strange is going on.

The first red flag was eight years ago on Mars, an outbreak of mitochondrial diseases in newborns. Initially the suspect was environmental factors, increased radiation or maybe a toxic leak causing random mutations, but close typing of the mDNA showed very consistent, nearly identical mitochondria—as if all the kids had come from the same mother, even though their non-mitochondrial DNA matched their expected parents. After two years of research, no causal finding could be produced, and the investigation was cold-cased.

Six years ago on Locus a few weird health spikes showed a group of eight-year-olds were found to have increased brown adipose tissue, up to 15% by body weight. The culprit was believed to be the presence of mutated mitochondria, which were identical in all of the children—again, as if they had the same mitochondrial parent, even though the children were conceived from different female donors. The reproductive health center which had performed the fertilization and egg implantation procedures was investigated, but aside from typical gene selectivity treatments, nothing unusual had occurred.

Four years ago, investigators finally got a suspect. Four adults on Aphrodite Prime started suffering liver failure, their mitochondria failing to produce the enzymes necessary to detoxify the ammonia produced from protein metabolism. One of the station personnel had been present on Mars and Locus during the past outbreaks, but managed to avoid both investigations: a nomadic lab assistant and amateur genehacker named Hamish Haal. When the Venusian security moved in, they found someone had beaten them to the punch: Haal had died under torture in his quarters. His personal dataspace was empty, wiped clean. Examination of his mitochondria found the same mDNA sequence as in the victims.

For the last four years, new reports have been sporadic, and various groups have taken it on themselves to attempt to track down and identify Haal's victims, who could number in the hundreds or low thousands. The mechanism

he used to alter or replace the mitochondria is still not fully understood; current theories lean toward a retrovirus. The reasons for Haal's crime apparently died with him, and the identity of his killers and the state of his research remains unknown. There are many that question whether he was even working alone, or was killed as part of a conspiracy. All that is clear is that the damage is done. A new source of mDNA is out there, somewhere, quietly proliferating through transhumanity.

Seed

Haal's mother died on Luna, and a portion of her genetic material was kept in a genebank while the rest was destroyed. The M2.0 Victims Network approaches the PCs and asks them to "liberate" the sample, to see if the mDNA Haal used is derived from his mother or another source. If the PCs are successful, they discover that not only is the mDNA not the source, the sample they liberated has no close kinship to Haal himself—the woman everyone thought was his genetic parent was just a surrogate. This raises even more questions about Haal's identity, but the victims' representative thanks the PCs for their aid, as every piece of the puzzle helps.

ENTRY 153: Kora von Raan

In contemporary times, “ghost-hunting” has nothing to do with parapsychology or the supernatural. Ghosts are a class of morph designed for infiltration; and somewhat confusingly sometimes the name for those invisible shells and identities that they seem to step into and out of—ghost people, using assumed names and identification, and then disappearing once again. Ghost-hunters are the people that track them, keeping tabs on the datatrails, sharing information in their own networks, pinning down who the egos are behind the morphs, and what they are up to. For some, this is a hobby; surveillance as recreation, snooping on the spies. For Kora von Raan, it is a mission.

Von Raan hunts TITAN sympathizers and collaborationists from the end of the last war. The secret people that aided and abetted the horrific crimes of the TITANs, who received their orders and their counsel, and who may yet work toward their goals. In this work, von Raan receives the discreet patronage of Firewall, but is otherwise left to their own methods and devices, traveling from habitat to habitat, sorting through digital records, interviewing individuals, collecting all the facts. Von Raan has saved some lives, ruined others. There are many dead ends, a few violent successes, and more than a few that begged for von Raan’s non-existent mercy as they stared down the barrel of an energy weapon. Always, von Raan simply scratched one more name off their list, and moved on.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
23	25	25	15	15	20	30	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	60	10	120	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: History (Dutch) 80, Academics: Sociology 50, Academics: Statistics 50, Deception 40, Hardware: Robotics 40, Interests: Dutch Books 60, Interests: Exsurgent Threats 70, Interests: Ghost Morphs 60, Interests: TITANs 75, Interfacing 50, Investigation 50, Kinesics 55, Language: Native Dutch 95, Language: English 90, Language: French 90, Language: German 90, Networking: Criminals 75, Networking: Scientists 75, Perception 55, Profession: Tracer 55, Programming 60, Protocol 50, Research 55

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Armor (6/6), Patron (Firewall), Social Stigma (Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

Using Kora von Raan

Methodical, hardnosed, unswayable and incorruptible, von Raan has seen more horrors than most, and has no compunctions about tracking down every last ego that had anything to do with the TITANs. While not cruel, von Raan is eminently practical and utterly unwilling to compromise; torture is acceptable, as is summary execution. While a specialist in hunting ghost morphs, von Raan has burnt neotronics to death without flinching, and stood straight and unmoving against rampaging furies. As an ally, von Raan is steadfast so long as the player characters abide by the same code—Kora will not tolerate weakness or sympathy for suspects. Kora von Raan will only be fully opposed to player characters if they believe the PCs are former TITAN collaborators; though given von Raan’s limited contact with Firewall, it may be easier to frame them than the PCs might like, particularly if one of the group is in a ghost morph.

ENTRY 154: The Martian Cryptids

When transhumanity arrived, Mars was a dead planet. Some still hold there was no life on Mars at all before humans made Marsfall. Now, though far from terraformed, Mars teems with life in and around the habitats and terraforming gardens. Yet no transhuman can say precisely what species are present on Mars; there is no master database of all animals, plants, and bacteria brought to Mars, or engineered since transhumanity arrived. As well, much of Mars remains *ares incognita*, unvisited and unexplored at the ground level, known only from the cameras and sensors of orbiting satellites and the occasional aerial sweep. So perhaps it comes as little surprise that Barsoomians see things out on the fringes, and come across strange carcasses from time to time after a dust storm has blown through, and some ruster takes a few pictures and uploads another entry in the Martian Cryptids database.

A classical open-editing environment, the Martial Cryptids is configured to allow any user to upload sightings and evidence; a devout community of bored scientists and cryptozoologists then begin the long battle of evaluating the rumors, collating data, sometimes even raising funds for expeditions to find evidence of cryptids with a high probability of actually existing. Most of the two hundred or so cryptids currently in the database are assumed to be the result of outside agencies, brought or engineered by transhumans, TITANs, or Factors; pre-Marsfall cryptids are generally considered hoaxes even by some of the most uncritical zoologists. Some of the favorite/most probable Martian cryptids include:

Aram snail-tortoise: A hypothetical silicon-based organism with multiple sightings in the Aram Chaos. The creatures are supposedly similar to gastropods and move on a single large pseudopod, protected by inarticulate iron-rich exoskeleton or shell which the foot draws into when dust storms come. Most reported examples are 6-8 centimeters long. "Aram shells" retrieved from the Aram Chaos region have so far proved to be inorganic hematite-silicon rocks.

Borget's sunflower: A wild, self-reproducing "petal" nanoplant with hexagonal solar-panel "leaves" in Reull Vallis, supposedly crafted by famed narcoalgorithm programmer Glenda Borget after a trip inside the Zone and containing primitive maker-facilities sufficient to create new copies of itself from available materials. More

conspiracy-minded cryptozoologists point to anomalous movements in the region shortly after rumors first emerged as part of a deliberate coverup.

Marsman: Known only through poor video and still photo footage, as well as hundreds of sightings, the Marsman appears to be a heavily modified, perhaps experimental morph combining traits of rusters and neo-hominids. Unlike typical Barsoomians, the Marsman reportedly is perfectly adapted to the current Martian environment, requiring no survival gear. Scientists decry this as highly improbable, but the number of sightings and mounting evidence suggest there might be something more than popular hallucination.

Using the Martian Cryptids

The Martian Cryptids Database, besides being the most popular source of data on Martian cryptids, also serves as a focal point for bounties proving the existence of any given cryptid, and the starting point of most expeditions that set out to prove/disprove the existence of such beasties, and as such may serve as jumping-off points for adventures.

Some of the cryptids listed may be victims of the exsurgent virus, experiments of the TITANs, critters imported from exoplanets, genetic experiments that got away, or hallucinations brought about by stress, sleeplessness, loneliness, and low oxygen out on the fringes. Any way you cut it, cryptids can be a good excuse to get the PCs out to some of the unexplored places of Mars. Other sizable planetary habitats like Titan, Europa, and many exoplanets likely have their own cryptid databases.

ENTRY 155: Antiares

In the L3 position on the opposite side of the sun from Mars lies Antiares, a Processor Lotus built on a captured asteroid. A joint venture by Martian hypercorps, the habitat is ostensibly a “thinking retreat,” a reward vacation-spot exclusively designed for infomorphs where they can let their guards down, talk openly about their jobs and interests, collaborate directly with the competition on projects that interest them, as well as network and socialize. By rule of the joint management committee set up by the principles, nondisclosure agreements are null and void within the protected infospace of Antiares, and the free collaboration and open atmosphere has led to some surprising advances and joint ventures between rival corporations.

This degree of open-sharing is made possible by tightly-controlled communications between Antiares and the wider ‘Mesh, strict security clearing for any residents, and mandatory memory edits for any infomorph that leaves the habitat for any reason to protect trade secret data—which, depending on what the individual is working on and who they are working on it with can mean that many contractor morphs return from Antiares with no memories of the past month except the virtual sex and a nice fat account full of credits. Complex legal agreements between the hypercorps govern the split in proceeds from joint technological development and construction of joint ventures on Antiares, with all participants taking responsibility that their “guests” are thoroughly screened; failure to comply or introducing a corporate spy into the Antiares community is grounds for major repercussions.

Residents for their part generally take a few days or weeks to open up to the idea that they don’t need to protect corporate secrets, and are usually matched up with social coordinators that try to find them new projects that meet their skillsets and interests while they adjust to the atmosphere of sharing. A “blue collar” subset of contractor infomorphs handle details like station maintenance, local mining and fabrication, virtual sex work, gamemastering, and security exist alongside the corporate scientists and executives in Antiares proper, though because they interact with the behind-the-scenes running of the station itself and have different levels of security access they also operate under tighter security protocols.

Seeds

- A key part of the protection for Antiares is its limited accessibility; the nearest habitats are in the Martian Trojans, where automated, unmanned resupply ships come every couple of months. However, a small section of the Antiares habitat does contain a functional atmosphere for emergencies. The PCs are hired to test Antiares’ security by infiltrating that part of the station, uploading and downloading two harmless pieces of code.
- Fa Jing has recently discovered its latest “guest” sent to Antiares may in fact be an industrial spy. Recalling the guest would cause too much attention, so Fa Jing seeks to hire the PCs as contractors with a mission to go to Antiares as infomorphs, and if their suspicions are confirmed then to “escort” the guest away from Antiares without the rest of the habitat finding out.

ENTRY 156: Communion of Re

“The Future Lies On Alien Suns”

- Motto of the Communion of Re

The suryas and salamanders that inhabit the corona of Sol are one of the most enigmatic groups of morphs in the system; few can comprehend the mentality of skimming through a seemingly endless layer of plasma, much less imagine what drives such entities, what their goals and aspirations might be. Strange as they are, the sun-dwellers are still transhuman, divided into different groups and factions based on one difference or another. One of those factions is the Communion of Re.

A minor gatecrashing organization that buys time on the Vulcanoid Gate, the Communion is organized like a hypercorp but close-knit like a religious fellowship, their headquarters at Caldwell a combination of slipstream Neo-Egyptian imagery, mini-Heliopolis meets raygun gothic. While it has only used the Vulcanoid Gate a dozen times, in its six missions five have used new gate coordinates which emerged near stellar bodies or Jupiter-like gas giants, sending through suryas or salamanders to investigate. How the Communion knows which coordinates to feed in is a carefully concealed secret, with speculation ranging from gravimetric calculations to a TITANS artifact or something bargained out of the Factors.

Because of their relatively small size and resources, the Communion of Re is often eager to hire experienced gatecrashers for their missions. Hired-on must resleeve into appropriate morphs for the expected environment, usually (but not always) salamanders and suryas, and given basic acclimation training as well as classes in sunspotting. The gatecrashing insertion itself involves a specially designed plasma chamber called the “Oven,” which is brought up to heat and pressure levels equivalent to those expected at the other side of the gate—the better to ease transition for morphs passing through the wormhole.

Using the Communion of Re

The Sun is a difficult spot to adventure in Eclipse Phase—it’s not friendly to a wide variety of morphs, and there’s not a vast amount to do once your player characters get there. The Communion of Re is a means to get a bit more use out of suryas and salamanders, easing the PCs’ path into resleeving and providing environments and settings that the PCs might actually be interested in. The very fact that the Communion has found gates located within the

coronas of strange suns and the bright/hot layers of gas giants suggests there may be remnants of alien life there, or perhaps native entities of some sort. As for the Communion itself, the iconography is more than superficial, but an expression of a NeoGnostic sect that is at the core of the group, basing its ideology on something supposedly found drifting around the sun. How much of this the PCs are exposed to and pick up on is up to the gamemaster, but certainly the cult/corporation has a distinct purpose to their missions—perhaps they’re looking for something specific.

Seed

The PCs are hired by the Communion to rescue a party of salamanders that had previously gone through to explore an alien waypoint made mostly out of artificial diamond. When they arrive, the salamanders appear to be fine—they’re attempting to fix the station’s degrading orbit—but the longer the PCs observe them, the more clear it is that something or someone on the station is influencing the salamanders’ actions...perhaps the station itself, which may be operated by an alien AGI.

ENTRY 157: Metis

Death is a disease. Not every disease has a cure.

Glick Metis and life-partner Oleksander Oryes were part of the first wave of colonizers to the Belt. Young, in love, and with first-generation cortical stacks they were living lives of adventure that they thought would go on forever. On a trip to harvest hydrocarbons from an icy asteroid, forever ended with the premature detonation of a mining charge. Oleksander dragged Metis' body back into the ship, and undertook heroic measures in an effort to save his lover's life. It wasn't enough. Debris from the blast had driven the pick of a mining axe straight through Metis' face, shredding roughly a third of her brain, damaging the proto-cortical stack. Oryes arrived back at Luna with Metis' body maintained by little more than the brain stem, in an irreversible coma and steadily failing. Surgeons did what they could to map what was left of the damaged brain and extracted the damaged backup unit, letting the meat body of Glick Metis to cease functioning.

The first fork attempt failed; the data corrupted. So did the next fifty. Oleksander gave up mining, took up programming. For the next eight years, Metis was his obsession. He maps the damage done to the cortical stack, invented new algorithms to extrapolate where data was missing or corrupted, filled in chunks of Metis' memories and recordings from journals, public records, and his own recollections. Most of his efforts were inherently unstable, incomplete, and prone to severe cognitive damage and mental disorders, barely able to interact before drifting off into virtual insanity. It took three thousand attempts to produce a stable fork.

By the time Oleksander was done, Metis was virtually a new ego. The cost of this new life was Oleksander's health, long neglected. So Metis does what they can to care for the half-remembered stranger who brought them into being.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	15	18	15	10	15	15	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Physics 30, Art: Electronic Music 35, Hardware: Electronics 20, Hardware: Robotics 25, Infosec 30, Interests: Experimental Music 50, Interests: Health Care 40, Interfacing 40, Language: Native Greek 90, Language: Russian 85, Medicine: Nursing 45, Networking: Criminal 25, Perception 50, Profession: Caregiver 60, Programming 35, Research 25

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Metis

Metis probably works best as a bit character with a bit of depth and enough skill to be useful in their given role, but not much more than that. Oleksander's care is somewhat draining in resources and favors, so Metis hires out as a nurse, caregiver, or medical assistant, which is where the player characters are likely to meet them. Alternately, Metis could approach the player characters for help. If running Metis as a villain, the PCs are likely marks in some part of a larger scam, set up to deal with violent forces that Metis cannot handle. It is important to play up Metis as confused and somewhat lonely, still trying to figure out what they are and their relationship to Oleksander and the person that was Glick Metis.

ENTRY 158: Hush

Capture is worse than death, in many ways. There's not a lot that can be done to an ego after death. Of course, these days death is cheaper than ever—and with cortical stacks, an unfriendly can dismantle you a thousand ways and still have a back-up copy to play with.

Interrogation techniques have come a long way. Physical torture, sleep deprivation, all the “enhanced interrogation” techniques are primitive, generally counterproductive, and with no guarantee of results—no matter how unpleasant your preferred method is, there's never any way of knowing that you've got the truth out of somebody, because after suffering enough an ego will say anything—do anything—to make it stop. They'll repeat back what you want to hear. They'll read what you want them to read in front of the camera. All to make it go away.

For some people, that's enough. For the rest, things get clinical. Statistics and biometrics (or psychometrics, for synthmorphs) are still the preferred “soft” methods; “hard” interrogations skip the foreplay and go straight to brainhacking, but not everyone has the skill and tech for that. Torture may be cathartic to the sadist's soul, but ultimately useless, often distorting and degrading the very memories they seek to uncover. Statistical interrogation involves simply getting the subject to talk, and continue to talk. Their speech (or text signal) is recorded and analyzed, compared against their metrics, weighted with probabilities; new questions are asked. The more they talk, even if it has nothing to do with the subject of interest, the more data they feed into the machines. In time, after the database is built up enough, they won't even need you to speak. They'll ask the questions, and your reactions will be enough to tell them what they want to know. It's a science, and it isn't perfect, but it's close enough. The software is free, anybody can download it off the Mesh.

Organizations whose employees are likely targets of capture and interrogation know the risks, and at some point they take their people aside and give them a sit-down talk on the realities of it. Instructions differ at this point; compassionate employers tell them to spill everything immediately, less compassionate agencies offer a variety of self-destruct implants. Realistic employers stress only

the possibility of holding out as long as possible; for soft interrogations, this means screwing with the data that the sensors and software are getting. Garbage in, garbage out. The preferred option for those that can afford it is Hush.

Hush Mechanics

Hush is a narcoalgorithm and nanodrug that institutes a controlled form of neural damage which causes the user to operate under the delusion that whatever they say is the truth. The user is under no compulsion from the drug to give out information, but at the same time any statement they make they will perceive as true, no matter how false or ridiculous it may actually be—even if the subject had intended to make a false statement, in the process of making it they will become absolutely convinced of its truth. As the subject never gives off the signals that indicate lying to interrogation software, “soft” interrogation becomes exceedingly more difficult against the subject (-30 modifier to Interrogation tests). The effects of Hush are permanent, though they may be removed with psychosurgery. At the gamemaster's discretion, cognitive dissonance from the subject believing too many contrary “facts” may cause additional mental stress to the Hush user.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano/Narcoalgorithm	INH, O	Special	+0	Mental	High

ENTRY 159: Language Synthesis

Historically, languages were critical components of a transhuman's identity. The mother tongue helps determine how the brain develops, provides one of the standard identifiers for national and ethnic groups, and can influence the ability to frame certain thoughts and concepts. Even after the Fall and the flight from Earth, many groups stayed together based on their common language as much as any other shared belief or heritage.

Yet the social shakeup of the Fall and the rise in technology has seen the blossoming of new constructed languages, in a way never seen in history since the adoption of Morse code. Language synthesis is a hobby and pastime for some, a full-time profession for others. All manner of multimedia require "authentic" human and alien languages crafted by linguistic technicians, and the results are stunning: over half a million egos have a working knowledge of Silá, the language of the O-sil in the popular Mesh-based fantasy game *The World Tree*. Powerful software modeling tools allow even amateurs to get in on the fun, using dialect engines to derive variant languages with unusual influences over a period of time—the cheap *World Tree* knock-off *Yggys* uses a variant of Latin based on a postulated five-thousand years of influence and borrowing from various Southeast Asian languages.

Many small groups have seized on custom-designed synthetic languages as a tool for more clearly communicating certain concepts, or to ensure no-one else can understand their speech. These code-talkers rely on the cutting edge of linguistics, combining difficult and complicated linguistic rules as a substitute for encryption—which is effective, until it isn't. Many agencies don't even bother keeping a staff of linguists to break synthetic languages: they can outsource the sample-languages to Mesh-based linguistic communities for free and have effective translations within minutes or hours, and certain military groups use specialized battle-languages to keep their communications secure.

Mechanics

Designing a new constructed language in *Eclipse Phase* is a Task Action with a timeframe determined by the gamemaster. The timeframe should be set according to the complexity of the language and could range from an hour (constructing a dialect) to days (assembling a new member of an existing language family) to even months (building an entirely new language from scratch). Typical appropriate skills for designing a new language are Academics: Linguistics or Art: Language Synthesis. The typical target number is 50, though the player may choose to aim for a higher target number if they wish the language to be more complex and difficult. At the gamemaster's discretion, academic sources on linguistics and specialized dictionaries and software tools may provide a modifier of up to +30 on these tests.

When complete, the character has created a new language and the sourcecode for a rating 40 skillssoft in that language. Learning this language requires spending rez points as normal, though the creator can make as many copies of the skillssoft as they wish. Characters may design the language to be partially or mostly communicable with one or more existing languages (a specialized patois of English and Mandarin, for example), or specifically create it to be incommunicable with existing languages.

Decoding a constructed language from captured samples of speech requires a Task Action with a timeframe and target number identical to those required to create the synthetic language. Academic sources on linguistics and specialized dictionaries and software tools may provide a modifier of up to +30 to decode a language, and substantial samples of the speech (a lengthy conversation of several minutes or hours) should reduce the timeframe for the decoding substantially (minutes instead of hours, hours instead of days, days instead of months). Again, the character still needs to pay rez to learn the language, but receives a rating 40 skillssoft of the language which can be used to easily decode it, and can make as many copies as they want.

Using Synthetic Languages

From a thematic standpoint, synthetic languages are one more flavorful option that can be mixed in to the background without any need for mechanics—the Klingon Opera Company that tours Mars, books and fanchats conducted entirely in some spaceborne variant of Tolkien's Tengwar script, wrappers for the latest hot snackfood written in some Sino-Greek hybrid, etc.—all good stuff that doesn't need to make gameplay harder but can make it more interesting and fun.

On the other hand, speaking in a language no one else around you knows and understands still carries certain tactical advantages, particularly during negotiations or combat situations. Secure communications makes this less of a big deal in *Eclipse Phase* but for players and gamemasters that want equivalents to the battlelanguages in the *Dune* series, these bare mechanics should be sufficient.

ENTRY 160: Troika

“It was an experiment in fecundity in space. A bold experiment, involving a selection of fertility drugs in microgravity, testing the limits of traditional conception. Everything had to be just right—the ambiance, the alignment of the planets, I was taking these hormone shots...and well, you can see the results. A bit mixed, but I call it a success.” - Troika’s Mother

“She was on every drug known to transhumanity. We all were. We’d just pried the doors off the pharmacy and snorted, swallowed, or shot up everything. Fucked like bunnies for fifteen hours. ‘Til we were raw and bleeding. First time I saw the kids, I thought it was the cosmic rays, but now that I think about it if they’d have come out with gills I wouldn’t have been surprised either.”

- Troika’s Father

The Troika began their lives as conjoined identical triplets. While their “mark zero” birthmorph wasn’t much to write home about, they delved deep into biomorph design. Eventually they saved up enough creds and favors to resleeve into a custom-designed biomorph which retains most of the cosmetic advantages of the human form but possesses a distinct trilateral symmetry. Three normal human faces stare out at 120degree angles from a conjoined skull, three arms pivot about in expanded ball-and-socket shoulder joints with hands that feature three fingers flanked by two opposable thumbs, and stand on a classic tripod leg structure. Each of the triplets’ personalities is distinct, and modifies their “third” of the morph according to their tastes: Troy has blue eyes and likes tattoos, usually hand-done blue abstract spirals crawling up their chest; Royce has brown eyes and prefers dermal implants and piercings; Kane has yellow eyes and goes in for scars and branding, having almost completed a quite elaborate feathered dragon eating its own tail on their chest. While content with their current morph, the Troika continue to design new custom morphs and are rumored to be working on a “Mark III” version that will allow each triplet to disengage their morph and operate independently, then rejoin with either of the others as necessary.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	15	12	15	12	18	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	42	8	84	30	6	45

Morph: Unique Biomorph

Skills (Troy): Academic: Neurobiology 60, Art: Tattooing 45, Interests: Multiple Births 60, Language: Native English 85, Language: French 50, Language: Mandarin 50, Perception: 70, Persuasion 40, Profession: Morph Designer 60, Protocol 20, Scrounging 45, Unarmed Combat 50

Skills (Royce): Academic: Biochemistry 60, Art: Piercing 45, Interests: Congenital Deformities 60, Interests: Custom Clothing 50, Language: Native English 85, Language: Braille 50, Language: Mandarin 50, Perception: 50, Persuasion 50, Profession: Tailor 60, Protocol 30, Unarmed Combat 50

Skills (Kane): Academic: Bioengineering 60, Art: Scarification 45, Interests: Custom Implants 60, Interests: DIY Augmentation 60, Interests: Unique Morphs 60, Language: Native English 85, Language: French 50, Language: Sign Language 50, Perception: 75, Profession: Bioengineer 60, Unarmed Combat 50

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack (x3), Mnemonic Augmentation, Multi-Tasking (x2)*, Sex Switch
Advantages: 3 arms, 3 legs, 360 degree vision

Disadvantages: Uncanny Valley

* All three egos occupy the same morph on a permanent basis, and switch off control of the arms and legs—though they can (and sometimes do) squabble over control.

ENTRY 161: The Gamma Cipher

The Forty-Seconds were a math cult out of a private habitat orbiting Titan. The outer order was a social network, a Rotarian outfit about communal activities to foster connections, cooperation, and friendship, with an emphasis on personal and group improvement, at the same time. Members were rewarded for partnering exercises, unlocking achievements that raised their status and additional benefits of being one of the Forty-Seconds. The inner order was a sex network, both fun-loving and pragmatic, a way for people to experiment, experience, and educate themselves within a group of people they trusted. Team-building exercises gave way to BDSM sessions and orgies, both of the flesh and of the mind, and there were achievements here too, though “partnering” took a different course. Advancing through the higher degrees of the inner order unlocked access to the Three Ciphers, the secret math that underwrote the whole philosophy and structure of the Forty-Seconds, the received wisdom that was supposed to unlock the ultimate in transhuman mental and physical potential—first for the individual, and then for the entire race.

Firewall’s cover was a catastrophic power core failure and faulty vacuum seal; they used an EMP to kill the power then popped the Forty-Seconds’ habitat open to hard vacuum and then sent a team in to kill anyone or anything that managed to survive. Sufficient evidence of infection was found in the inner circle members to confirm an exsurgent cell, though the particular vector of infection was not discovered. The clean-sweep team that went in after removed any evidence of Firewall’s involvement and set up flags in the Mesh to alert them if any follow-up activity occurred.

The Forty-Seconds’ “Three Ciphers” hit cryptography networks starting six weeks after the Titan habitat was deactivated. The codes involved were complex, interrelated, and clever— requiring the decryption of the first document to decrypt the second, and the second to decrypt the third. Presented as a challenge to be done without software aids, Firewall tracked 93 cases of exsurgent infection before it could spike the file from the networks and start tracking the seeders. Even today, the hunt continues and new copies of the Three Ciphers – Alpha, Beta, and Gamma – still pop up today.

Mechanics

The Three Ciphers are a trio of documents encrypted using a pre-quantum cryptography algorithm—in other words, something designed to be used by transhumans, without the need for software. A successful Infosec or Academics: Cryptography Task Action Test is required to decrypt each document (timeframe of 1 week). The encryption is layered, so theoretically each document must be decrypted in turn, though practically, quantum codebreaking can decrypt any of the documents in any order – see Eclipse Phase 254.

The Alpha and Beta Ciphers are indoctrination documents; the process of cracking the code encrypting the two documents serves as practical example of the “secret math” that they espouse on unlocking the potential of transhuman mind and body; a user that reads either of the documents suffers a -10 cumulative modifier to their test the next time they are exposed to a basilisk hack. The Gamma Cipher itself is a basilisk hack, a variant of the Watts-Macleod strain; victims always gain the Psi Trait at Level 2 (allowing them to learn Psi-Gamma sleights) but also always gain one or more physical changes similar to those seen in Stage 1 of the Xenomorph virus (Eclipse Phase 368), usually involved deformations of the cranium; changes to jaw shape/dentition; weakened or enhanced senses sight, smell, hearing, or taste; development of a vestigial sensory organ from the pineal gland; and increased or decreased sex drive. Firewall has not yet ascertained if these changes continue to develop over time, though there is some indication they might.

ENTRY 162: The Secret Forest

Skirting the southern edge of the TITAN Quarantine Zone is a thirteen-kilometer-long arboreal habitat—the officials who drew the map designating the Zone actually argued about whether to place it inside or out, but settled for placing the southern border at the habitat’s northern wall. Ownership and origin of the habitat remains a matter of dispute; records are either lost or contradictory, and officially the habitat remains locked until the matter of ownership has been resolved, though that doesn’t stop tourists, explorers, and scroungers and from wandering in at their own risk.

The vast majority of the Secret Forest habitat is a recreation of a bamboo forest, with buried marscrete barriers preventing uncontrolled spread of rhizomes and aerogel walls marking the passage between the four climatic zones, which begin temperate at the eastern entrance and grow more tropical as a visitor moves west, the bamboo species and soil types changing to suit. The quick-growing perennial grasses brush the 12-meter ceiling in many places, and aside from various fungi and invertebrates that break down any fallen bamboo there is no direct evidence of animal life in the habitat. Access to the core habitat systems has not yet been made, but the habitat appears self-sufficient and entirely automated.

However, anecdotal evidence from visitors suggests that the Secret Forest is not as uninhabited as it first appears. Stories vary in details, but generally fall into two categories: the living trees and the predator.

The Living Trees are a number of bamboo plants spread throughout the habitat which have been augmented with transhuman-style implants, including something similar to a cortical implant or cyberbrain. Some accounts record attempts at contacting these egos, which range from incommunicative to accounts of a monastic sect attempting to escape human desires by resleeving into the tree-like forms, or of a TITAN prison where the subject is forced to grow and die, grow and die, over and over... Efforts to locate the “living trees” on planned expeditions have so far met with failure.

The Predator is supposed to be a large mammal—perhaps an uplifted panda—which lives in the Secret Forest. Multiple expeditions have failed to find any trace of the predator, though they have found the remains of certain “victims” that appear to have died violently in the bamboo forest, perhaps after having become lost. “Survivor”

accounts of the predator attacks suggest the animal can become invisible, or nearly so, and the heat signature is indistinguishable from the surrounding environment. The predator is most often blamed for the failure of any concerted operation to harvest the material of the Secret Forest, though since all such operations are illegal according to all Martian habitats and the Planetary Consortium, such reports are few and unsubstantiated.

Seed

A research team is planning a week-long expedition into the Secret Forest, using drones equipped with radar, sonar, and lidar to map the whole structure. Conscious of the habitat’s reputation, they are planning a minimal-impact trip—take only scans, leave only footprints. However, given the rumors of the predator they invite the PCs to come along with them to provide protection and insight. Legends of invisible deadly panda bears aside, the more immediate problem when they arrive is the crew of illegal bamboo-harvesting botanists already there...and who cannot afford any witnesses.

ENTRY 163: Rust Convocation

In many ways, Firewall is not a single organization. There are dozens of groups that seek to protect transhumanity, or guard against exsurgent threats, some of which are aligned with Firewall and others of which are ignorant of its existence. The Rust Convocation is one of the latter, a supergroup that is focused on sharing information and resources among various anti-exsurgent groups on and around the planet Mars, and coordinating their efforts to prevent and contain outbreaks.

The Rust Convocation began as an alliance between the Zone Rangers, who developed and maintain the private sensor net encircling the TITAN Quarantine Zone, and the Ruster Reclamation Project which seeks to identify and rehabilitate victims of the TITANs among the Barsoomian population. The Convocation quickly grew to include such groups as the Olympus-based Extraordinary Virus Containment Unit which seeks to identify, contain, and possibly reverse the effects of various exsurgent viruses; and the Red Market, a group of hypercorp executives who have pooled their wealth to remove TITAN-related materials from the Martian black and grey markets before they can do any harm. Most of these groups are secret to various degrees, due to questionable legality of their practices, but the Convocation provides Mesh resources that link their individual intelligence networks into a single database/wiki, and provide additional quasi-legal tools for covert funds and material transfer.

While the Rust Convocation as a whole is ignorant of Firewall, Firewall is aware of the Rust Convocation, and has a few agents planted in the various organizations to monitor their progress and lend additional aid if necessary—made all the easier by the Rust Convocation's anonymous funds/material/information transfer procedures. While not sufficient to really influence the organization, the plants Firewall has in place are enough to keep tabs on the various groups.

Seeds

- The Zone Rangers have registered a major incursion into the Zone, and have coordinated with other groups through the Rust Convocation to intercept the quarantine-breakers on their way out—with lethal force, if necessary. The player characters are quietly approached to assist; if nothing else it should be a good networking opportunity...on the other side, they may be facing

a small army of exsurgent morphs looking to make a breakout.

- Firewall's plants inside the Rust Convocation are concerned that the Extraordinary Virus Containment Unit is keeping samples of the exsurgent virus in storage for study, and with inadequate security precautions. An agent approaches them and asks that the player characters infiltrate the facility and activate the emergency protocols that will destroy the samples.
- The Red Market is concerned by a recent source of TITAN-tech that has begun appearing on the Martian black market. The offer to provide the player characters with a line of credit for two million Titanian kroner in order to track down this source and eliminate it—with prejudice. Anything left of the original two million is theirs to keep for a job well done. They will receive additional help and information through limited access to the Rust Convocation network.

ENTRY 164: Molly 8

Even Firewall makes mistakes. Molly 8 was trained as an asset, one more orphan of the Fall that nobody would miss if things went wrong, but with skills and dedication to the cause. She volunteered for the Experimental Psi-Implant program. Nothing was ever quite clear to her after that.

Molly 8's escape from Firewall containment was messy. Her mental state since then has continued to degrade, though she remains generally functional in society. Instincts or the remainder of her training convince her to change her face and name frequently, to seek out the edges or lowest levels of society, and to generally keep on the move. She no longer remembers who exactly is looking for her, but she knows it has something to do with her powers.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	13	15	15	8	12	50	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	100	10	200	40	8	60

Morph: Remade

Skills: Academics: Neurochemistry 60, Academics: Linguistics 60, Blades 45, Climbing 55, Clubs 45, Deception 80, Disguise 65, Fray 45, Free Fall 45, Freerunning 45, Impersonation 65, Infiltration 60, Infosec 60, Interests: Firewall 55, Interests: Psi 55, Interests: Psychiatric Drugs 55, Kinesics 45, Language: Native English 85, Language: Korean 50, Language: Spanish 50, Language: Mandarin 50, Networking: Criminals 40, Palming 45, Perception 55, Profession: Scrap Merchant 55, Profession: Spycraft 55, Spray Weapons 25, Unarmed Combat 55

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Respiration, Experimental Psi-Implant, Temperature Tolerance, Toxin Filters

Traits: Addiction (Psike-Out, Major), Exceptional Aptitude (WIL), Mental Disorders (ADHD, General Anxiety Disorder, Insomnia, PTSD), Neural Damage (Dyslexia, Mood Swings, Synaesthesia), Uncanny Valley

Experimental Psi-Implant

The experimental psi-implant administers is a combination of dozens of drug glands tied to specialized medical sensors and a computerized controlled center. It releases controlled doses of various psi drugs into Molly's system, either on a preset schedule or on command. At any given time Molly 8 has 3 different doses of Psi-Opener running

through her system, giving her access to 2 Psi-Chi and 1 Psi-Gamma sleight (determined by the gamemaster); Molly can also voluntarily activate a dose of Psike-Out once every hour. A command override signal to the implant will cause it to release a dose of Inhibitor once every six hours. It was hoped that the continued circulation of psi-drugs would enable Molly 8 to develop Psi skills, but instead the continual mental stress and her constantly changing brain chemistry have left her almost insane.

Seed

Molly 8 was a failure. Molly 9 was a success—but she went rogue. Molly 9 is smart enough to time her psi-drug intake, and knows exactly when she'll have what sleights available to her, and is working to upgrade herself even further, by stealing a tech device that might grant her access to exsurgent-only psi sleights. Firewall wants Molly 9 brought down, but she has already defeated three teams. As far as Firewall can see, the only hope is to recruit Molly 8 to help hunt down her "sister"; maybe then the player characters will have a chance.

ENTRY 165: Clanstack

Individual transhumans, as unique and distinct from one another as they are, remain a part of a greater whole—a family, a clan, a hypercorp, a nation. In the focus on the individual, these tribal identities often get confused or lost. To help combat this, cyberneticists developed a variation of the cortical stack called the clanstack.

The clanstack is an active Mesh device, constantly feeding information to and receiving it from a private peer-to-peer network associated with the user's "clan"—which, depending on the individual's preferences might be their immediate family, their work group, or wider religious/ethnic networks like the Israel Network or Réseau Français. Users experience a constant communion with their clan network, a sensation that their people are all around them, and keeping up-to-date on major developments. For a family this might be weddings, funerals, births and other life events; work groups and national groups tend to focus on holidays and the change in major officers; religious networks emphasize holy days and periods of prayer. Users can also draw on the network for any basic knowledge available to their group network.

The clanstack keeps an archive of fundamental aspects of the clan, just as a cortical stack keeps an up-to-date fork of the ego of the morph it is installed in. In the event of a cataclysmic extinction event (or the collapse of the network), any survivors would contain enough cultural data in their clanstack to preserve the clan. In this way, each individual with a clanstack is a seed from which their people may grow, to prevent entire cultures from being lost.

While intended as a cultural tool, in the marketplace clanstacks have found other uses as well. Many groups use clanstacks to keep members tightly-knit and aware of each other's immediate status—the fewer members in the clanstack, the more data from individual members is fed into the user's clanfeed at a time. Gangs, elite military units, and social cliques have all used clanstacks in this way.

Mechanics

A clanstack is a cyberware implant that ties in to a specific network, usually chosen at the time of installation (this can be switched later on, but most such networks have verification protocols to ensure the user is a member of that group before they can join). Users receive a constant, non-distracting stream of information related to their

group so long as they have a Mesh connection. This is not a constant chatter in the backbrain so much as the user instantly being aware of major holidays and events relative to the group, the names and positions of prominent members, key aspects of group history, etc. All of this is automatic and does not require a skill test to recall. Clan networks also tend to have major documents related to the group available—religious networks have major holy books or works of scripture, states have constitutions and laws, nations or ethnic groups may have major examples of literature such as the Icelandic eddas. When cut off from the Mesh (or if the network goes down), a back-up of the key cultural data is stored in the user's clanstack. [Cost: Moderate]

ENTRY 166: Firebreak Protocol

Firewall is dedicated to maintaining transhuman existence—at any cost. There are levels of existence that may be hellish and unthinkable to most transhumans, but are acceptable to the Firewall organization. While they will strive as long as they can to preserve transhumanity as it is, if Firewall is faced with another extinction event there are several less-than-optimal alternatives that may come into play. One of them is the Firebreak Protocol.

One of Firewall's greatest fears is a mass outbreak of the exsurgent virus, particularly if realized through a basilisk hack through the omnipresent Mesh or the FORBIDDEN REACH scenario. Information is one of the hardest things to contain, and a substantial portion of Firewall's research is dedicated to find ways to detect, counteract, or vaccinate the population against a basilisk hack exposure. Illicit transhuman experimentation has led to the development of the technology beyond the Firebreak Protocol: a specialized basilisk hack that infects the subject with a low-lethality (72% survival rate) variant of the WattsMacLeod strain of the exsurgent virus that renders the subject immune to further basilisk hacks. The basilisk hack would be broadcast in a habitat in response to a suspected local outbreak, immunizing the remaining population and preventing the further spread of the exsurgent virus.

Mechanics

The Firebreak Protocol is a basilisk hack (Eclipse Phase 364) which infects the subject with a variant of the exsurgent virus. This hack is particularly severe, designed to be difficult to overcome—victims take a -30 penalty to COG + INT + SAV Test to see if they are susceptible. About 28% of victims suffer a series of grand mal seizures every minute until they die or receive medical attention. The rest are changed, their brains rewired in several ways to resist basilisk hacks. They gain:

- The Psi Defence (Level 2) positive trait. They do not have to pay CP for this trait.
- Two Neural Damage negative traits, often (but not always) dyslexia, color blindness, or amusia. They do not gain any CP for these traits.
- A +20 modifier when resisting further infection from the Exsurgent virus, including basilisk hacks.
- Reduce the character's Trauma Threshold by 1.

Using the Firebreak Protocol

The Firebreak Protocol is one of Firewall's dirty little secrets. It is not pleasant, it is far more lethal than most characters would like, it is far less effective as an immunization agent than Firewall's limited testing has shown, and it is currently being deployed to habitats throughout the solar system, hardwired in to be triggered remotely in the event of a mass basilisk hack outbreak. It is currently being planned as the primary countermeasure if FORBIDDEN REACH ever comes to pass (see entry 103). And the player characters through their missions for Firewall may have helped it be developed, tested, and installed. The Firewall agents aware of the Firebreak Protocol are those dedicated to preserving humanity in some form—and they are willing to pay the cost. The player characters may agree or not; some may even volunteer for testing, hoping for psi powers. Other PCs may argue against it—and, if sufficient evidence is ever brought to Firewall's higher ups that the Firebreak Protocol is not as effective as they think, the program may be dismantled, at least until it can be refined.

ENTRY 167: Codename: Sector

There is a mole in Firewall; an undercover agent or leak who is passing Firewall's data and technology to outside parties, including various suspected TITAN affiliate groups, former collaborators, and exsurgent cells. Firewall agents have been killed or infected, their missions blown. Valuable intel data and equipment has gone missing. The counterintelligence agents attempting to track and identify this mole know them only by the codename Sector. While they do not yet have definitive proof of Sector's real identity, they have three strong suspects.

D'lish is a freelance media tech, veteran of six gatecrashing documentaries and a brief but high-ratings civil war on one of the Venusan aerostats. Murky personal history involving some military training; no record of birth or family. She started stringing for Firewall in media circles six years ago, began running her own agents within eighteen months, gradually gained greater access to the organization as crises came up and were contained or dealt with.

Artemis 1 worked her way to the top of the matriarchal sex-economy hypercorp AllLove, and used her position to fund reproductive health education throughout the solar system. Appeared on Firewall watch lists after attempting to convene a conference on suspected sexually-transmitted diseases left behind by the TITANS; contacted after her personal cadre of troops firebombed three reproductive health clinics that were implanting xenomorph embryos in unsuspecting transhumans. Became a close advisor on viral research who personally took part in several research-and-recovery expeditions.

Jules Mars, professional war orphan from out of Mars. Fifteen nanoseconds of fame for being the last living transhuman rescued from the Zone; her muse managed to parlay that into a career as a minor media personality focusing on the rights, benefits, and care of veterans and survivors. Her continued prominence in the Martian mediasphere is in part due to Firewall support, as Jules' continued advocacy and has placed her at the center of a number of groups that Firewall likes to keep tabs on. At this point, she has become so adept at handling her Firewall handlers it is not clear what Firewall assets she has access to.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	13	12	18	13	13	30	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	60	12	120	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academics: Psychology 47, Academics: Sociology 53, Beam Weapons 40, Fray (Full Defense) 56, Free Fall 55, Infiltration 50, Interests: Exsurgent Cells 50, Interests: The Fall 50, Interests: Firewall 40, Interests: TITANs 50, Intimidation (Verbal) 67, Kinesics (Sense Motive) 45, Kinetic Weapons (Pistols) 45, Language: Native French 87, Language: English 73, Language: Skandinaviska 68, Networking: Autonomists 36, Networking: Criminals 47, Networking: Hypercorps 40, Networking: Media 55, Perception (Visual) 50, Persuasion (Negotiation) 56, Profession: Intel Ops 65, Scrounging 44, Unarmed Combat 40

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack

Traits: Allies (Firewall), Eidetic Memory

Using Codename: Sector

The three suspects listed above are only the most likely possibilities on Firewall's list. Gamemasters may choose for any (or all, or none) of them to be Sector. The search for a mole is a venerable story trope with lots of material to draw on for an Eclipse Phase campaign, but in EP there exist any number of possible twists: each of the women mentioned as suspects may be no more than sleeves for the ego of the real morph, or Manchurian Candidates whose psychosurgery-installed behavioral routines are triggered by certain code phrases.

ENTRY 168: Missile Children

Intelligence is cheap, and readily available. There is a glut of AGIs and infomorphs, more egos than there are morphs to carry them. Yet at the same time, intelligence is a valued, desirable trait—the ability not just to reason, but to make instinctual decisions, to see through traps and discern patterns, to not just follow a program. It is a weird economy, with a constant demand against an overwhelming supply, and at the fringes there is room for very strange demands indeed. Slavery and indoctrination are often considered the whims of those rich or highly-connected and devoted enough to have a sentient object at their disposal, but in truth there is a brute and terrible pragmatism behind contemporary transhuman commercial slavery—why waste the time and effort on writing a program, when you can have an intelligent ego do the work so much better and just as cheap?

Missile children are a tradition dating back to the conflict with the TITANs, one that most transhumans would rather forget. AGIs or immature egos ripped from war orphans were drafted into virtual boot camps, indoctrinated in group discipline and obedience, educated in their peculiar function, and then installed inside military hardware. The lucky ones who scored high in tactics and reflexes were installed in gunnery emplacements, operating mass drivers, rail guns, and lasers; the rest were resleeved into missiles, torpedoes, and self-guided bombs. Intelligent kamikaze explosives that waited patiently for the order to fire themselves at the enemy, using their skills and training to bypass all defenses.

It is estimated that 80% of missile children were “expended” during the TITAN conflict, with the rest later “decommissioned.” Rumors persist of various groups, individuals, and habitats that maintain a stockpile of missile children, and lost or forgotten remnants are still found—unexploded bombs that have spiraled into insanity after the failure of their mission, or automated defense platforms who think the war is still on. It is one of the crueler reminders of transhumanity’s recent past, and there are those who seek to address the suffering of the surviving missile children, especially the Mesh-based Mothers of Missile Children (MOMC) network, which resleeves the egos and places them in foster family-groups to help reintegrate them into transhuman society.

Mechanics

Missile children are usually sleeved into missiles or small fighter ships with a range of sensors (typically radar and thermal imaging), propulsion systems, and sometimes communication, anti-missile countermeasure, or electronic warfare equipment in addition to their payload—which can range from conventional high-yield explosives to nuclear weapons or antimatter warheads. However, over the course of different conflicts missile children have also been placed into drop-bombs, torpedoes designed for underwater function, and orbital artillery emplacements. The missile morphs have strict limitations on attributes, capping out at 25.

Most have standard intelligence (INT 10-15) but are selected for good reflexes (REF 2025). Self-guiding missiles will have Navigation 50, and may have additional skills depending on their specialty—for example, torpedo children often have Perception (Sonar) 44. Artillery emplacements always have Gunnery 55, and in some cases were even given command over a stock of missile children of their own to fire as necessary.

ENTRY 169: Firebase Shaka

The TITAN Quarantine Zone on Mars. One of the last bastions of transhumanity's would-be exterminators. Even the Planetary Consortium isn't sure what is left in there—art and technologies dreamed of by minds freed of human desires, morals, ethics, and goals, rigged with whatever traps, leftovers, and experiments they remained. Too dangerous to explore, too valuable to destroy outright, transhumanity can only seek to contain the Zone. Some of the safeguards are obvious—walls, fences, signs, mine fields. Others are less intrusive: a surreptitious sensor network monitoring everything going in and out of the Zone, regular satellite surveillance, and laser emplacements built into the Martian landscape and camouflaged from view.

High above all of this in geosynchronous orbit is Firebase Shaka. An autonomous fortress/habitat, little more than a platform primed to deliver its payload of tungsten harpoons upon the Zone. Designed as a final failsafe in the event of a TITAN resurgence, Firebase Shaka has enough orbital artillery to level any conventional and most unconventional structures. Whether that will be enough has not yet been put to the test.

Seeds

- Unmanned and carrying a payload of orbital weaponry, Firebase Shaka makes a tempting target to any criminals insane or desperate enough to try and rifle it. After several thwarted attempts, the Planetary Consortium offers the player characters a reward to act as “white hats” by attempting to bypass the latest security measures they have installed. The mission goes critical when an accidental intrusion in the Zone causes one of the orbital weapons to arm...and only the PCs are close enough to stop the countdown.
- An unarmed duplicate of Firebase Shaka occupies an orbit closer to Mars' South Pole—initially designed as a test bed for orbital weapon technologies and later decommissioned, it is now mainly used as a setting for various cinematic efforts. The PCs are hired to come along and provide security and technical assistance with one such effort, which includes installing a massive “prop” tungsten rod...are the people who hired the PCs really there to make a movie, or at they trying to make the station operational?

- Firebase Shaka has suffered a failure in its navigational thrusters and slipped into a decaying orbit. The PCs are hired to get aboard the falling space station and try to correct or allay its descent...and failing that, to direct it to fall onto the Zone instead of any of the occupied habitats on Mars.
- Exsurgent terrorists have seized Firebase Shaka, and are reconfiguring the weaponry for some purpose. While the Planetary Consortium debates the best course of action—trying to destroy the station versus trying to recapture it—Firewall asks the team to discover what is really going on. Unknown to the Planetary Consortium, Firewall has a miniature resleeving station set up inside Firebase Shaka itself loaded with six micro-morphs – synthmorphs only fifteen centimeters tall. This could be a valuable opportunity to find out what the exsurgents are planning and stop them at the same time.

ENTRY 170: Godkillers

“Omnia pereundum.”

– Godkiller slogan

Some transhumans have set themselves up as above and apart from the clanking masses and unmodified flats of transhumanity—Ultimates and exhumans who have declared themselves superior in every form and function. Such arrogance begets enmity, for in a time when the length of a single ego’s existence may be prolonged indefinitely there still remain those that seek to remind others that no one is immortal.

The Godkillers are a sect of assassins, mainly targeting the Remade and certain exotic exhumans. Mainly composed of flats and spicers, the bulk of their numbers are perfectly ordinary individuals who hold a grudge against those who set themselves up as superior to others. Through their network, these individuals commit their resources to the destruction of the Ultimates by bidding against specific targets. The agents of the Godkillers are dangerous specialists, trained in particular skills, methodical in their planning and execution. Few target are engaged directly; the Godkillers prefer to strike from a distance, making use of the weaknesses in their target’s morph or personalities, and staged to look almost like accidents. Most of the Remade never see their death coming.

So far, the Godkillers have claimed five kills—although at least three of those appear to have been industrial accidents. Of course, given the existence of forking and cortical stacks the destruction of an Ultimate or exhuman’s morph rarely equates to the destruction of the ego, so there are several “survivors” of even the most successful Godkiller strikes. One Godkiller squad managed to pry out the cortical stack from the corpse, and is said to have kept it as a trophy; in the other confirmed Godkiller hit the destruction was so total (the Remade was trapped in a tank which was then filled with liquid helium) that even the cortical stack did not survive.

Seeds

- The Godkiller network has announced a new trial “open season” bounty on one of their targets—a Remade ego broker known as Joaquin the Bastard. The current price on his heads is 250,000 credits...if the PCs can present his cortical stack with its ego intact.

- The PCs come across the remnants of a Godkiller ambush of an exhuman named Xoras. The ambush was mostly successful, but Xoras’ back-up head is still alive, and calls out to the player characters, offering them whatever they want to reunite him with his back-up body in a bunker on Pluto. If they accept, they’ll have to deal with Godkillers looking to finish the job.
- Scandal rocks the Godkiller network; it turns out that Mike Cheetimanah the splicer handling the money was using it to launder earnings from a Triad criminal network on Luna. The network has begun to fracture, and a specific faction of outraged supporters hire the PCs to go after Mike with extreme prejudice.
- A local administrator is subtly encouraging the Godkiller network in the PC’s habitat to target a visiting Remade morph on her way to the Outer Rim—all the better to convince her to spend her resources on overpriced security details and otherwise boost the local economy. One of the Godkiller agents in place to keep tabs on the Remade wises onto the scam and asks the PCs to find the evidence exposing the administrator’s culpability. Once the Remade drops her guard, the Godkiller will have a much easier time dispatching her.

ENTRY 171: Ciudad

On the surface of Mars, at the edge of the Tharsis plateau, stands a monolith in the shape of a steeply-angled, flat-topped pyramid eight meters tall, and six meters on a side at the base. The surface appears to be granite, of shade just to the red of black, and in the right light parts of it seem to sparkle where metal filaments and piezoelectric crystals meet the surface. Its name is Ciudad, and they claim to be the first stonemorph in transhuman history.

While the details of the design remain proprietary, Ciudad claims that his morph is a single massive solid-state device, the product of a new discipline called geoelectronics, and that barring seismic cataclysm or accident his morph will last ten thousand years, until the hard shell is weathered away by the winds and waters of a terraformed Mars. The truth of that claim remains unproven, though visitors to Ciudad have noted sonar and x-ray scans do show that the structure appears almost entirely solid, and with a high degree of electrical activity.

What is known is that the Ciudad stonemorph is extremely limited in its abilities—immobile, with none of the typical transhuman senses, they perceive the world entirely through a refined electrical sense, judging distance, velocity, and even shape through varying capacitance between nearby objects and its stone skin. Ciudad’s only “natural” means of communication is the production of weak electrical signals, but these are boosted and converted by its Mesh inserts into something other transhumans can interpret. Hermitical by nature, Ciudad enjoys its isolation, both geographical and sensory. Most of its time is spent directing a handful of robots to sculpt the surrounding landscape, and interpreting the seismic data it receives.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	15	15	5	14	-	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
4	1	40	8	60	1600	200	2400

Morph: Stonemorph (Unique)

Skills: Academics: Geography (Mars) 65, Academics: Geology (Mars) 70, Academics: Geophysics 70, Academics: Seismology 55, Art: Landscaping (Xenoscaping) 52, Hardware: Electronics (Geoelectronics) 64, Interests: Martian Vulcanism 56, Interests: Zen Gardens 34, Interfacing 45, Language: Native Portuguese 84, Language:

English 73, Language: French 70, Language: Spanish 70, Networking: Martian Mining Hypercorps 60, Networking: Scientists 25, Profession: Seismologist 66, Scrounging 25

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Electrical Sense, Seismograph Armor: 30

Notes: Immobile, no hands, linked to five Dwarf robots (Eclipse Phase 345) which manipulate its environment when necessary.

Using Ciudad

Sometimes the NPCs come to the PCs, and sometimes the PCs have to go to the NPC—Ciudad is NPC and remote location all in one. A veritable sage on anything involving Martian volcanism, the stonemorph can be a valuable if eccentric asset, either helping the PCs out or hiring them to go on missions to investigate geological anomalies on Mars. Despite the isolated context, savvy players will probably realize that designing, building, and installing the “stonemorph” and expensive Dwarf robots suggests considerable resources on Ciudad’s part—and indeed, the monolith has a minority interest in several Martian mining corporations, and continues to act as a highly-paid consultant for several of them.

Seed

In their last adventure, the PCs have stumbled upon a multicolored metal cube with bizarre electrical characteristics. Research into the artifact leads them to Ciudad, who recognizes it as a “geoelectronic” device, and realizes someone is pirating his designs. Ciudad will offer to hire the PCs to deal with the infringers...or, failing that, at least buy the artifact off them for a hefty sum.

ENTRY 172: The Neptunium Skull

Distance impedes nearly all communication; both the physical distance measured in kilometers and the conceptual distance between one ego and another, or one community and another. Information comes through various channels and becomes distorted or misinterpreted in passing from one receiver to the next, rumors growing as they are told and retold, and even the most diligent wiki on the Mesh cannot perfectly control all of what its members post. Space gives birth to legends.

One such legend regards the Neptunium Skull: 59.88 kg of neptunium-236, cast or carved or otherwise shaped into the semblance of the skull of a human female. Those are the facts; the rest is mostly conjecture. Its likely first appearance was a line on a security report from Rhea, when an “irregular near-critical mass” of neptunium was listed as among the missing following a break-in at a radioactive materials storage facility. A few weeks later, a Ruster yegg fresh from a “honeymoon” on Saturn died of radiation poisoning, mumbling about a skull—her partner/wife escaped custody and was never seen again. The first “official” sighting was when the St. Catherine Tong handed over the Skull to the administration of New Quebec, in exchange for the release of sixteen of its members from various forms of incarceration or service. The accepting official, Davier Jose Cheecha, was later indicted in scandal when the skull disappeared from its secure vault, and fled for the Outer Rim.

So the tales go, on and on—the Neptunium Skull crops up here and there throughout the solar system, an objective of inestimable worth and danger, leaving a trail of broken lives and contamination in its wake.

Mechanics

The Neptunium Skull is radioactive. Any unshielded exposure to the Neptunium Skull results in radiation poisoning for biomorphs (see Eclipse Phase 201); synthmorphs tend to become contaminated and may suffer flawed and corrupted backups, as well as passing the contamination on to others by exposure. Currently, due to shape, density, and mass the Neptunium Skull is subcritical and will not create a sustained nuclear reaction. This can be easily overcome however, so there remains the possibility that under the right conditions the Neptunium Skull can be converted into a nuclear weapon. The effects of this happening are left up to the gamemaster, but should probably involve “BIG BAZZA BOOM” and radiation

poisoning and contamination for any nearby morphs that survive.

Using the Neptunium Skull

A deadly sort of MacGuffin, the Neptunium Skull represents an object of nearly incalculable worth and danger all rolled into one. The industrial effort required to synthesize and separate that much neptunium-236 is tremendous, the idea that it is running loose in the solar system-wide grey market frightening. While not apparently designed for use in a nuclear weapon, the mass is sufficient that it could easily be used for such a purpose. However, the greater appeal of the Neptunium Skull is: who made it, and why? The shape and properties of the Neptunium Skull also make it easy to transfer legends of real-life “cursed” and apocryphal objects like the Hope Diamond or the Crystal Skulls to the Neptunium Skull; some deluded individuals may even believe that the Skull contains the ability to enhance psi powers in some fashion. NPCs may play up this and other reputed powers of the skull, but the very real threat of carrying a massive ingot of refined radioactive isotope should be more than sufficient threat for most players.

ENTRY 173: Graviton Trade Talks

It began, as many things do, when a drunken physicist scribbled something on a napkin. The party was a trade junket at Extropia, with various manufacturing interests discussing the purchase of some novel allotropic alloys from the Factors. In addition to the various official negotiating bodies were various specialists, administrators, and hangers-on at the party, waiting in case their expertise or decision-making powers were called upon. Most of them ended up highly inebriated by hour seven of the meeting; one of them—JorgeAchmed Long, an experimental physicist, was actually given half an hour of unsupervised conversation with one of the Factors. Which led to the napkin. When Jorge-Achmed sobered up the next day, he realized he'd begun conditional negotiations for purchase of the proof of gravitons.

That was five years ago, and the official beginning of the Graviton Trade Talks, a series of negotiations between the Factors and the Planetary Consortium that still have not culminated one way or another. A large portion of the negotiations involve both parties determining exactly what is on the table. Despite the Initial Drunken Napkin Agreement (IDNA), the Factors have been clear that gravitons as massless particles that mediate the force of gravitation is not quite correct, but they're being cagey about giving up more details to the point that entire teams of physicists have spent the last couple years of their careers combing over every statement any Factor at the Graviton Trade Talks has ever made, looking for clues as to the real nature of gravity. What is clear is that the Factors themselves are not certain they want to trade over anything related to graviton-tech to transhumanity, or more importantly what the going market price should be.

Using the Graviton Trade Talks

As an ongoing event of some minor importance, the Graviton Trade Talks are a nice background element to roll out in any game—an easy go-to for small talks, news, etc. “Major disappointment today at the Graviton Trade Talks...” “Chief instigator of the Graviton Trade Talks Jorge-Achmed Long vomited on the Factor ambassador today, who apparently thanked J-A for the contribution of nutrients...” “Hey, I heard the Martians are trying to undercut the Consortium at the Trade Talks, cut the rest of the solar system out of the deal...damn Rusters...” and so on and so forth. Likewise, the trade talks are a good place to place any physicist or Factor NPC that the gamemaster

needs for an adventure. As with trade talks in general, the Graviton Trade Talks are also an excellent setting for general espionage activities, particularly if the Factors can ever be convinced to bring out an example of their graviton technology.

Seed

The PCs are hired to bug the Graviton Trade Talks. Security is tight, but their employer has noted a potential weak spot: chief instigator Jorge-Achmed Long, who has a taste for male company after a long day of talking physics. If the PCs can get invited back to J-A's living quarters they'll bypass most of his security measures...and from there it's a relatively painless and easy process for them to attach the surreptitious neutrino farcaster listening device to J-A's cortical stack. Well, painless for them.

ENTRY 174: Typhoid Jane

Latisha Mehmeton Jane was orphaned in the Fall, and her foster family killed by the TITANs on Mars, leaving her to fend for herself at the age of thirteen. She has spent the last several years as a playtester, moving from one contract to the next, one habitat to the next, slowly accumulating academic credits from online courses, making friends and enjoying noncommittal non-monogamous relationships with men and women she meets online. L. M. Jane likes to get lost in crowds, and makes a hobby of being a pickpocket and groper. Her therapist said she had issues making connections with others.

Then he turned into a monster. Just like the others.

What L. M. Jane knows of her life is a lie. She is a sleeper agent for the TITANs, designed as a vector the exsurgent virus, which is spread by close contact with her. L. M. Jane is unaware of her nature, and attributes her propensity for brief relationships, being touchy-feely with others, and keeping constantly on the move to her upbringing—the artificial memories built specifically to support and rationalize those traits. So she moves through life, leaving monsters in her wake.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	15	12	10	15	13	10	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
4	1	20	3	40	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Art (Abstract) 35, Art: Digital Media (Virtual Reality Games) 37, Art: Painting (Abstract) 21, Art: Sculpture (Abstract) 25, Art: Writing 24, Free Fall (Microgravity) 33, Infosec 26, Interests: Ethical Nonmonogamy 40, Interests: Gambling 27, Interests: VR Game Design 36, Interfacing 50, Language: Native English 82, Language: Arabic 46, Networking: Autonomists 28, Networking: Hypercorps (VR Games) 43, Palming 50, Perception (Touch) 48, Profession: Playtester 56, Programming (VR Games) 33, Unarmed Combat (Touch) 23

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Sex Switch, Skinflex

Traits: Edited Memories, Innocuous, Modified Behavior (Touching, Encouraged), Psi Chameleon

Mechanics

Typhoid Jane carries dormant versions of the xenomorph exsurgent virus (Eclipse Phase 367) in specialized sweat

glands in her skin and orifices—she can infect a biomorph with a kiss or a grope or through her bodily fluids (tears, saliva, etc.) L. M. Jane has no control over when the virus is released; treat each contact as a chance infection (MOX x 10 Test, see Eclipse Phase 363)

Using Typhoid Jane

Not all enemies are malevolent. M. L. Jane just lives her life, but because of who and what she is, the xenomorph virus spreads. Her victims are sufficiently spread out that up until now she has gone unnoticed, but before long Firewall or someone else (perhaps the player characters?) will make the connections. Typhoid Jane presents the players with both a tangible threat and a moral dilemma—how do they handle this woman who is an obvious but unintentional threat to others? How will she handle it if they confront her with the news? The easy solution would be to resleeve her into an uninfected morph, but that just begs the question of how many more Typhoid Janes are out there.

ENTRY 175: Human Upgrade Program

Super soldier serums. Vita-ray enhancements. Nanochemical baths. Controlled mutative agents. Snake oil by any other name, still finding a market because the teeming hordes of transhumanity still have a sentimental attachment to their morphs. While resleeving may be practically ubiquitous, there are still plenty of people, especially among the poorer and less educated part of the transhuman spectrum, who simply want their own morph just as it is except...better. The desperate and hopeful are easy prey for the scammers peddling radioactive water and steroids, often under the most dubious available science. Efforts to stifle and educate the industry have so far failed—for every fact-checker debunking a treatment or bio-agent as crap (and often cancerous) or listing the lies and crimes of the people behind, there are thousands of automated programs drowning the Mesh personal anecdotes, promotions, secret offers, and viral campaigns.

Yet amid all the cosmic potions and miracle drugs there are real scientists working away in pursuit of the unattainable—permanent non-invasive human augmentation. That their efforts seem pointless in consideration of the personal augmentations and morphs already available is beside the point; many envision a future freed from the restraints of the current system, where custom morphs are priced out of the range of the common ego, of a transhumanity that has transcended to physical perfection and left flats and splicers far behind in favor of Humanity 2.0. Such is the logic behind the Human Upgrade Program, whose primary research facilities are on the Green Teeth, a scumbarge that operates mainly between Mercury and Venus, full of plenty of volunteer subjects.

The transhuman researchers and scientists behind the Human Upgrade Program have as their goal a retroviral agent or procedure that will transform a flat into a Remade—restructuring the subject completely while retaining their identity and some gross aspects of their physical appearance. Lost in the haze of mutative agents and chemical baths, mainstream scientists have not yet been aware that the Human Upgrade Program has begun to report some successes.

The Human Upgrade Project has found something that works; sort of. Subjects are placed in a chemically induced coma, their egos backed up to their cortical stack, and then the body is introduced to a controlled series of retroviral

and nanovirus infections which rebuild the character from the ground up, which takes several months. It's an inefficient program, and currently none of the thirty-six subjects have completed a full transformation from flat to Remade, with most exhibiting partial transformation or cancerous growths. Still, it is a start, and the Human Upgrade Project has vowed to continue to refine and augment the process until it is perfected.

Mechanics

The key retrovirus involved in the Human Upgrade Project is the exsurgent virus; stripped away of the pseudo-science and mummerly all they have succeeded at so far is reducing the body's resistance to the infection (-30 modifier to DUR test to see if the virus takes hold). Most of the "partial successes" from the project are actually experiencing Stage 1 or Stage 2 of the xenomorph virus (Eclipse Phase 368).

ENTRY 176: The Iktomi Vault

The shattered settlements of the Iktomi on Echo V are spread out in networks across the world, the remnants of shattered, overgrown highways and aqueducts connecting broken city to broken city. Yet the whole of the surface of the world was not occupied by the Iktomi—maps from space show regions that were inhospitable or otherwise neglected, free from Iktomi structures. Some were deserts and forests, beneath which the satellite maps showed former riverbeds and forgotten townships long buried by sand or crawling plants. On the ocean shore off one continent lay an entire nation that seemed to have fallen into the sea, to lay undisturbed. And in one isolated rocky butte—a geological anomaly, far from the Iktomi cities old or new—they discovered the vault.

Perhaps once it had been a natural cave, but if so the ancient Iktomi had mined it out and enlarged it into a deep shaft reaching into a natural hollow in the butte through a series of three chambers, each of which had been guarded by massive stone doors, heavily engraved with undecipherable signs in matte white and black, and the walls and floor as well are decorated in eye-catching interlocking circles and geometric designs of bright primary colors. Test samples from materials in the vault leads Xenoarchaeologists to believe that the initial period of creation for the vault was about twelve thousand years ago, and that is featured at least three subsequent periods of activity where the vault was opened, expanded, and resealed, and the three chambers leading into the natural hollow show considerable defenses had been erected, including some sort of jamming devices to disable wireless signals, the remains of three automated laser emplacements, and explosives set in the walls to collapse the chambers if the doors had been breached.

The reason for these defenses remains unknown, but whatever they guarded was obviously insufficient, as the entire complex has been breached. The massive stone discs that were rolled into place like bank vaults to seal each chamber lie shattered, the automated weapons melted from heat characteristic with plasma weapons, the designs carved into walls and ceiling pock-marked from various other weapons-fire and the heavy tread of some six-legged arthropod vehicle. The innermost chamber has yet to be breached by xenoarchaeologists—a partial detonation of the final security measure has blocked access to it, but based on the residual radiation leaking through the loose stone, the current belief is that the site contains several

tons of radioactive material, though this may be an overestimation as many of the materials used in the third cavern are based on pitchblende and radium; robots armed with UV lights have reported distinct fluorescent patterns are visible that are different from the brightly-colored markings in the previous two chambers.

Still, citing the risks and difficulties of clearing a way into the central hollow, xenoarchaeologists are currently excavating what might be the remains of a nearby worksite that could give clues into what the Iktomi were storing in their vault, and why. Some researchers have also pointed out the disturbing similarities between the Iktomi vault and human long-term radioactive waste storage facilities.

ENTRY 177: Brauchen

During the Fall, countless ships left Earth—anything that even had a chance of making it. Not all of them did. In the ensuing chaos, rescue efforts sometimes took months or years...and all anyone could do was bury the dead and loot the remnants for whatever salvage could be found. Some ships remain unaccounted for; for others the records are corrupted and lost, so no one knows for certain how many ships actually launched, or how many were on them.

The Alma Germania made it to Mars. Engine failure hit somewhere in the upper atmosphere over what would be the quarantine zone; the pilot was reduced to steering thrusters as she tried to glide a 230 ton flying brick straight into a dust storm. All hands were presumed lost, the ship quickly buried by Martian sand and dust. Last year, a dust storm uncovered part of the hull, and word of the Alma spread out on the Mesh. There was a race to see who would get there first between the bone-pickers and scrap merchants on one hand, and the archaeologists on the other.

The first expeditions were repulsed with crude chemical bombs and ancient sniper rifles.

Follow-up expeditions showed that the Alma was still crewed. The ship, designed for years in space and packed with materials for a potential colony, had enabled the initial survivors of the crash to go on, even buried alive. Air, water, waste, all recycled as best as they could with the resources remaining to them. No one knows exactly how many remain in the shell of the Alma Germania, or what the conditions within must be. A handful of survivors in ancient vacuum suits have been spotted clearing dust away from the solar panels on the ship's hull. One or two always have their weapons at the ready, willing to take a shot at anyone who comes near.

Researchers trying to pick up any signals from the downed craft received a partial audio transmission of a sermon beginning "Die Brauchen..." The language and context of the sermon were both bizarre, based around a very debased German or Dutch dialect with considerable loan-words. Still piecing together an almanac on the Brauchen, as people have taken to calling them, from bits of the transmission, anthropologists believe that the survivors have formed an isolationist community, distrustful of the outside world. They practice strict controls on child-bearing, but are otherwise sexually liberal—and in the case of the community elders, aggressive. Children exist in a form of chattel slavery, and are sometimes subject to cannibalism according to the hard math of limited resources. Many common diseases appear to be thankfully absent, but certain parasitic infections appear nearly ubiquitous.

Public opinion is still divided on what to do with the Brauchen, and so they exist in political limbo. Conditions in the stricken Alma Germania are obviously hellish, but equally obviously the

community appears stable and does not desire outside contact, having already responded violently. The latest idea to help establish communication and "open" the community, at least to researchers, is to provide a gift of salt, water, and medications...but even this has met with considerable backlash as it would be disrupting this primitive brinker-esque community.

Using the Brauchen

It's a big universe, and there are some primitive screwheads in it. The Brauchen are an entire community gone a bit medieval, stuck in a rotting ship where no-one can even remember what air smells like that hasn't gone through filters long past their prime, and yesterday's abortion very well might be on the menu. As a gamemaster, this is your chance to get as strange, nasty, and creative as you'd like. Whether you make the entire remaining ship unrepentant cannibals or a religious fundamentalist society gone crazy is entirely your bag, but keep in mind that despite the dire conditions the Brauchen have access to as much philosophy as any contemporary transhuman, and the main limit to their technology is limited resources. While it might be difficult to keep them from shooting you on sight, if the PCs can talk to them (deciphering their mangled German patois) they'll find a society that combines libertine attitudes of personal freedom with extraordinarily pragmatic approaches to basic survival. Children are not considered persons but property, the better to avoid emotional attachments, and at least a segment of the population has embraced cannibalism as both a necessity and a freedom from ancient taboos.

If a carrot is needed to further interest the PCs in this Brauchen, perhaps the Alma Germania was carrying the equivalent of five thousand early-prototype cortical stacks in its hold. Five thousand egos from old Earth, unsullied by the Brauchen's activities...they might be mad, or damaged, but right now they wait in legal limbo until the authorities decide what to do with the Brauchen. Of course, there are certain groups that are willing to launch a rescue mission, and to hell with the authorities...and they could always use some extra hands.

ENTRY 178: Niels Watanabe

Early menton designs focused primarily on functionality, to the exclusion and detriment of all else. The prototypical models were often flawed caricatures—stunted, malformed, and ugly compared to the mediagenic that flood the Mesh. These were only the most visible errors; later on researchers realized the dangers these unperfected morphs posed, the enhanced wetware of the brain often leading the transhuman consciousness into extended fugue states as they lived entirely in their own minds, forgetting reality, or became fixated into various autistic states. Still, the enhanced mental capabilities attracted any number of scholars, researchers, and others who wanted the intelligence edge that they felt the morph would give them. Perhaps this is the truth underlying the media’s portrayal of mentons as cold creatures of rational intellect or unhinged mad scientists, but while it is true many mentons fit that mold, not all of them do.

Niels Watanabe was an early adopter, and for his troubles was sleeved into a stunted morph with a severe degeneration of the spine and brainstem, rendering him a quadripalegic with an outsized cranium on top of a stick-thin, useless body. He took the loss of mobility in stride and good humor, and is generally carried about in a variety of automated walkers or other vehicles, sometimes driven by one of his three wives. Unlike most mentons, Watanabe is not much of an academic, nor interested in research of formal learning. Instead his is a genius at problem-solving, brilliantly creative to the point that he is nearly unemployable—some of his proposed solutions have included the invention of exotic states of matter or permanently dying every resident of a habitat halfblack and half-white, for example. These moments aside, Watanabe is infamous for his frankness, insight, and undisputable creative brilliance, and his services put him in sufficiently high demand that he never wants for work or favors when he wants them. Keeping busy keeps him happy, whether it is on a project or picking out gifts for his identical triplet brides, but sometimes he does enjoy a challenge—especially if it is a truly strange situation—and his friends and colleagues are aware of this aspect of his nature, and continually send along any interesting problems they encounter.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
40	5	15	5	16	5	22	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
9	1	44	9	88	33	5	50

Morph: Menton

Skills: Art: Poetry (Limerick) 45, Interests: Any* 25, Interfacing 60, Investigation 50, Kinesics 50, Language: Native Japanese 80, Language: Norwegian 66, Language: English 44, Language: Hindi 44, Language: Italian 44, Language: Korean 44, Language: Mandarin: 44, Networking: Hypercorps 36, Networking: Scientists 53, Perception (Visual) 56, Profession: Creative Consultant 60, Programming 33

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, HyperLinguist, Math Boost, Oracles

Traits: Exceptional Aptitude (COG), Common Sense, Feeble (SOM), Frail (level 1), Neural Damage (Quadripalegic), Unfit (Level 2)

* Niels has a vast number of interests and a lot of time on his hands; assume he has a rating of 25 in any non-Academic field of knowledge, even obscure ones like Old Earth Yo-Yos or Hyperspace Engineering.

Using Niels Watanabe

Watanabe is not insane, nor is he your typical genius. If asked some complicated or obscure question, he may cheerfully answer “I don’t know!” and then have one of his wives (Ivanna, Kim-Lee, and Star) show you the new recipe he just thought of for synthetic tapioca. He is so creative in fact, that many people have difficulty following his reasoning, and sometimes his answers are completely useless (anytime he goes on about “antineutrino fields” and the color purple, his wives just shrug and roll their eyes). However, his intuitive genius does allow him to skip past several logical steps to suggest innovative, if occasionally wacky, solutions to any problem—and if the PCs have a suitably wacky or difficult problem and need a solution, Niels Watanabe may be their go-to contact.

On the other hand, being trapped in a useless, deformed body has rather twisted Niels mind a bit, and there’s more than enough super-villain potential there for gamemasters that need someone brilliant, bitter, and off-the-wall to mastermind some harebrained scheme.

ENTRY 179: Sweetjuice

There is little room to grow sugarcane in space, nor many hives for honeybees. With priority given over to more important foodstuffs, sweetener production is often a local affair, each habitat or community finding their own way to satisfy their sweet tooth. Scumbarges and other stations where room and economy are tight simply process various food starches with cultured enzymes, deriving a colorless sticky-sweet gel known sugarin; several O’Niel cylinders have enough crop space to make a minor industry of sugarin production, and export the excess. On many ships and domes with hydroponics gardens, small batches of sugar cane, sugar beet, or stevia are grown, harvested, and processed, often by hand to render a variety of brown and white sugars for local use. In the aerostats of Venus various insects are cultivated; more often those that produce sweet nectar products like sugarbag, since honeybees are rare. Mars is the greatest producer of cane and beat sugar in the solar system, with an average production approaching ten tons, though some of it is siphoned off to the production of molasses, rum, and other culinary products, and Martian rock candy is a common treat marked for tourists, available in all the spaceports.

For the majority of transhumanity, raw or refined sugar remains unavailable, and industrious humans have turned instead to sweetjuice. Local products, often made by individuals or small groups who pool their resources and expertise, sweetjuice is a liquid sweetener derived from whatever is available—semi-sweet berries and tree saps are preferred, such as the Sugar Pines and Sugar Maple cultivated on Titan, or the juniper and raspberry bushes on Luna—which are boiled to condense the liquid, and sometimes filtered or further processed to remove adulterants, toxic elements, or native flavor. The resulting sweetjuice is a sweet or semi-sweet liquid, made available in small packets as a condiment (in microgravity) or dolloped out with a spoon. Quality is usually judged by the clarity of the sweetjuice as much as the taste, with clearer sweetjuice more highly prized and likely to be sweeter, with fewer contaminants. Different styles and flavors of sweetjuice have considerably affected many local forms of cooking, with distinct flavors from different habitats sparking a small high-end trade in quality sweetjuice.

Seeds

- A local entrepreneur on the player character’s habitat is looking to bring in sixty kilos of “brown

crystal”—unrefined sugarcake straight from Elysium. Mixed with the local water, he’ll claim it as sweetjuice and sell it on to passing ships as a local delicacy. However, he’s concerned that the local artisan sweetjuice crafters on the habitat will jump him for devaluing their product, and offers to bring the PCs on board as partners...provided they take care of security, and kick in on the cost of the initial Martian sugar.

- Someone has been going around wrecking sweetjuice stills, and stealing the product. Local ordinances against sugar (it’s bad for your teeth!) mean that the residents cannot complain, but the sudden loss of real sweetener in the habitat has everyone in a grumpy mood...except for the local crafter of synthetic sweeteners, who has noted a sudden rise in custom. Could they be the culprit? Or is there a sugar addict loose on the station, desperate for their next fix?

ENTRY 180: Echo Point

The very first radio signal humanity ever sent from Earth still hurtles through the void. Every transmission that was ever made forms a part of the endless wave of invisible radio energy moving through space at the speed of light. Before the Pandora Gates were discovered, the first any alien species would have known of humanity would have been those calls into the great darkness.

Now, something is sending them back. First noticed in AF 8, radio telescopes pointed in the direction of Barnard's Star began picking up distorted, patchy transmissions from BF 2. Analysis of the content shows it to be a continuous broadcast stream—presumably everything that the listeners at Echo Point have picked up, amplified and sent back. These re-broadcasts have continued in near-real time, and now listeners have started picking up signals sent out during the early days of the Fall.

As transhumans tune in and relive the first days of the end of their world, others still wonder at the future. No source has been observed for the re-transmissions; astrophysicists have fairly ruled out any natural source of reflection might be responsible for the echo, and whatever alien ship, satellite, or other apparatus has so far evaded detection. So Echo Point remains a mystery, all of transhumanity's greatest fears and worst memories cast back at it...and all anybody can wonder now is why.

Using Echo Point

Transhumanity may be looking toward the future, but it still has a lot of baggage from the past to work through first. Echo Point is a mechanism for gamemasters to address lingering issues from the Fall—old wounds, forgotten memories, secrets better left buried. Echo Point itself is a mystery, left open for the gamemaster to decide what to do. At (presumably) five light years or so out, it remains beyond current limits of transhuman technology to reach (barring a very fortuitous Pandora Gate opening nearby). Whether an alien effort to communicate or some trick of the TITANs, Echo Point could do a lot of damage just in the chaos it creates in the time it takes to go through the Fall and its aftermath.

Seeds

- A group of hackers has begun broadcasting the transmissions live from Echo Point through the habitat's systems. Many are reliving bad memories from the fall, and a small riot has broken out.

Caught in the chaos and confusion, will the player characters seek to hide, help, or take advantage of the distraction?

- Sabotage is occurring at several of the major listening stations tuned in to Echo Point, their facilities raided, files scrambled or erased. Firewall believes that among the Echo Point transmissions are secrets that someone wants to keep under wraps—TITANs collaborators, profiteers, hidden exsurgents, something. They've tracked one of the saboteurs to the PC's habitat...an aged flat who's just burned the last of his favors. The PCs are asked to apprehend him. Firewall wants answers, but the old man isn't ready to go without a fight.

ENTRY 181: The Lonely Dome

The Shaheed Dome is a small, autonomous “waypoint” habitat on Mars on one of the southern roads leading out from Ashoka to the outlying dirt and moisture farms. With no permanent residents, Shaheed is little more than a shelter for passing traffic to wait out the sandstorms or catch a breath of fresh air and clean water, maintained by automated systems and the social contract of visitors, who help keep the place clean and change the filters so that the next travelers can benefit. A few regulars also know it as one of the few hardcopy public libraries on Mars, again operating on the trust system: a modest collection of a few hundred books printed on plastic pages and kept in ring-binders awaits travelers, along with a double handful of “donations” that have accumulated throughout the years.

Or so goes common knowledge. In truth, the Shaheed Dome is neither abandoned or autonomous—they are an autistic macromorph, resleeved into the control system of the dome as part of an experimental therapy unit, and subsequently forgotten after the Fall. Shaheed is desperately lonely, but finds great difficulty in communicating and expressing themselves to other transhumans, and takes particularly obsessive care of any “guests” who come to visit. Most of the books in the library were written by Shaheed, and represent their dreams and memories as much as anything. Like many authors, Shaheed usually inserts itself somewhere in the narrative.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	14	15	15	14	18	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	26	4	52	200	50	300

Morph: Macromorph

Skills: Art: Writing 45, Hardware: Environmental Systems 50, Hardware: Robotics 34, Interests: Hospitality 33, Kinesics 25, Investigation: 25, Language: Native English 75, Language: Swahili 63, Profession: Lodging 60, Protocol 25

Implants: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eidetic Memory, Lidar, Radar, T-Ray Emitter

Armor: 10

Notes: Immobile, Mental Disorder (Autism), Social Stigma (Macromorph)

Using The Lonely Dome

Living, sentient structures have a solid place in science fiction, and the Lonely Dome provides one way for gamemasters to introduce them into their Eclipse Phase games. Finding it difficult to communicate but obsessively lonely, the gamemaster should play up how a building that desperately craves human attention and interaction but cannot outright ask for it may act—from obsequious but surreptitious assistance of visitors to subtly trying to keep them there for longer periods, or at least to draw them back when they leave.

However, Shaheed is not overly villainous in its intentions, and would likely not resort to murder or life-threatening situations to keep their “guests” from leaving, and would be protective of them if any violence did threaten. The major question is how long it will take the PCs to realize that perhaps there is a guiding intelligence behind the Lonely Dome.

Seed

Rumors have reached back to Ashoka of a “haunted” habitat, and a group of travelers in that region that have gone missing, with their friends and loved ones posting a reward. Investigations lead to the Lonely Dome...and Shaheed works to keep the PCs there as it tries to provide clues to what happened to the missing travelers, perhaps leaving clues in one of the books in its library.

ENTRY 182: Relativistic Time Travel

Not everyone groks the full physics, but this much has percolated through to the bulk of transhumanity: while no one can travel back in time (yet), if you accelerate up to a reasonable portion of the speed of light and back down again, you can travel into the future, while not personally experiencing the same passage of time. Relativistic time travel is then is theoretically available with current technology; just strap yourself in to a ship with enough fuel and supplies, set a round-trip course, and accelerate up to around 10% of the speed of light and back again, to return to a solar system decades or centuries later than the one you had left, but having subjectively experienced only a fraction of that time passing within the craft. It's all about frames of reference.

Realistically, efforts at relativistic time travel remain rare. The calculations are precise, the amount of fuel involved often immense (barring some of the more unusual schemes), and under current technologies even approaching relativistic velocities in an acceptable period of subjective time is problematic—most current efforts at building vessels capable of relativistic speeds center around antimatter drives. Still, there have been experiments. Zooming around beyond the Outer Rim is the Undiscovered Country, a small vessel with a crew of six infomorphs still accelerating up toward relativistic velocities since it was launched six years ago; if the ship holds and the calculations are correct it should return to the solar system somewhere around AF 150.

Using Relativistic Time Travel

There are two main uses of relativistic time travel: visitors from the past, or diving headlong into the future. In the former case, the assumption is that at some point a ship or other vessel was shot into space, attained relativistic speed, and then came back, decelerated, and re-entered the solar system's frame of reference. To say this is unlikely given pre-Fall technology is putting it mildly, but for the sake of including forward-time travelers the gamemaster should consider it. The return of such a vessel is likely to be a momentous occasion, akin to opening a time capsule from another century—as given earlier technologies, it is unlikely that the original pilots of such ships are still alive; if they did somehow avoid perishing of old age, they have a lot of catching up to do... Time travelers from the past are especially likely to have the Old Age and Immortality Blues traits.

On the other hand, PCs or NPCs may look to travel into the future of the Eclipse Phase setting using relativistic time travel. At worst, their efforts are doomed to failure—the vessel they select simply isn't able to achieve relativistic speeds. At best, the gamemaster is stuck with how (or whether) to present a setting even farther in the future than Eclipse Phase already is. If the GM is willing to bend the rules of physics a bit more, then Pandora's Gate-derived wormhole-generation technology in a future Eclipse Phase setting might permit the PCs to travel back after being stranded in a strange future by relativistic time travel...but at that point, it might be easier just to have the PCs be reconstituted in the present-Eclipse Phase from forks left behind before their trip.

ENTRY 183: Bear Safari

On Gerlach, an O'Neill cylinder orbiting Venus, there is a single solid ring of the habitat that is off-limits to most visitors, though the transparent aluminum walls display a mix of carefully-cultivated forest and savannah. Only fifty meters wide, the ring of greenery is little more than an arboreal tunnel, like a small section of old Earth sliced off and brought around in a circle—most tourists can only stand and stare at the verdant growth, and perhaps get a peek at the residents of that small, strange stretch of land.

They stand on two legs, though they only grow to a maximum height of a meter, and their claws and fangs are tiny things, the paws modified into crude opposable thumbs, and with wide eyes on their expressive faces. A range of fur colors and patterns have been noted, some of which are distinctly unnatural (light purple, pale green, and pink being most notable, not to mention the infamous “Checkered Ted”). The BearWatch network believes that they are sub-sentient, and probably genetic chimerae combining aspects of koala, panda, and lemur. They are adorable. And they are hunted.

The Bear Safari is a game preserve, and their specialty is a short bipedal mammal which resemble nothing so much as a giant teddy bear. Given that the safari is located inside a populated station, some restrictions on weaponry apply, mainly kinetic and projectile weapons, though at least a few uplifted customers prefer a more “hands on” kill. Strict limits are applied to how many are killed, and the time period a group is allowed in, and the “Teds” are of course not restricted in how they can respond—there have been a few fatalities where hunters underestimated their prey and fell to fangs and claws. Any customer that does kill a Ted gets their carcass, which can be rendered in the Bear Safari office to separate pelt, meat, and skeleton. An average hunt for a single Ted starts at 10,000 credits.

Standard Ted Stats

Teds are not sentient but are intelligent animals, about on par with un-uplifted chimpanzees. They tend to be very territorial and will react aggressively to anyone entering their hunting grounds or near their lairs, which are often “nests” created at the base of trees. They are omnivorous and diurnal, mainly subsisting on insects and small animals that the Bear Safari keepers release each day. Each is tagged so that its movements may be tracked.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
6	6	6	20	20	12	8	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	2	16	2	32	20	6	30

Skills: Climbing 37, Fray 33, Free Fall (Microgravity) 26, Perception (Smell) 55, Scrounging 24, Spray Weapons (Urine) 25*, Unarmed Combat 45

Traits: Claw/Fang Attack (1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat skill), Danger Sense, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Taste, Enhanced Vision, Pain Tolerance (Level 2)

* Teds may spray urine up to five meters away; a successful hit does no damage, but marks the target so that other Teds can easily distinguish them through their sense of smell.

Seed

“Old Ted” is the most hardened survivor of the Bear Safari, a scarred silver-furred veteran of eighteen hunts who had pulled down and partially devoured over twenty flats and splicers that have ventured into the “forest.” An online petition has asked for the Bear Safari to retire Old Ted, and the Bear Safari appears to be considering it. However, an uplift rights group believes that Old Ted is in fact an uplift—which would make the entire Bear Safari venture illegal. To prove this, the group needs someone to venture into the Bear Safari and capture Old Ted so that he can be subject to a battery of intelligence tests. If the PCs accept, they’ll find that perhaps the hunters have become the prey.

ENTRY 184: AllLove, Inc.

In the Venus aerostats, a new anarcho-corporate structure thrives, and no one misses the corporate retreats. AllLove Inc. began as a socio-economic experiment by anthropologist Sanaa Trogdottir, designed to test the hypothesis that a corporate culture could be sustained through the tight-knit relationships of a sexual community-economy. Basing her work on extensive research on sexual dynamics within hypercorporate hierarchies, Sanaa recruited open-minded individuals who were willing to abide by the guidelines on sexual health and openness required by the corporation—while no member of AllLove Inc. is required to have any sexual contact they do not desire with any other, an individual's position within the AllLove hierarchy is determined by the social-sexual bonds they have forged with their coworkers, as tracked by the internal LovePlugIn network. Officers in the hypercorp, and are elected based on both ability and connections with their co-workers, some having extensive harems while others have numerous intimate relations. Aside from tracking the number, type, frequency, members, and duration of sexual encounters, LovePlugIn identifies social blocs that form within the corp, and schedules group exercises to include isolated individuals or to break up factions that grow powerful or abusive. Unrequested sexual violence is not permitted and grounds for immediate expulsion from the group, as well as various punitive measures specified in contracts.

As for business, AllLove, Inc. provides a number of specialized relationship services catering specifically to transhumanity, from fertility assistance and birth control to romantic gifts, toys, and pornographic designed for specific morphs, factions, and demographics. They are also one of the leaders in sex education in the solar system, and dedicated to promoting positive, consensual attitudes towards sex, and are currently engaged in a mission to eradicate the sexually transmitted disease syphilis by the year AF 25.

Conversely, they are also known as one of the major opponents of the Carnival of the Goat, whose approach to sexuality they claim specifically invokes danger and the negative image and understanding of sex as taboo, which historically has led to the suppression and loss of sexual knowledge and the spread of disease and sexual repression.

Using AllLove, Inc.

Not a hypercorp for all groups, AllLove, Inc. is an alternative to the Carnival of the Goat for discussing any and all aspects of sex in Eclipse Phase. If nothing else, it can provide the gamemaster with a handy background element to hang a plot element on—a pack of AllLove self-heating condoms, sized for an Olympian; the source of certain specialized implants like the automorphic UltraOrifice; a clinic where a young splicer can go for an abortion/surrogacy donation; etc. Likewise, AllLove, Inc. might form the

employer/background of one or more PCs or NPCs, providing a relationship complication that prompts discussion among players about the AllLove, Inc. lifestyles—while dating members outside the employee pool is permitted, most such relationships are casual, with deeper relationships leading many outsiders to feel like they are dating the corporation more than the individual (and indeed, outside sexual contact is a prime recruitment tool for new employees). Keep in mind that AllLove, Inc. and its subject matter may not be appropriate for all groups; you don't want to be the player or gamemaster reading their Eclipse Phase erotic fan fiction at the game table while the others squirm uncomfortably waiting for you to finish.

ENTRY 185: Beano

Resleeving facilitates behaviors and desires that in normal flats would be impossible. Why should a transhuman that is one gender by accident of birth be restricted to that gender for the rest of their life? Why should a transhuman that believes themselves a wolf not be able to become a wolf in truth, if by their resources and favors they can achieve it? Where in the past these aberrations would be stifled or suppressed as a form of mental illness, or at best only partially indulged through roleplay, now they can be realized and indulged in ways never before thought possible. For many transhumans, this is the realization of their innermost dreams, becoming in physicality what they already know themselves to be mentally, so ego and morph finally match. Others discover that changing a morph does not solve all an ego's problems, and that an ego's ugliness shines through no matter how beautiful the morph may be.

Beano has never had a problem with what they are. It was always other people that had problems with Beano, even though Beano only ever wanted to be close to people. Very close. The authorities on Titan finally caught up with Beano after the sixth child disappeared, the crushed bodies were found in Beano's bedroom, with Beano still hugging them as tightly as they could.

Beano posed a problem to the Titanian authorities. Despite the heinous nature of their crimes, Beano was undisputedly mentally disturbed and not responsible for their options. Many of the families and guardians were baying for blood, with the most moderate of them suggesting ego-pruning and most calling for Beano to be shoved out of the nearest airlock. A compromise was reached: Beano's morph was publicly executed, but their ego recovered and rescinded to psychiatric care until such time as it was no longer a danger to the public.

After six years, Beano's principle therapist proscribed a possible solution, an experimental work-treatment which met with Beano's enthusiastic approval. With certain limiters in place, Beano was resleeved into a specially-modified jellybone suit. Now, Beano can hug the children as much as Beano wants. It's their job. The only sad part is when Beano has to let them go...

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	10	18	15	10	15	17	-

Morph: Jellymorph* (Unique)

Skills: Academics: Psychology 34, Art: Performance (Clowning) 34, Deception 50, Fray 23, Infiltration 35, Infosec 30, Interests: Children 25, Interests: Clown Lore 28, Interests: Neotenic 24, Interfacing 25, Intimidation 30, Language: Native Irish 76, Language:

English 56, Networking: Clowns 25, Perception (Touch) 28, Persuasion (Coaxing) 37,

Unarmed Combat (Smother) 38

Disadvantages: Modified Behavior (Immobile, Enforced), Mental Disorder (Monophobia), Social Stigma (Murderer)

* Beano is resleeved into a jellybone suit (Entry 004), a special type of vacuum-adapted exoskeleton mainly reserved for children, with a Durability of 30 and Wound Threshold of 5.

Using Beano

Beano's believes physical limiters prevent them from physically moving the suit, making Beano largely a passenger in the suit, often mistaken for a muse or helpful AGI designed to accompany and look out for children. However, Beano's limitations are actually the result of mental conditioning; there exists a chance that they can overcome that conditioning through force of will...and that possibility is probably what will lead the player characters to Beano. As a known child murderer, no matter how mentally disturbed, Beano will be the first suspect if a child or neotenic morph ends up dead or injured, particularly if there is a jellybone suit involved. It is up to the gamemaster as to whether Beano is guilty or innocent of that crime—sometimes the obvious suspect does do it, other times they are the red herring that throws the investigators off the scent so that the real killer can strike again. Alternately, the gamemaster may decide that Beano has overcome both their initial compulsion and mental programming, and now uses their morph as an assassin...enfolding their victims and then purposefully starving them of oxygen until they asphyxiate. Beano's "signature," if one is needed, is to leave their victims with a postmortem smile or stylized version of their old whiteface.

ENTRY 186: Gate Bleed

The most experienced gatecrasher transhumanity has ever produced has done, at most, a couple dozen jumps between worlds. The medical evidence of side-effects from gatecrashing is thus rather sparse; worries about the effect of sudden transitions from different gravities, pressures, and radiation levels have so far proven mostly unfounded. Whomever built the Pandora Gates, their technology appears to be rather gentle as long as an unmodified flat doesn't try to take a stroll into deep space or a high-g world. After all, that's what drones and probes are for. The psychological effects of gatecrashing remain mostly unexplored as well. Generally speaking, most gatecrasher corporations at least do a cursory profile of their employees before and after they get sent through a wormhole to another planet, and most seem to have handled the journey fairly well. Key word: most.

Gate Bleed is more a rumor than a condition. Stories are told in Gagarin's Rest of gatecrashers that see impossible things—Iktomi web cities on Mars, cockroaches crawling through the knee-high forests on Luca, Mishipizheu boiler reefs in the seas of Europa—images from other planets leaking into their perception. Rarely experienced and difficult to study, the few drunken psychologists and neurologists to discuss the sightings came up with the theory that the transhuman brain or ego is just doing what it always does...filling in the gaps in the individual's perception. Confronted with people who regularly travel from wildly different environments, the brain simply ignores or sketches in the familiar-looking bits of alien scenery by substituting some image that seems to fit.

Mechanics

Gate Bleed is a minor derangement associated with frequent gatecrashing, which is rare enough that the condition itself is almost unheard of, aside from the community of gatecrashers. Currently, sufferers are subject to uncommon, brief hallucinations, often on the edges of their perception, which bleed elements from the various worlds they have visited together. A typical example is a cockroach glimpsed out of the corner of an eye, crawling on an exoplanet where there can be no cockroaches. The study of Gate Bleed is made difficult both by its rarity, and because it is underreported: no one wants to admit to being crazy or seeing the impossible for fear that they will be blackballed from further gatecrashing.

Suggested Game Effects: Sufferers suffer brief hallucinations which are logically "impossible." By itself this rarely causes any life-endangering problem unless coupled with some other illness (a fear of bugs combined with seeing a scorpion inside your gatecrasher vacuum suit, for example), but tends to cause further mental stress, especially if the subject cannot confide their visions or seek help. Characters with Gate Bleed typically gain 1-2 Mental Stress per month, which may lead to further related derangements like paranoia or more frequent and disturbing hallucinations.

Seed

A gatecrasher has committed suicide, and their family hires the PCs (as neutral outsiders) to investigate the circumstances. An early lead is the gatecrasher's journal, which seems to chronicle a descent into mental illness, including signs of Gate Bleed...though PCs will have to talk to other gatecrashers who will have to explain what that is. However, if they dig a little deeper they might find out that not all of the victim's bleed-visions were hallucinations...and someone may have played on their illness to drive them to suicide.

ENTRY 187: Parasitoid Pod

Parasitoid pods were developed by exhumans experimenting with different ecological relationships. As the name implies, the parasitoid pod spends the majority of its existence within another living entity, most often another transhuman morph or pod. The elongated body of the parasitoid pod curls amid the host organism's guts, tapping into its circulatory, digestive, and respiratory systems to derive basic nutrition; early efforts at tapping into the host's nervous system were eventually abandoned in favor of using basic Mesh protocols.

Unlike natural parasitoids, the parasitoid pod does not enter the host's system innocuously and grow slowly over time. Implantation (and escape/removal) tend to be traumatic experiences for the host; the average parasitoid pod is 1-2 meters long and 2-4 centimeters in diameter, and the morph is quite capable of chewing its way in (or out) using its claws, though most egos prefer surgery to avoid placing undue stress on the host. Once installed, the parasitoid places an increased burden on the host's system, requiring greater food and water intake to sustain both systems.

The reasons behind occupying a parasitoid pod differ from ego to ego, and tend to be complicated. Some exhumans simply prefer the lifestyle, where they are kept warm and nestled womb-like in the guts of another morph—either a chosen victim, or a pod selected specifically as a carrier and to aid in interaction with transhumanity at a greater remove. Alternately, some transhumans have taken to carrying a parasitoid pod as a quick “back up” morph that they can quickly resleeve into should their regular morph be damaged (or if they need to abandon it quickly). Practical egos in need for subterfuge have noted the advantages of hiding within another morph, and Firewall has become aware that parasitoid pods are difficult to discern with psi sleights, perhaps masked by the host's nervous system.

Generic Parasitoid Pod Stats

Parasitoid pods have all of the advantages of pods (Eclipse Phase 142).

Enhancements: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cyberbrain, Puppet Sock

Aptitude Maximum: 25 (5 for Coordination, Reflexes, and Somatics)

Durability: 10

Wound Threshold: 2

Advantages: Psi Chameleon (when in host), Fang Attack (1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat skill)*

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Pod), Unfit (Level 2), Blind, Deaf, Mute, No hands but five hundred feet CP Cost: 10 Credit Cost: High

* Success is automatic if the parasitoid is already installed in a host.

Entering or leaving a host biomorph inflicts 1d10 DV on the host morph per round, and typically takes 1 round per every meter long the parasitoid pod is (or longer, if the entry is contested by grabbing the parasitoid as it enters). The parasitoid pods typically enter or exit from a point just within the host's mouth or anus, but other places are possible. Once installed, the host's cost of living increase by 25% as their needs for water, oxygen, and nutrition increase. Parasitoid morphs can be removed surgically, though they will often seek to leave of their own accord if they become aware of this, or can be poisoned by various medications (treat as a poison, but half cost and only the parasitoid is effected, not the host). When removed from the host, parasitoid pods have limited ability to accept nutrition—if they do not enter another host or a vat of nutrient and oxygen-rich fluids within 24 hours, the pod will expire. In some habitat sewer systems, a parasitoid pod could theoretically survive indefinitely without a host.

ENTRY 188: Mr. Spudd™

Lima Farms is a small beehive habitat in orbit around Mercury, specializing in prepackaged “seed” packages of yams, potatoes, turnips, and other root vegetables for other habitats to start their own subsistence farming. In addition, the smaller experimental farms on the outskirts of the hive are used by eco-conservationists and artisanal farmers to cultivate newly engineered and relict species of potato from the Lima Farms seedbank— more than 1400 varieties at last count, with many grown nowhere else and presumed extinct even on Earth. To help promote their conservation work and commercial production, Lima Farms has tried a number of different advertising campaigns in the Planetary Consortium. Arguably, their most successful is Mr. Spudd™.

The “first human/potato hybrid,” Mr. Spudd™ began his life as Juan Jiminez (“J.J.”) Achira, a nutritionist and cultivator specializing in Incan foodstuffs, who agreed to resleeve into the morph to help teach people about the benefits and cultivation of the potato and other edible tubers. The morph itself looks perfectly human, which is mildly disappointing to many transhumans who thought they’d be looking at a six-foot tuber with arms and legs or a shambling mass with potatoes growing out of it; the incorporation of potato DNA into the transhuman genetic material was done selectively to cause Mr. Spudd™ to produce a number of plant-based proteins and related substances, which among other things give him a notable potato-like smell. However, in recognition of people’s expectations Mr. Spudd™ has submitted to additional (mostly cosmetic) procedures to cater to tourists looking for something a bit more exotic.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
16	18	15	22	15	16	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	26	5	52	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Biology (Potato) 65, Academics: Genetics (Potato) 45, Academics: Nutrition 70, Art: Potato Sculpting 50, Free Fall (Microgravity) 55, Interests: Incan Culture 70, Interests: Microgravity Farming 45, Interests: Potato Research 55, Interfacing 30, Kinesis: 40, Language: Native Spanish 85, Language: English 70, Language: Portuguese 70, Language: Incan 56, Networking: Autonomists (Ecoconservatives) 36, Networking: Hypercorps (Agricorps) 50, Networking: Scientists 44, Research 48, Scrounging (Potatoes) 55

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bodysculpting (rough, tuber-like skin; no fingernails, toenails, navel, body hair, or teeth; head hair replaced with green “stalk” usually tied back in a ponytail), Cortical Stack, Scent Alteration (potato), 20 EasyGraft Universal Bioports*

Traits: Uncanny Valley

* See entry 124: EasyGraft. These bioports are sculpted to resemble dark depressions in Mr. Spudd™’s skin, like the “eyes” of a potato, and Mr. Spudd™ can freely move around his existing sensory organs (six eyes, four ears, two tongues, and three noses) to different ports on his body.

Seed

Mr. Spudd™ has lost an eye! Can you find it before rival commercial tuber growers can crack his partially potato genome and produce their own rival mascot, Madame Yam? Mr. Spudd™ is sure to be so grateful he’ll give you all the tubers you can eat—and that’s not all! It will make the children happy too, with a nice rep boost for the friendly PCs. But look out! That rival grower faction wants to splice cocaine into their super-yams, and they’re being backed by some not-nice people at all...

ENTRY 189: Printfruit

Fruit does generally grow on trees; that is a general problem when trees themselves are a rarity in the solar system. Beyond the general requirements of soil, water, light and volume to grow in, most fruit trees require years to mature until they can bear fruit, and in the years immediately following the Fall only a few habitats had the resources to devote to growing fruit-trees in any quantity. Efforts at making fast-growing trees, and of supporting them with advanced grafting techniques, has improved the availability of fruit, but for the bulk of transhumanity the only fruits that are available are relatively small berries, grapes, tomatoes and the like—and, of course, printfruit.

Fabricated with a combination of traditional nanomanufacturing techniques and wet making, the goal of printfruit is to simulate the experience of fruit—more than nutritional content, makers of printfruit strive to achieve smell, texture, and taste as well. It is, generally speaking, not an easy task. Makers, even those which are designed for making various artificial foodstuffs, are not well-equipped to handle juice, pith, and rind or skin; most amateurs just about manage to make a sticky mess, but there have been some successes.

The earliest, and most popular, printfruit is the Ice Orange. While creating a rough facsimile of the solid parts of the orange is not terribly difficult (as one artisan put it “it’s an edible ball stuffed with balloon-wedges”) getting the orange juice (or reasonable orange-flavored liquid) inside is a bit of a pickle. The solution that was arrived at was simply to freeze the “juice” concentrate; makers have a much easier time moving around orange-flavored ice-crystals than liquids. The resulting spheres are passable imitation fruit, with a soft edible rind and pulp filled with an orange-flavored slush; however the limits of physics still apply, so that when defrosted the Ice Oranges tend to be somewhat soft and saggy, requiring post-processing treatment to regain firmness.

The latest word in printfruit however are Melonstuff. As with most other printfruit, the active ingredient is a sugary, artificially-flavored liquid to simulate the fruit flavor; however a clever craftsman from Luna has devised an edible uniform polymer matrix which can store the juice and which very closely approaches the texture of cantaloupe meat. Rather than trying to fiddle with the rind or other details of melon structure, Melonstuff was released as freeware for other artisans to play with, and is

freely or cheaply available on many habitats in the form of melonstuff balls, melonstuff bars, and even elaborate decorations; it freezes rather well and is sometimes served with a “chocolate” coating, or in other flavors. In small quantities, it has even fooled people in blind taste tests with real cantaloupe.

Seed

Someone on the player character’s habitat is making durian-flavored printfruit. The spiky, rubbery balls a poor imitation of the real thing, but the smell is close enough to trigger the gag reflex on most biomorphs, and a committee has been assembled as to whether or not durian printfruit counts as a potential bioweapon. The craftsperson making the durian printfruit claims they are an important part of their heritage, and begs the PCs to help argue their case in front of the committee...if not for the malodorous dorian, then because any restriction on printfruit might set a dangerous precedent. Will the PCs speak for or against the durian? (Gamemasters might bring a sample of durian to the game table to help the discussion along; if they can find it and if they dare.)

ENTRY 190: The Mirror of Earth

Luna. Weeks before the Fall. An artist called San Julian prepared a very special long exposure photographic plate on the surface of Mars, the work of months of planning, calculation, and construction. A photograph the size of a football field—and it captured, in extraordinary detail, one full revolution of the Earth as it was. Captured there is humanity's homeworld at the height of its civilization—not the darkened, burnt, and scarred face it shows today.

The significance of this achievement was not widely recognized given the more immediate concerns of the Fall. The Mirror was partially covered, and forgotten. The edges, which were thinner and most vulnerable to damage have partially cracked and fractured. Scroungers made off with whatever equipment was left, and may have broken up the whole plate for scrap silver if they hadn't been discovered by Lunar explorers, out delving through forgotten outposts for a thrill. With re-discovery came recognition that this priceless record of Earth-that-was must be protected, and made available.

Today, the Mirror of Earth is regarded as something of a monument, carefully preserved within a special dome facility built over the vulnerable, fragile plate to keep it safe. Restoration artists work on the damaged boundaries, while high-quality digital scans of the Mirror have been archived on the Mesh, there for anyone to see, and if they are old enough to remember, where humanity came from...and where it might yet someday return.

Using The Mirror of Earth

At its most basic, The Mirror of Earth is a point of interest and nostalgia—a monument as distinct for Luna as the Statue of Liberty is for New York City, a public place where PCs and NPCs might meet, and a stage upon which to enact their struggles against a suitably awesome backdrop. On another level, The Mirror of Earth is a work of art, and like many works of art is probably not alone in its generation. The mysterious San Julian (who disappeared during the Fall, and may or may not be alive) may have done early, smaller models of The Mirror of Earth that remain to be discovered, and are worth a princely sum (if sold) or a considerable boost in rep (if donated to the public); likewise, San Julian might have gone on to attempt a similar Mirror of Mars waiting to be discovered. The Mirror itself may contain secrets of old pre-Fall Earth, unwittingly captured and kept in plain view.

Finally, and most importantly, The Mirror of Earth is potent to destroy. It is unique, and even the high-resolution digital copies cannot capture the full details of the analog technique that went into its manufacture. There is a real sense of loss that may come with the Mirror's destruction, and the depth of its effect on NPCs may well affect the players as well. If you as the gamemaster are in need of a suitable target for a bit of supervillainy or terrorism, there are few as iconic and emotion-laden spots—but it is new to players, so you won't disrupt anyone's view of the setting if it suddenly goes kaboom.

ENTRY 191: Eyebrow Network

“You are your rep. A wise transhuman takes no more than they need, gives no more than they can afford, and through their work achieves merit and accumulates a higher re. Those who seek rep for its own sake are often doomed to failure, others successful beyond their dreams. To borrow against your rep, your name, to commandeer the resources of a tribe, a network, a gang, a habitat, a planet to your whims—if you succeed, to the benefit of others, you will earn it back again and then some. If you spend it selfishly, your rep will wither and die, and black marks will stain your rep beyond fallible human memory.

Remember, each to their own need, and by each to their own ability.”

- Fuck-the-Money-I-Have-Rules, Anarchist Philosopher

Transhumans exist not just as egos and morphs; each individual is also their informational footprint, the tracks and records they leave behind them in the Mesh, in every gateway and airlock they pass through, all the accumulated data of their life. These traces exist for everyone, even the dead, and vast engines and innumerable egos make it their work to sift, compile, and organize these heaps of data into comprehensible chunks. The business of data mining is not just in the finding and sorting, but the précis and presentation. There is value added in taking ten thousand receipts and distilling them into the salient data points “Enjoys Chinese food, particularly mushroom chow mein.” Entire organizations and databases exist whose sole purpose is to derive and update pithy, accurate profiles of transhumans, living and dead. The most popular is the Eyebrow Network.

The Eyebrows are a stateless, anarchist organization formed by Fuck-the-Money, designed to be operated autonomously without administrator or rank above peer; the data is said to be backed up in servers from Pluto to Mercury, sustained without advertisements or hypercorp money by generous donations and the occasional outright larceny. The workers are all volunteers and vested interests: to join they must provide an accurate, detailed, but brief and fully documented (public sources preferred) profile of themselves and one other, which are subject to peer review. With acceptance comes access: the Eyebrow Network has profiles on over two billion transhumans, living and dead; and responsibility: regular tasks of file maintenance, review, updates, and new profiles as needed. Failure to contribute causes loss of access; efforts

to intentionally deceive or provide spurious information are call for a black mark. Everyone is entitled to their secrets, the blank spots on their reports, but false data is punished with ostracism and derision, not to mention a hit to the re

Mechanics

The Eyebrow Network is a service associated with The Circle-A List, and accessible to egos with @-rep; contributing to update and verify Eyebrow profiles is part of regular @rep maintenance and growth. Characters can make a Networking: Autonomist Skill Test to see if a particular transhuman’s profile is available, and call in a Trivial favor to access it.

While not quite public access, these profiles are so generally accessible and editable that few will reveal major secrets about the transhumans—but they are guaranteed accurate (to the best of the Eyebrow Network’s ability), and can give the character the basic biographical details of the transhuman so they have an idea of who and what they’re dealing with. Of course, the PCs might also be interested in seeing what their own profile says as well...

At the gamemaster’s discretion, other rep systems may have their own related profile networks, though these tend to be specialized—The Hypercorp Directory (CivicNet/C-rep) for example, might contain profiles of every corporate entity, rather than every transhuman.

ENTRY 192: To Be Tuesday

“It’s a game, Miss Tuesday.”

“But what do they hope to win?”

“They don’t want to win. Or lose. Winning and losing means an end. They don’t want it to end. They just want to play.”

- Excerpt from the novel Tuesday Prime

On Pandora, in the little marketplace crammed with stalls that feed the tourists and the gatecrashing employees, there is a small noodle shop. The meat is textured protein, the noodles mostly starch and carbohydrates with the regulation-required micronutrients most biomorphs need, and the water is recycled habitat water with just enough salt and trace minerals left in for flavor. But the vegetables are picked fresh every morning from the fastgrowth gardens, and the oil and soy sauce is all-natural, imported at some expense from Mars. The owner of the little nameless stall is Feng Liu Tuesday, a smiling thin-boned creature with a shock of dark hair that seems to change its shade every week, mismatched eyes, and a face like a Mongol princess. Tuesday works ten-hour shifts, broken up by two periods of deep sleep. Most of the details of running the business—permits, ordering, bookkeeping, deliveries, checking the autocatheter—is handled by Tuesday’s muse, Khutulun.

Tuesday’s greatest effort each shift is the business of being Tuesday. In an ongoing game that is part cosplay and part round-robin, each shift another ego settles into the cyberbrain of Feng Liu Tuesday...and spends the next ten hours trying to be Feng Liu Tuesday. Every twelve hours, a different ego looks out from behind those mismatched eyes, to greet customers and see the gatecrashers off to their next journey, or returning from their last one. Hundreds of followers keep track of each day of Tuesday’s saga, the ego in the pilot seat sending out regular updates, little cameras in the noodle shop recording each move and conversation. Performances are rated, debated, argued about; original elements are incorporated into the ongoing group exploration of “Who is Feng Liu Tuesday?” Many pilots are content to simply do the best they can at being Tuesday, managing Tuesday’s relationships with their regulars, lovers current and former, etc. There is even a break-away community managing a neotenic morph that, according to group consensus is Tuesday’s little sibling.

Mechanics

Feng Liu Tuesday is essentially a pod version of a hibernoid (Eclipse Phase 140) with the Cyberbrain, Puppet Sock, and Sex Switch implants in addition to those standard for that morph, and the Social Stigma (Pod) trait for those aware of their nature; physical attributes are set at 15, with mental attributes provided by the puppeteer. If a character deliberately maims or kills Feng Liu Tuesday, their m-rep, r-rep, and @-rep scores take a hit—subtract 6 points, divided between the three scores as the gamemaster sees fit.

Using Feng Liu Tuesday

Tuesday is a living, breathing example that the world the player characters perceive is not the only world; while those characters move and talk and breath in the physical world of Eclipse Phase there is no guarantee that what their senses perceive is “real”—or that the morphs they are talking to are being driven by the egos that they think. A large part of Feng Liu Tuesday lies in the reveal, how the gamemaster lets the players in on the idea that Tuesday is not whom they appear to be, but a series of egos taking turns piloting the morph and trying to stay “in character.” Tuesday might hire the player characters for a job, or be a trusted contact, or simply a messenger that a local spy corporation uses to hold and deliver certain items, with espionage adding a tiny thrill to the game of being Tuesday. If the PCs make an impact on Tuesday during one of their shifts, other egos driving Tuesday may seek them out to interact with them further (depending on the ego involved and their particular alignment in the Feng Liu Tuesday continuity, this might lead to a fight, fuck, or flight response). It’s a bit of zany antics and odd behavior that players might shrug off as eccentric or add some chaos to keep a game busy, though how the PCs react once they find out that thousands of fans have been experiencing everything that Tuesday has perceived might put them in a spot of bother...a one-night stand with a noodle vendor could have a PC wake up to find themselves an unexpected porn star, and the rest of the group dragged in as data mining fans try to “ship” Tuesday with them; or a single witnessed murder could lend the PCs in hot water as the damning XP evidence circulates throughout the Mesh.

ENTRY 193: Plasmamorphs

There are no food pills in the science fiction future. Pure carbohydrates are 4 Calories per gram, and no foreseeable technology is going to distill an entire turkey dinner into a conventional-sized tablet. A couple crystal spires do exist, but most habitat building codes prefer reinforced concrete over a skeleton of smart materials. Togas are entirely optional, but most transhumans prefer something with pockets and better thermal layering. It is unquestionably the future, but not the future imagined by men and women that dreamed of far-flung stellar empires managed by pen-and-paper calculations and room-sized tape computers.

Still, there remains something of that iconic early science-fiction imagery lodged in the transhuman consciousness—the idea that somehow, someday, the achievement of the marvels dreamed of by that repressed society just beginning to imagine the exploration of space is something worth working towards. And if food pills aren't possible in anything smaller than suppository form and you need several permits to build a crystal spire which you can't get insurance for, there is at least one ancient sci-fi marvel that many transhuman scientists, engineers, and technologists are diligently working towards: becoming a being of pure energy. Or, something close enough.

The leading developments in this field of endeavor center on quasi-perpetual vortices of plasma. Generated in controlled environments by a high-temperature vortex generator, scientists believe that these vortices can be made sufficiently complex that they can emulate a transhuman ego, and that under the right conditions may even be self-sustaining by drawing in and ejecting plasma from the environment. Of course, that is some time in the future, and it remains to be seen if the resulting "plasmamorphs" would be stable enough to sustain themselves in a natural environment like the surface of the sun.

Mechanics

The cutting edge of plasma vortex technology is amazing, but extremely impractical. Currently generated in fireballs (see entry 047), a plasmamorph is essentially a constantly twisting knot of ionized gas above a plasma vortex generator, which monitors and maintains the vortex-form while constantly saving data from the ego in real-time to the equivalent of a cortical stack. The ego inside the plasmamorph perceives the environment through electromagnetic senses, which give them a basic

awareness of the temperature of surrounding plasma and the presence and movement of charged bodies, with enough sensitivity that a plasmamorph can discern sunspotting (see Eclipse Phase 86), and respond in kind by manipulating plasma flow on its outer layer. That said, plasmamorphs are extremely fragile; any substantial disruption of their form (like, say, a surya or salamander moving through it) will destroy the plasma vortex, though they find movement in the direction of their principle rotation along the edges very pleasurable. If the vortex generator that keeps creates and maintains the form of the plasmamorph stops operating, the plasmamorph suffers gradual and irreversible dissipation, usually within thirty minutes.

Using Plasmamorphs

At this point, it's established that plasmamorphs are incredibly fragile, mostly powerless bodies of ionized gas that can only exist in highly limited environments and dare not interact with anything too closely or else that incarnation of the ego inhabiting the plasmamorph is doomed to speedy disintegration. Given these restrictions, no sane player is likely going to want to be a plasmamorph even for a session, and even if they did it would be highly disruptive of the game since the PC couldn't really go anywhere or do anything; the solution then is for the gamemaster to give the PC those things. An experimental plasmamorph may be the only way for the PCs to contact and interact with a potential alien species of natural plasmamorphs, for example. Scientists might give the PCs a significant rep boost if they participate in plasmamorph resleeving experiments, and the gamemaster might design a session or part of a session to the PCs discovering the limits of what they can and cannot do in such an environment and in such alien forms. Fireballs in particular make good settings for an old-fashioned locked-room mystery given the dangers of damage to a plasmamorph's vortex generator, and the PCs might need to venture into one to try and get some information out of the plasmamorph of the victim before it dissipates permanently, comforting the ego as it begins its final collapse. And of course, plasmamorphs make suitably exotic forms for very strange and cerebral exhumans, striving for the old-fashioned future.

ENTRY 194: Zero Day Flu

Once, transhumanity set its schedule by the movement of the sun and moon, as perceived from the surface of the earth. Now, transhumans are wired to a much more personal cycle: software releases, patches, and updates. With a substantial chunk of transhumanity being augmented with cyberware or occupying a synthmorph, “update days” tend to bring with them worries about sudden incompatibilities between different manufacturers, bugs and bug fixes, unverified third-party updates, and all the other little troubles that accompany software-driven-hardware. Except now, a bug or error in the program can be crippling or disabling to many; no one wants their cyberarm to freeze, or have their oracles fill with spam at a critical moment.

However, for the most part software updates provide no greater aches and pains than the normal stressors of transhuman life, and these days are often taken in stride as comparable to acne, stiff muscles, a drippy nose and other minor ailments. Of much greater concern are security compromises—zero day exploits that skilled hackers can use to manipulate a morph’s system, bypassing their typical security. Zero day exploits are, again, part and parcel of transhuman existence. Estimates by cyber-health specialists show that as many as 80% of synthmorphs have been vulnerable to a zero day exploit at some point, though fewer than 25% have reported actually being infected with malware or suffering an attack that utilized a zero day exploit. Still, after every major release cycle there tends to be a rise in complaints about “zero day flu,” where a portion of the clanking masses feel too disabled to work, at least until they get their systems looked at and the first patches start rolling in.

Mechanics

Zero day exploits are effectively backdoors (Eclipse Phase 250) inadvertently created in a system; either inherent during product launch or introduced in an update. Hackers who become aware of these backdoors can use them at will on vulnerable devices, including morphs, until the exploit gets patched. Whether a zero day exploit exists or if a character can learn of it is up to the gamemaster; generally speaking most zero day exploits only remain active for hours or at most days before they are discovered and patched, though certain isolated systems cut off from the Mesh can allow them to persist for much longer.

Using Zero Day Flu

“Zero day flu” and other update-related “illnesses” are a catch-all to describe periodic problems with software updates that affect every synthmorph or morph with cyberware at some point. Generally speaking this is a flavorful effect, the cybernetic equivalent of slipping a disc in your back and being out of commission for a few days, and should probably be mostly restricted to NPCs and devices, especially those with low-rating Firewalls, but can make an effective narrative excuse for why a certain device or individual is not available for an adventure—the captain of the spaceship the PCs want to leave on is down with the ‘flu, so they have to stick around for an extra couple of days, or the elevators to Level 3 (Oxygen Processing) are disabled because of a glitch in the last patch.

ENTRY 195: The Forever Virgins

The transition into space was anything but a smooth colonization designed to keep the multitude of Earth cultures intact, and many took to desperate measures to sustain their traditional practices. Whether those cultures were worth saving is another debate entirely, and one still being played out. Old arguments about whether one culture has the right to level moral judgments on another, or the cost to transhumanity should certain practices be allowed (or forced) to die out. But while different parties argue, some people still cling to the old ways...and someone, some specific individual, always pays the price.

Many cultures hold special consideration for virgins. They occupy a certain place in society, and are the subject of considerable status and desire; some assign superstitious benefits to sexual congress with a virgin, or hold virginity as a sexually desirable trait in a potential partner. Whatever the case, the demand for virgins among those seeking to preserve that part of their culture exceeded the supply—so a compromise was made, and a new flesh trade was created.

The Forever Virgins are specially-augmented neotenic morphs, designated as professional virgins to accommodate the needs of the culture-groups they serve. They are willing volunteers in their positions, though some may argue that they have agreed to these positions without consent. Depending on the culture involved, a virgin may occupy specific duties, have their virginity ritually “tested,” or be called upon to be sexually initiated according to the group’s customs. In some instances, this has led to Forever Virgins being ceremonially “sold” to “husbands” or “clients,” most notably in the Mizuage Project on Luna.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	13	15	10	10	8	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	26	5	52	30	6	45

Morph: Neotenic

Skills: Academics: Anthropology (their culture) 55, Animal Handling 50, Art: Dancing 46, Art: Singing 46, Interests: Art History (their culture) 55, Interests: Child Development 36, Kinesics: 65, Language: Native (their culture) 85, Language: ASL 60, Networking: Scientists (Anthropologists) 45, Perception 40, Persuasion 45, Profession: Virgin 55, Protocol (their culture) 65, Unarmed Combat 30

Implants:** Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Medicines*, Sex Switch Traits: Edited Memories, Social Stigma (Neotenic)

* Modified version; the Forever Virgins “heal” normal sexual trauma, including restoring hymens and undoing the effects of circumcision or genital mutilation. The healing process triggers an automatic ego-pruning procedure in the cortical stack, removing from the ego the memories of the traumatic event.

** A minority of Forever Virgins are actually pods, with the Cyberbrain and Puppet Sock implants, designed to allow infomorphs to take part in coming-of-age ceremonies and the like.

Using the Forever Virgins

Sexual norms and unusual cultures are not fit for every game; before bringing the Forever Virgins into play at your table, please make sure that your players are mature enough to handle the concept...and be willing to abandon it if it looks like it’s going to be a serious fight-starter. That being said, here are recommendations for using the Forever Virgins.

The most obvious choice for Forever Virgins is just to present them unaltered as part of the background of an adventure—maybe a sect of brinkers trying to maintain their pre-Fall culture and “needing” virgins for certain tasks, maybe an anthropological project to sustain a certain cultural practice for further study. In this case, the PCs are exposed to the practice, allowed to ask questions, come to their own conclusions, and decide and debate how they feel about that...and maybe what to do about it. It is very easy for the Forever Virgin practice to resemble child prostitution or worse, even if the entire concept is carefully explained, and the PCs may well feel inclined to “rescue” the virgins. Whether this works or not is up to the gamemaster; remember there are no right answers and have fun.

The other alternative is to have an ex-Forever Virgin—a character who was a participant in that lifestyle, but escaped or was broken out of it. Such a character probably still struggles with issues related to their morph’s unique traits and their former social role, and may have the Real World Naïveté trait. A strong reason for Forever Virgins to “break” from their social role is if their memory programming fails for some reason, leaving them to remember repeated sexual initiations or genital mutilations. The mental stress alone from such memories can cause the character to develop any number of mental derangements and social hang-ups...or the character may be met several years later, having overcome that trauma and emerged as a self-assured, self-empowered character; a good NPC contact for deep insight into mental trauma or their “home” pocket-culture.

ENTRY 196: Biomimetic Sampler

Pain and pleasure are evolutionary advantages that have helped transhumanity survive for hundreds of thousands of years. Early synthmorph designers soon learned they needed to include analogues of satisfaction and discomfort into the morphs they were designing, both to ease resleeving and as a necessity to help users live and thrive in their new bodies. While it never completely mimicked the biological neuroreceptors, it was close enough to activate the old hardwired survival instincts in the transhuman ego—the instinctive drawing back of a body part away from a source of damage, cradling an injured part, etc.

These same pleasure/pain analogues, along with the other sensory input data, later became the focal point for the development of narcoalgorithms—because while a synthmorph may have no physical need to get drunk or high, the mental desire and addiction to do so still remained with the ego. So many synthmorphs and infolife have sought out means of getting off in their new technological forms. Needless to say, they have found them in all manner of digital drugs. But digital drugs, even with all their tricks and advantages, have never quite come close to the vast spectrum of experiences offered by physical, analog drugs.

The biomimetic sampler is an augmentation designed to address that issue. A chemical drug is applied to the input of the sampler, where it is vaporized by a laser and its structure analyzed. Using a software emulation of a simplified human body and mesh-based XP recordings, the sampler then synthesizes a narcoalgorithm approximating the physical and mental effects of the drug. Initially a psychiatric tool designed to aid addicts who had resleeved, it was quickly co-opted by the black market and less scrupled hypercorps.

Mechanics

The Biomimetic Sampler is a cyberware augmentation for characters with a cyberbrain with a cost of Expensive. If a dose of chemical, drug, or toxin (see Eclipse Phase 317) is fed into the sampler, that dose is destroyed and the Sampler produces a narcoalgorithm that approximates the physical experience of the drug or toxin to the user, allowing synthmorphs to enjoy the same benefits of various drugs...to a point. Narcoalgorithms created by this drug can only give the perception of the physical effect, but without working muscles and endocrine systems cannot

enjoy the bonuses. Mechanically, this means the character can enjoy any boosts to purely mental attributes like COG, INT, WIL, or Lucidity, but not physical attributes REF, SOM, Durability, Perception, Speed, etc. Sampler-derived narcoalgorithms also never cause damage, which means morphs with this augmentation can mainline digital emulations of toxins without danger. All narcoalgorithms created by the Biomimetic Sampler have an Addiction Type of Mental and share the Addiction Modifier as their original drug (if no Addiction Modifier is listed, that would be zero).

The gamemaster has final say on what chemicals and chemical effects translate over; while a synthmorph could mainline a capful of exotic hydrocarbons or an alien venom, odds are the XP library is going to be a little short on those. By design all biomimetic sampler-created narcoalgorithms are one-shots, but a clever and skilled hacker can probably find a way around that—if a character does manage to hack their own biomimetic sampler for a supply of “infinite narcoalgorithms,” remember to apply the full duration, side effects, and risk of addiction as appropriate.

ENTRY 197: The Last Caliphate

Thawra is a mid-sized habitat cored out of one of the Vulcanoids; founded by Islamic refugees of the Fall and boasting one of the largest Neo-Islamic communities in the solar system, it has been nicknamed “The Last Caliphate” by the media of the Planetary Consortium. It is a habitat marked by intricate fractal mosaics but no depictions of the human form, very little augmentation but extensive development of genetically engineered biomorphs, and a strongly insular community that is amazingly tolerant of outsiders. The habitat itself is made up of nested domes (in case one is breached), all of which are decorated or stylized with various architectural frills taken from Earth-based Islamic cultures...minarets, cupolas, American Islamic murals, mocárabe and muqarnas, among many more. Architecture is one of Thawra’s major exports, with the Caliphate holding a treasury of over a thousand years of designs and decoration techniques from Islamic cultures, which are being adapted to new nanofabrication and macrofabrication methods.

Led by the Calipha Amatullah, the Thawra community is a constitutional elected monarchy based both on the political and religious traditions of early and postmodern autonomous communities. Key to the community concept is absolute and knowing participation: no one is born into the Last Caliphate. Applicants must submit to testing of their knowledge and compatibility with Thawra’s laws and philosophy, including the acceptance of Allah, the forbidding of usury, and the fair treatment of other peoples; and the ulama often consult the subject’s rep score and challenge or question various incidents. Those who apply for and are accepted are made full members of the community, and are expected to contribute a part of their work and resources towards the maintenance and expansion of Thawra—which means not only a duty to clean air filters and replace micrometeorite ablation tiles, but regular participation in and attendance at social events, particularly the famous group debates mediated during the evenings before prayer, and voting. The Caliph or Calipha and other positions (heads of Maintenance, Legal, Education, etc.) is elected by the Islamic citizens by a democratic process known as shura, with new elections and re-elections staggered so a new election occurs every cycle (28 days), with the average term of office lasting 13 cycles. In addition to overall executive power, the Calipha is the spiritual leader of the community, the guiding philosopher for its goals and development with undisputed authority, bound only by constitutional and religious laws...until their term concludes, when they may be voted out.

Using the Last Caliphate

A combination of old and new, the Last Caliphate is a playground for players and gamemasters to explore both what Islam was, is, and could be—for better, worse, or indifferent. The Caliphate structure described here is not the traditional Islamic politicalreligious structure, nor are its principles and actions

entirely in keeping with any modern Islamic teachings; this is a fictional community, where weird pressures have forced refugees of different Earth Islamic cultures together. The result has been compromise, amalgamation, resynthesis...and revolution. Undoubtedly, there are many that will disclaim Thawra for the changes it has made to various traditional Islamic beliefs and culture; and others that will claim its changes haven’t gone far enough. However the gamemaster decides to play it, keep in mind that the Last Caliphate is neither an Islamic paradise nor a repressive, conservative regime, but somewhere in the middle...people trying to live their life right by the principles they hold and the traditions they are familiar with.

Seeds

- Thawra architects have unveiled the Mosque Engine, a scale model of a nanoconstruction system which could potentially convert entire planets into habitats—just add air, water, fusion reactor, and transhumans. Their test site is a nearby Vulcanoid massing just 100 tons; powered by an antimatter cell the Mosque Engine should direct its nanite host to mine and rebuild the entire asteroid into a rotating disk-like structure. However, someone has interrupted the test and stolen the Engine; the Calipha of the Last Caliphate quietly hires the PCs to recover or destroy the engine before it can be perverted into a weapon.
- With the destruction of Earth apparently imminent, it is rumored some of the faithful stole the Black Stone from the Kaaba in Mecca, and launched it into space. Neolslamic scholar Suraa believes she has located the apocryphal ship...and wishes the PCs to help her retrieve it and bring it back to Thawra intact, where they have the resources to open it properly without damaging the contents...if the Black Stone is even there. This places them in the line of fire to several other groups, who would either claim the artifact or see it destroyed.

ENTRY 198: Axis Solari

“Is it then really to be the end of our history and of our peoples? No! We cannot believe it. This age must be called, not the decline ... but the resurrection of the peoples ... Only that which was old, decayed and evil perishes; and let it die! But new life will spring u Faith can be found, if the will is there. Our leadership has the will, and faith is with the people...” - Excerpt from Axis Solari ‘Mesh-cast; adapted from a speech by Adolph Hitler

Not all conservatives are bioconservatives. There is more to being human than the shape of your DNA, or the number and kind of your augmentations. The Axis Solari care nothing for your ethnicity or nation, your sex or your gender. They embrace biomorph and synthmorph alike as one people, unified, the survivors of Earth, the undiminished egos that survived the Fall, to be perpetuated forever. Those human egos are the chosen people that the Axis Solari wishes to save.

Not all transhuman attributes are positive. Their hatred, and cruelty, and racism. Bias and invective. Rape and torture and murder, sometimes on scales barely imaginable. Those are traits that the Axis Solari believes are valuable and defining to transhumanity. Those are the emotions that they wish to instill and cultivate to raise transhuman consciousness. So they have taken on them the symbols of those regimes which are most reviled in transhuman memory—specifically to elicit anger, and distrust, and bile. Because once you hate them, you have already achieved half of what they want.

AGIs are the scapegoats of the Axis Solari, the minority group that they feed their spite on. In their speeches and in their actions they proclaim them as alien intelligences, different intelligences, not human, inimically opposed to the human ego. Similar epithets are turned toward exhumans, and procedures that lean toward becoming exhuman; uplifts are regarded as lesser creatures. The AGIs bear the brunt of Axis Solari invective, and are at the forefront of their attacks.

The Axis Solari are transhumans dedicated to the preservation of the darker parts of the human ego, the parts that most transhumans wouldn't mind pruning away. They dress themselves in swastikas and other symbols because they elicit hate and fear; they are willing to be hated, simply to spread hate. A terrorist group that knows what they do is terrible, but believes in the long run it is in the best interests of transhumanity.

Using the Axis Solari

On the most basic level, the Axis Solari are space Nazis—and everybody loves to punch Nazis. These people play the villain so much and so easily that they can be the bad guys or numberless goons in nearly any criminal or underhanded plot and none of the PCs will blink. That's good; it makes the PCs underestimate the Axis Solari. That's what they want.

Better: being labeled as enemies of a large segment of transhumanity, the Axis sometimes finds itself in bed with other terrorist organizations, the better to betray them from within.

The only thing worse than space Nazis are intelligent space Nazis. The Axis Solari is actually deadly serious that it wishes to preserve the human ego, particularly survivors of the Fall, and all the criminal activities and low-level terrorism it engages in is just a visible smokescreen to funnel resources into its true goals of fighting existential threats. The Axis Solari are, for all their hate speech, a counterintelligence organization masquerading as a criminal hate group. As such, the Axis Solari have a loose working relationship with Firewall and other organizations—though they may not care for each other's ideology, when it comes to fighting exsurgents, basilisk hacks, and extraterrestrial threats their goals overlap. The PCs who would so happily gundown the idiotic clanker with a swastika armband may find themselves working side-by-side with an Axis Solari deep cover agent to break up an exsurgent cell...

ENTRY 199: Vel Von Voom

During her awake-cycle, Vel von Voom is a young face that stands out in the crowd, her face and body a mass of scar tissue, artful brands concealing and incorporating the older, uglier chaotic burn wounds that speak of some horrific fire. So she faces the world through a mask she burnt into her own face, proud and terrifying. Vel has the ambition, but not the skills, and there is no road-map to stardom or happiness. So she works where she can find it, builds her rep in small ways, shares her music with those who will listen, and steals kisses from girls in dark, little-used corridors and maintenance shafts.

At night, she dreams of fire. Reliving the night when they burnt their way in to her parent's ship, the smell of her mother's boiling fat splashing against her face, the boneless thing that forced her into its burning, burning embrace... After the first few fire alarms, she started to sleep in water cocoons. Waking up half-scalded from boiling currents was better than sparking a blaze that called station maintenance and security down on her head. Sleeping with lovers turned out to be another bad idea; on the last one her sleep-self had gotten creative, burning a terrible pattern of fine lines in her skin that hurt to look at...

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	13	12	15	16	10	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	26	5	52	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Accounting 28, Academics: Astrophysics 25, Academics: Psychology 26, Art: Branding 34, Art: Singing 28, Blades 27, Deception 28, Fray 26, Free Fall (Microgravity) 30, Hardware: Aerospace 24, Infiltration 26, Infosec 26, Interests: Black Markets 28, Interests: Criminal Groups 25, Interests: Psi 29, Kinesics: 20, Kinetic Weapons: 20, Language: Native Dutch 85, Language: English 72, Language: Korean 46, Language: Cantonese (Swearing) 22, Networking: Autonomists 17, Networking: Criminal 20, Networking: Hypercorps 17, Palming 31, Persuasion (Flirt) 30, Profession: Appraisal 27, Profession: Day Labor 32, Profession: Smuggling Tricks 29, Scrounging 39, Sense 30

Implants: Basic Biomod, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Gills

Traits: Mental Disorder (Compulsive Self-Branding, Night Terrors, Sleep Firesetting), Pain Tolerance (Level 2), Psi

(Level 3), Striking Looks (Level 1), Uncanny Valley Sleights: Pyrokinesis (see Eclipse Phase 372)

Using Vel Von Voom

Some gamemasters will see Vel von Voom as Carrie...in Spaaace. If that's what works for you, fine. But I challenge you to be more creative. Fire is a weird thing in space, and need not be teenaged refugee from a burn war pointing her finger and letting loose a flamethrower. Imagine instead subtler, more bizarre uses – floating will-o'-the-wisp candle flames floating in the microgravity around her as she shivers in her night terrors, or slow-burning arabesques crawling over the nearby surfaces she touches. The amount of control Vel even has over her abilities is questionable—as is her overall mental state. Vel's façade is that of an independent teenager, orphaned by the Fall, mostly self-educated, doing odd jobs and finding what small pleasures she can when and where she can. If that's all the gamemaster wants to portray, fine and dandy. But nobody reaches Psi 3 unless they've fully converted to the exsurgent virus—and it remains to be seen whether the Vel that can do that awesome dragon on your arm with a piece of wire and a torch is the real Vel, or just the artificial shell of an ego that's no longer remotely transhuman.

ENTRY 200: Thermal Sword

“The tip of my sunblade seemed to just touch the faceplate—and then I drove it in. For a moment he stared into the sun, and in the next breath the white-hot tip had plunged through helmet and eye and bone, and the brain flash-boiled and exploded.” – Ruster Graeme

There is a popular story told on Mars, about how a squad of exsurgent xenomorphs came down on a demolition site where the Barsoomians were cutting apart a dome that had fallen in on itself. The transhumans had only their tools to defend themselves with. The xenomorphs burned under the assault of a dozen thermal lances, and when the rods were exhausted what was left of them were broken into pieces by heavy hammers and wrenches. With all its variations, no one can say if the events of the story ever happened, but it is undoubtedly part of the reason thermal swords are so popular today—and perhaps it’s even true.

The progenitor of thermal swords and sunblades (also called “oxygen weapons”) is the thermal lance, a powerful and simple industrial cutting tool. An iron tube packed with iron rods; pressurized oxygen is fed through the assembly and the business end ignited. The result is a few minutes of molten magma being pumped out at around 3,000° C before the tube is consumed. Oxygen weapons work on an identical principle, with only a few refinements to the technology. The typical thermal sword is a shorter version of a thermal lance, with a specially-packed rod designed to burn hotter and a red-oxygen ignition at the end that can get the thermal sword burning in less than a second; the base contains the oxygen bottle and a heavily-insulated handle with flow-control knob and ignition switch. All of the parts can be manufactured by a maker, are relatively easy to assemble, and the plans are online—the red oxygen being by far the most expensive part of the whole weapon.

What a transhuman gets for their efforts is an easily disguisable melee weapon capable of melting or burning through most armor, and which can be wielded effectively using a few basic fencing maneuvers. However, the “blade” and oxygen supply lasts only for about a minute, and the igniter device is a one-shot; once lit the transhuman may have a burning sword of fiery vengeance, but unless they finish their business quickly will find themselves holding a

handle with an empty oxygen bottle and the glowing stump of a weapon.

Sunblades are artisan-crafted thermal swords, made by Barsoomian fencing schools. Using higher-quality materials and better manufacturing techniques than random people with access to a maker and some duct tape, sunblades also have a better balance and are overall much better weapons in combat.

Mechanics

Thermal swords and sunblades are wielded with the Blades skill. Any hit that is an Excellent Success (MoS 30+) sets the target on fire, where they will continue to take 2d10 damage per Action Turn provided the environment has oxygen available. Both weapons are one-shots; igniting them is a Quick Action, but they only last for one minute (20 Action Turns) and then the weapon is effectively destroyed. Gamemasters who don’t feel like handling this extra bit of bookkeeping are advised to rule that the oxygen weapon simply lasts until the end of the current combat. Oxygen weapons do work in vacuum, since they provide their own oxygen, but the gas and molten iron shooting out the business end will send the character flying unless they are carefully braced.

Blade	AP	DV	Average DV	Cost
Thermal Sword	-4	2d10 + 2 + (SOM ÷ 10)	16 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Low
Sunblade	-6	2d10 + 4 + (SOM ÷ 10)	18 + (SOM ÷ 10)	Moderate

ENTRY 201: The Burning Plague

“Burn. All burn.”

- Last transmission, Utica Station

There is an old legend, that one of the titans of myth stole fire from the gods and gave it to transhumanity. Perhaps it is ironic, then, that it was one of the TITANs that instigated the Burning Plague. First categorized as spontaneous human combustion and subsequently ignored, medical evidence eventually came forth of a new, deadly strain of the exsurgent virus that causes the subject to rapidly develop pyrokinetic abilities—in a process that is so rapid, most subjects lose control and explodes in a ball of flame.

It starts with a fever that you can never quite shake, running a little hot constantly, all the time. After a couple weeks you get used to it, the extra energy that seems to drive you a little faster during the day, and keeps your mind so busy you can hardly sleep at night. In a month, you’re past the little headaches and periods of light-headedness, face flushed all the time, incredibly energetic. Some victims report bursts of nymphomania or compulsive touching, spreading highly infectious body fluids with each contact. At the end of the event, the flashes start. No one knows quite what triggers them—agitation, stress, light cycles, hormones, anything. But things around the victim start to burn...anything they concentrate on starts to burn...and when they realize they are the one causing it, they start to burn. Most victims self-immolate at this point, the victims of their own developing psi power.

Mechanics

Stage 1 (initial infection to 30 days):

Upon initial infection, the character begins to feel feverish. Other physiological effects may include mild headaches, nausea, skin rashes, early onset of periods, light sensitivity, and priapism, but most victims report a sense of energy and alertness—treat this as temporary +1 to REF and COG. Medical attention at this point usually points to a mild viral infection, though a detailed scan of the brain will reveal tumors growing and the nervous tissue altering in subtle ways. If these tumors are surgically removed or treated, the infection resets to day 1, but does not go away. Resleeving at this point will save the character’s ego.

Stage 2 (30 days to 35 days):

After a month, the tumors in the character’s head have reached full size, and they gain the Psi (Level 3) trait and

the Pyrokinesis Psi-Epsilon sleight with all the usual psi drawbacks (Eclipse Phase 220); at this point the character is considered an NPC (though any forks of the ego prior to this point are still under the control of the player). As they manifest, the character’s pyrokinetic psi powers begin flaring almost uncontrollably. Every hour, make a Control Test—if the character succeeds, then they can determine how their pyrokinesis is used; if they fail, then the pyrokinetic effect is random, usually with some item nearby or that they are focusing on bursting into flames. As most victims do not have any ranks in the Control skill, few survive very long once the flares begin.

Stage 3 (36 days+):

At this stage, the mutations in the character’s brain and nervous system stabilize, and they gain control over their pyrokinetic psi abilities—at least enough to keep from frying themselves by accident. The neural damage also causes profound shifts in how the victim perceives the world and relationships with other transhumans. The original personality and memories are still present, but the NPC tends to feel alienated in their own skin, like a computer running an emulation of another operating system on top of the one built into it. Such characters also run a slightly higher body temperature, making them easy to pick out in a crowd with thermographic sensors.

ENTRY 202: Jhassa Autumnbringer

“Autumn is coming.”

-- Mesh graffiti

Earth-life adapted itself to seasonal cycles. In the western hemisphere, autumn was the season when the days began to fail, the nights were longer and colder, and everyone prepared for the winter knew was coming. Sacrifices were made: herds culled of animals that would not survive the cold; practical decisions made to preserve precious resources during the period of want to come. The cruelty of the farmer was a kindness, to spare both individual suffering and the group suffering of the herd.

Jhassa is one of the Autumnbringers, ideological assassins that cull the transhuman herd, they target the weak and traitorous, those who will not fight for themselves, those who will not work or produce. In this way they hope to better prepare transhumanity for the conflict they feel is coming—when the TITANs return, or the Factors turn against them, or whatever other existential threat may arise. When that happens, some brave fools will seek to save all of transhumanity. The Autumnbringers know better. They see a long winter and hard decisions, where synthmorphs will need to scavenge each other for parts and biomorphs not bother to recycle the dying and the dead before they consume them. In their cruelty, they hope to spare transhumans the pain of making some of these decisions. Every where Jhassa goes, death and a message are left behind:

Beware. Autumn is coming.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
23	15	17	16	19	23	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	45	9	67

Morph: Ghost

Skills: Academics: Memetics 40, Academics: Political Science 60, Academics: Psychology 50, Art: Acting 36, Art: Writing 44, Deception (Acting) 56, Fray 50, Freerunning (Microgravity) 45, Infiltration 40, Infosec 42, Interests: Existential Threats 45, Interests: Survivalist Groups 45, Interests: TITANs 45, Interests: Triage 60, Interfacing 45, Intimidation 25, Investigation 44, Kinesics 44, Language: Native Urdu 86, Language English 40, Language Hindi 40, Medicine (Euthanasia) 50, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Criminal 55, Networking: Hypercorps 35, Networking: Media 55, Perception 55, Persuasion 35, Pilot:

Aircraft 44, Pilot: Groundcraft 33, Profession: Social Engineering 66, Protocol 44, Research 44, Spray Weapons 27, Unarmed Combat 43

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Vision, Grip Pads

Traits: Allies (Autumnbringer cell), On the Run

Using Jhassa Autumnbringer

Not quite a “survival of the fittest” type, Jhassa targets individuals and populations that she sees as burdens to transhumanity in the event of the apocalyptic long war the Autumnbringers believe is coming. Individuals on perpetual life support, criminals incarcerated for life, any traitors or collaborators that worked with the TITANs, advocates of de-militarization, individuals that refuse to work and exist only as a drain on a habitat’s resources, etc. Her occasional terrorist bombing garners all the attention, but for the most part are rare; her specialization is euthanasia, sitting down and convincing individuals that it is in their best interests to die, and providing the means to do so—easily, and painlessly. Of course, if the victim resists she’ll put a bullet in them, erase their cortical stack, and release a digital virus to hunt down and exterminate as many forks as she can find—but she likes to at least make the offer.

ENTRY 203: The Green & The Black

Sunshine is a power-generating habitat out Mercury-way, a vast array of solar panels cranking out electricity, which is converted or stored in a variety of high-energy density storage units destined for the Vulcanoids and other Mercury habitats. The work is neither as cleanly efficient nor pleasant as one would hope; involving a considerable amount of heavy chemical, industrial, and radiological processes, depending on type and amount of batteries involved. A communistic endeavor, with shared principles of clean energy and nudism Sunshine has a mixed population of morphs, the Green and the Black.

The Green are biomorphs of every stripe with a skin augmentation based on a plant's leaf system, allowing them to perform photosynthesis. While the majority of them really do have green skin, a minority use a more efficient augmentation derived from the Black Pearl Pepper and are actually black-skinned. The Black are synthmorphs whose outer layer is covered by thin layer of photovoltaic cells that charge their own batteries when exposed to light. Both augmentations share attributes of directly providing energy that the morph requires and producing a pleasurable sensation when exposed to bright light. Central Planning regulates work schedules so that every part of the population spends four hours out of every ten basking in sunlight on one of the three sundecks.

However, after nearly eight years of operation, cracks have started to appear in the system. The majority of the Greens in the station receive administrative labor assignments, while the majority of the Blacks are assigned the more dangerous industrial job slots, and overall statistics show that the administrative group receives nearly five hours of sunbathing out of every ten. This, along with a rising disparity in the number of Greens versus Blacks, concerns about falling oxygen vs. carbon dioxide levels, and other glitches have set the stage for serious debates about the long-term plausibility of the Sunshine system.

Seeds

- A black-skinned Green has fallen in love with a Black member; but their familygroups are opposed to the relationship because they're upset it will limit procreative choices and further exacerbate the imbalance between the two sides. The Green and the Black lovers have sent out an order for a surrogate pod to gestate new Green morphs and hopefully alleviate the approbation of their family-

groups—all they need is the PCs to deliver it. Unfortunately, that means heading out during a period of heavy sunspot activity, and possibly dealing with a deadly micrometeorite shower! Will the PCs risk it to save two star-crossed lovers?

- A Green worker with an industrial skillbase has suffered severe, crippling injuries as a result of insufficient safety procedures for biomorphs on Sunshine station. Now undergoing surgery to accept various cyberlimbs to save their life and restore their functionality, the Green has had a vision to bridge the gap between Green and Black—but to do it, they need to apply the Black's solar-power skin augmentation. This procedure is normally restricted, so they need the PCs to find a way...if they succeed, the Green/Black worker could be a strong ideological influence on the Sunshine communist habitat.

ENTRY 204: Lunar Pimps & Hos Ball

Obscene implants wobbling in microgravity. Representatives from every part of the spectrum of sexual fetish, from the steaming genitals of the transhuman pets straining at their leashes to the streamlined and baroque New Sexes strutting their stuff, custom sex organs on careful display. Guests are allowed on the convention floor, but by tradition the Ball itself is reserved for registered Pimps and their Hos, resplendent in their finest. At the midnight hour the Queens will be crowned, the Grand Pimp named, and then the formal procession will begin, each pimp showing their strut in a loud, lazy parade. A celebration of transhuman sexuality, in every form and flavor.

The Lunar Pimps & Hos Ball is a tradition stretching back to before the Fall, and some say before the legalization of sex workers in most of the Lunar habitats. Originally an informal gathering for socialization and networking, in these later days the Ball has turned into a system-wide trade and career fair, where young hopefuls come to learn about and apply for positions, and hypercorps and groups of all types come together to educate, entertain, and advertise their latest research, products, and philosophies. On the convention floor, amateurs of every size and shape are engaged with interactive sex ed displays, torrents of pornography, meet their favorite himbos and bimbos, listen to talks from industry veterans, and buy or sell nearly anything. The trade floor is more corporate, but with a three drink/narcoalgorithm minimum, and often hosts academic lectures on economic prospects, fetishization tracking algorithms, and other metrics; new products and production techniques are laid out and big deals made on human furniture. The Adult Media Awards are often held the night before the Ball, and it is traditional that the facilities close with the Last Dance in honor of those pimps and hos of old who have passed on.

The Ball itself has a more select audience—invitation only, limited to 200 pimps and their selection of their two best hos. Despite the name, not every invitee is a sex work administrator, but all of them get into the style and mood of the party, and the extravagant escapades make for some of the highest viewer ratings of anything on the 'Mesh.

Using the Lunar Pimps & Hos Ball

Sex in RPGs tends to be ignored unless it causes Drama. Rape, incest, bestiality, alien abductions and impregnations, etc. are fine to read about if that's your

particular kink, but at the table reading that stuff out loud tends to just make people squirm—and not in the good way. The Lunar Pimps & Hos Ball is primarily about allowing the gamemaster a venue to use sex creatively and positively in their Eclipse Phase game; the kind of openness and weirdness about sex you read about in old New Wave science fiction. From a gaming standpoint, the Lunar Pimps & Hos Ball also presents a collusion of social and hypercorp interests that you rarely get together, so there is plenty of room for corporate espionage, hurt feelings, stolen prototypes, and blackmail. Fun for the whole family!

ENTRY 205: Skinchasers

You're a neo-hominid in a transhuman universe, and you'll never be able to forget it. Uplifts are generally outnumbered, outsiders rubbing elbows (or comparable parts of the anatomy) with a wild and diverse array of transhumanity which they are constantly in contact with but rarely a part of. Imagine being a neo-hominid where your gut-level reaction if that someone baring their teeth is a form of threat display, faced every day with hundreds or thousands of Mesh ads showing smiling, laughing humans. Imagine growing up where you might not see another member of your species for months or years on end. Yet as social creatures, they need to connect with someone.

Uplifts are not human. Members of a different species, they do not think or act in human ways, their instincts and responses are alien to much of human experience. Yet they are raised to transhuman intellect, immersed in transhuman culture, and often raised by and interacting with humans as much if not more than with other members of their own species. So it should come as no surprise that many an uplift comes to crave transhuman companionship. Individuals derisive of such uplifts call them skinchasers, a label containing the suggestion of both bestiality and betrayal.

This is not necessarily a sexual attraction, though such relationships do happen. The mental and biological hurdles of stimulus and attractiveness for such relationships generally require special expertise from qualified therapists (though more than a few adventurous couples make do with Mesh-based advice). No, for most uplifts that find themselves in this situation, they simply feel more comfortable being around and interacting with humans than members of their own kind. It is, to many psychologists, a special class of alienation where the uplifts feel that they belong more strongly with humans than other uplifts.

Using Skinchasers

This is not an excuse to introduce bestiality to your gametable. Honestly, if you want to include cross-species lovin' between a neo-hominid and a sylph, that's entirely between you and your table. This is about adding another wrinkle to the dynamic of roleplaying an uplift, and relationships (mental, spiritual, platonic, etc.) between uplifts and transhumans. An uplift accused of being a skinchaser is subject to bigotry, and while that should not

dominate a campaign it might be appropriate if the uplift character is in a fairly conservative habitat, or if they encounter a fairly conservative population of uplifts. On the other hand, several organizations may support skinchasers to further integrate uplifts and transhumans socially.

Seeds

- Ezekial Jones is an octomorph a long way out. Lonely and depressed, Jones strikes up a working relationship with a local worker named Tafa, but finds it difficult to express his feelings and see if they are reciprocated. Jones asks the PCs to be his de Bergerac and guide him in bromancing Tafa according to transhuman customs.
- Memphistoles is a neo-hominid (orangutan) is worried about the perpetuation of the species, but his son/daughter (a neo-hominid orangutan with the Sex Switch augmentation) Manchester seems fixated on humans. Memphistoles offers the PCs a reward if they can convince Manchester to have a child with another neo-hominid orangutan.

ENTRY 206: Single Splicer Female

She seeks company. Watches everything, learns quickly, and shows active interest in what her victim does. She shares their interest, asks to borrow their media, talks with them about it. Always, always, she wants to know about them, turns the attention and conversation back to them, their past, how they feel, what they think, what they want. The most egotistical and self-centered don't seem to notice until she starts dressing like them. Borrowing clothes. Then maybe changes her hair to match theirs. Her eyes. Her face. By then, it's almost too late...and she already has some of their passcodes and identification, passing herself off as them on far-flung parts of the Mesh, begging favors and squirreling away funds...

Whatever her original identity, the Single Splicer Female has long buried it under a chain of assumed identities. Her concept of self is unstable, and so she latches on to an individual—often a female splicer in need of a roommate or partner, though when at loose ends she is less picky. They may become friends or lovers. With connection comes identification; she sees her victim as her idealized self and seeks to become them. Given time and transhuman augmentation technology, there's no telling how far she might go, but most of her victims interfere by the time she starts using her skinflex to assume their appearance and begins to steal their identity.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	22	18	16	13	15	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Anthropology 35, Academics: Psychology 45, Academics: Sociology 30, Art: Acting 45, Art: Makeup 50, Blades 33, Deception 60, Disguise 38, Interests: Gossiping 25, Interests: Identity Theft 60, Interests: Stalking 55, Interfacing 30, Kinesis (Faces): 50, Language: Native English 85, Language: Spanish 70, Language: Portuguese 70, Language: French 50, Networking: Media 24

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Mental Speed, Sex Switch, Skinflex, Skillware

Traits: Mental Disorder (Adaptive Identity Disorder)

Using Single Splicer Female

A doppelganger with a psychotic twist and a penchant of going for your online wallet, Single Splicer Female is a solid

choice for a contact that goes from cool to clingy to scary. While presented as an individual, given the way that Eclipse Phase plays with identity there could be any number of egos with the same Adaptive Identity Disorder and a criminal bent—possibly an entire gang that mimics and then replaces a small group of people, uses their identities for some purpose, and then abandons them, fading away into the sea of transhumanity to pull the same con again.

On the other hand, the Single Splicer Female can be seen as a victim of their mental illness, driven by their impulses and lack of self-identity into an unhealthy lifestyle and a cycle of abusive relationships. “Fixing” them is probably beyond the PCs’ abilities or cares—a long-term project that involves a great deal of therapy, medication, and helping the SSF come to terms with and establish their own identity, a task better left to psychiatric care professionals and institutions. Although, an individual who understands their illness and has sufficiently strong will and resources could use it to their advantage, and turn the SSF from a minor criminal to a deadly assassin...

ENTRY 207: AF Ice Cream

Humans are often at their most creative not when they have an infinite number of choices and tools at their disposal, but when they are faced with sharply limited constraints. Nowhere is this more obvious than when it comes to cooking after the Fall. Limited availability of many ingredients has forced transhumans to broaden their horizons both as to what is edible and what is acceptable to the palate, and spurred a wave of creative food preparation that has yet to diminish.

Ice cream, for example, was a relatively simple dish to prepare on earth before the Fall—ice and sugar, the two main ingredients in most forms of ice cream, were relatively abundant. After the Fall however, both are scarce, and true ice cream correspondingly rarer. Traditional ice cream is only really available on Mars and to a lesser extent Luna, where the number of transbovines and sugar crops are produced in sufficient quantities to make artisanal batches of homemade ice cream a viable commodity—and even frozen yogurt and custard, though the demand for these products is generally less. Most Martian and Lunar ice cream is consumed locally, with the remainder dehydrated and shipped to other habitats, especially Titan where it is often served with chocolate and coffee-flavored liqueurs—eating dehydrated ice cream plain is uncommon, and locally is the basis for several anecdotes about good fortune going with bad.

Most large habitats manage a near-ice cream product derived from dehydrated transbovine milk powder, crushed water ice, and the local sweetjuice or sugarin; the resultant product is vaguely similar to gelato, or if the milk powder left out and grain alcohol applied it becomes a kind of sorbet. Smaller and more isolated habitats make do with what they can; many scum barges in particular prefer a high-energy foodstuff based on akutaq and made from crumbled protein biscuit, sugarin, and congealed food-grade oil, blended together into a smooth paste. Several hypercorps around Luna and Venus are currently working on cheaper recipes of ice cream that can be produced in bulk, but so far have only produced a wide variety of artificial flavors and “extender” processes where air and filler materials are added to increase the “bulk” of ice cream products.

Makers have been working diligently on produce ice cream substitutes for years, but so far all they’ve managed is a flavorless low-grade foam similar in consistency and

appearance to toothpaste. Some of them claim that it tastes just the same once you mix in the sweetjuice, but few of them can say that with a straight face.

Using AF Ice Cream

Eclipse Phase is mostly a post-scarcity economy; for any well-run habitat, running out of air, potable water, power, and for a stable population is unlikely. However, while you can survive off scummy recycled water and moldy break bread for quite a while, few transhumans hold it as a preference. Ice cream, because of the scarcity of its main components sugar (see Entry 179: Sweetjuice) and milk (see Entry 63: Transbovine), a fairly rare substance highly dependent on the availability of local foodstuff producers. On Mars for example, the cheaper ice cream alternatives are Trivial in cost and the really good handmade batches are Moderate; on Titan handmade ice cream is Expensive, and on the Outer Rim it isn’t available unless you have the resources to make it yourself. For most of the solar system, the hypercorp-produced filler-laden “ice cream” has a Low cost and is always available. Because of the scarcity of traditional ice cream and the tremendous local variations, there is a steady demand for it throughout the solar system, to the point where it is considered a luxury trade item in most habitats—while the PCs may balk at receiving a 5-gallon jug of homemade ice cream as payment for a job, that could potentially buy a decent used morph out on the Outer Rim. Dehydrated ice cream (astronaut’s ice cream) and milk powder are compact trade goods favored by smugglers because they are nonperishable and can be hidden between the inner and outer hull. A fun but silly adventure might have the PCs running around a habitat trying to beg, borrow, steal, and otherwise scrape together the ingredients for a batch of ice cream for a client, all while fending off the jackals that want the ice cream for themselves!

ENTRY 208: Randomly Accessible Memories

There are limitations to human-style long term memory storage and retrieval. Recollections are never stored and recalled as single, self-contained events; they are always allocated and dredged up by chains of associations, folded in on one another. Digital storage is more linear and efficient—once coded as XP data, a memory can be searched, sorted, and edited just like any other bit of code. Various personal augmentations (and in some intelligence coding algorithms) work to combine the two methods, increasing the efficiency of transhuman memory storage, search, and retrieval—but even computer-aided recall is limited by the abilities of the user. If an ego doesn't know what they're looking for or when and where to look for it, then the perfection of their recollection doesn't help much. Even if an ego downloads an entire library of works into their brain and can recite the data verbatim doesn't mean they necessarily understand the contents.

The problem has attracted some big thinkers from all over the solar system, who have tossed about ideas and tinkered with different concepts off and on for years. The most popular and practical concept is a Mesh-based app called RAM—visually represented as a planet-sized sphere of liquid mirror hanging in a void. At the most basic user level, the RAM app is designed to act as a kind of mental prompt, interacting with the user's memories over a set time period and forcibly drawing their attention to random details, looking for patterns. The algorithms aren't perfect, but neither are they designed to be; it's up to the ego to decide what is important and what is not, whether a detail they remembered but overlooked is critical or noise in the signal.

More advanced users have found other uses for the RAM app: set the duration to a single moment and it becomes a tool for meditation, recalling the same experience continually to push out other thoughts; several artists have used selective RAM app options to record and construct elaborate memory trips or as a creative prompt. Most notoriously, the RAM app has seen a lot of its code stolen and incorporated into narcoalgorithms and petals, used to complement or exacerbate the effects of those drugs—attention focusing smart drugs tend to leave the user in a haze of hyper-attentive recollection over minutes, while hallucinations take on a guided, story-like structure based on the user's memory of the last day.

Using Randomly Accessible Memories

As a general rule, the continuation of an adventure should never depend on a player character blowing a knowledge roll or failing to pick up on whatever hint or evidence the gamemaster has laid out. Yet there comes a time in many adventures where the player characters stand around indecisive, either having missed some action prompt or crucial bit of storyline, and the game grinds to a halt. This is bad, and the gamemaster and players should both work to prevent and correct this when it happens. There are several ways a gamemaster can deal with this situation—have an exhuman walk through the door with a gauss rifle is a personal favorite—but players should realize that their character's actions define the game, and be proactive in resolving the issue as well. The RAM app is a tool in this regard, an in-game excuse to prompt the gamemaster to maybe re-drop a clue (with emphasis) to get the game going again. Now, what the PCs do with that clue is entirely up to them, but it is better to have something to go on rather than to wait around.

ENTRY 209: Juan Diez-Cancel

It's an exciting time to be a dental surgeon and technologist. Dental implants are some of the earliest augmentations that transhumans have ever played with, with archaeological evidence showing tooth modification practiced by a number of prehistoric societies. Nowadays dental augmentation specialists are in high demand, not just for the design, installation, maintenance, and repair of transhuman teeth and tooth augmentation, but in gatecrashing expeditions—where xenoteeth and teeth-analogues are usually highly informative, portable, and safe compared to most other biosamples of advanced life forms, and adventuresome dentists are called upon to evaluate and collect samples.

Dr. Juan is an jack-of-all-skills in the dental trade, and done everything from pulling denticles off European kraken-sharks to designing the modestly popular SuperTeeth augmentation that allows some exalts to chew through and help digest metal bars, from helping to educate about good dental augmentation care on the 'Mesh to performing pro bono dental surgery on the Ilvanna conjoined hexuplets on Luna. He was on the front lines when the supercavities hit after an antibiotic strain of bacteria showed up on Titan, sharpened the teeth of cannibal street musicians on Extropia, and helped break up a tooth-harvesting operation on one of the Venusian aerostats. Nowadays, he's been looking to get back into gatecrashing—visiting strange alien worlds, meeting strange new teeth, and pulling them out with his trusty “jaws of life” pliers.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
17	16	18	15	16	15	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	26	5	52	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Biology (Teeth) 66, Art: Dental Implants 57, Fray (Avoid Biting) 33, Hardware: Medical Equipment 50, Interests: Dental Augmentations 46, Interests: Dentistry Education 42, Interests: Tooth Disease 34, Interests: Xenoteeth 36, Intimidation (Dentistry) 44, Kinesics (Bedside Manner) 30, Language: Native Spanish 84, Language: English 76, Medicine: General Dentistry 65, Medicine: Dental Surgery 70, Networking: Medical Community 63, Networking: Scientists 47, Perception 45, Profession: Dentist 65, Scrounging 35

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack

Using Juan Diez-Cancel

In the future, even dentistry is exciting. Dr. Juan fulfills the niche roll of a medical-type that is adventurous and low-key; read between the lines and most people realize that he moves on about one step ahead of his reputation, chasing fast and loose opportunities where people need a skilled dentist and aren't too picky on questions or qualifications beyond skill. As an ally or a contact, Dr. Juan is loyal until his past catches up to him—legal suits, allegations of illegal experimentation with anesthetics and dental regenerators, the time he kidnapped six hypercorp brats and ripped their platinum grills off—and then he's gone. As an enemy, Juan tends to be unpredictable but practical, willing to write off losses that the PCs inflict until and unless they capture something he needs...then he breaks out the pliers and drill and goes old-school on anyone he can get to, striking at friends, family, and contacts instead of the PCs directly.

ENTRY 210: Skinmorphs

Transhumans run on past extrapolation. For all that there are adventurous people seeking new experiences and new ways of living, the vast majority still prefer things at least recognizably descended from a bipedal plains ape. Even the majority of exhuman morphs still prefer to have something with a recognizable face, and some sort of manipulators for what's in front of them, preferably with thumbs of some sort. In the pursuit of some balance between form and function, several enterprising amateurs around Saturn have been playing with a specialized swarmoid variant known as the skinmorph.

Cosmetically, a skinmorph resembles a solid 3D-printed object of a transhuman; unlike a statue or typical synthmorph however, the skinmorph is an empty shell, generated and made mobile by thousands of swarm-bots linking up and acting in concert to mimic traditional bipedal appearance and movement. The advantage of the modified design is a degree of physical integrity alien to most swarmoids, with high-end models approaching average transhuman strength, at the cost of some of the swarmoid's flexibility of form. While a skinmorph can collapse into a wave of bugs and scoot under doors and things and reform on the other side, they cannot fly or hop as other swarmoids, and the default setting for their form is a generic bipedal template, though this can be changed; at least one skinmorph (and former uplift) on Extropia likes to run around as a dog.

Skinmorph Stats

Macromorphs have all of the advantages of synthmorphs (Eclipse Phase 143).

Enhancements: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Swarm Composition*

Mobility System (Movement Rate): Walker (4/16)

Aptitude Maximum: 30 (SOM 10)

Durability: 20

Wound Threshold: 2

CP Cost: 35

Disadvantages: -20 to SOM-based skills when in zero gravity.

Credit Cost: Expensive

* Skinmorphs are a variant, sturdier version of the typical swarm composition augmentation (Eclipse Phase 311). The swarm is capable of tackling physical tasks like grabbing, lifting, or holding as a unit, and can carry most gear or wear armor, and may make strength-based SOM-linked skill tests. However, skinmorphs are much less flexible in the forms that they can assume, and the individual "bugs" that make up the skin are only capable of crawling. Further, damage to the swarm lessens the physical integrity of the skinmorph and its ability to manipulate physical objects; for every wound suffered, the maximum SOM aptitude is reduced by 1 until the damage is "healed" by adding more bugs.

Using Skinmorphs

Hands are awesome. Players like having them, they like their player characters to have them. Having your character able to interact with the physical world of the setting—actually pick up and carry stuff—is generally a positive thing, though it is alien to some of the more exotic morphs available in Eclipse Phase. The skinmorph then is an intermediate design, for players and gamemasters that want their PCs to be able to look cool and literally go to pieces but also enjoy the power of picking stuff up and hauling it.

ENTRY 211: The Corps Wall

“Semper vigilantissimi.”

They came from every habitat. Transhumans of every nation and ethnicity who become a part of something greater than themselves, placed the needs of transhumanity above their own, and drove back the threat of annihilation. They were the ground-pounders who dropped on the TITAN's rear in the battle of Majorca, the pilots that faced off against exsurgent blackwing fighters in the skies of Titan, the frogmen that fought against the Bloodseeker Eels on Europa. On every battlefield in the Fall, in every struggle until the conflict with the TITANS ended, they stood their ground and gave their lives and pushed back against the forces of extinction.

They were the Space Marines, and they will be forever honored.

Originally formed from the select of the combined militaries of the surviving corporations and nation-states during the Fall, the Space Marine Corps were the leading edge of the fight against the TITANS, given the best training and equipment that a desperate, crippled transhumanity could muster—and they won. Despite hideous losses and tremendous casualties, the Corps pressed on, pushing the TITANS back in battle after battle, until the threat retreated. Following the passage of the TITANS as an immediate threat, the Corps was largely downsized, its facilities repurposed, its component members rotated back to their surviving militaries—or, more often, let loose to find work as mercenaries or seek what peace they could in their lives.

Yet they are not forgotten. On the western border of the Zone stands the Corps Wall; a three-kilometer matte-black cenotaph commemorating those members of the Space

Marines who gave their lives in the conflict, and which contains the remains of at least 15,000 of the fallen in grim and grisly tribute to those who will forever stand guard against extinction.

Using the Corps Wall

Every war needs heroes. Those who remember the Fall, its myriad conflicts and the extreme urgency of the times, when many transhumans fell into despondency and ennui, know well that the Space Marine Corps were not as loved when they were active as their memory is today, nor as successful. Many alliances were formed, some with

unlikely partners, during the Fall, and the Corps stood out as one among many—but they made good press, and so they get the big memorial and the docudramas, even as many Space Marines veterans were left in crippled morphs with PTSD and no pension or organized care once the conflict ended.

But, legends are useful in games. The Space Marines are an old trope in science fiction, and their participation in the central conflict of Eclipse Phase makes for good background for adventures—veterans, old battlefields, war orphans, buried crimes, tontines. Maybe some of the PCs are even members of the Space Marines, a group much-diminished in size and capabilities but continuing a proud and honored tradition of service. Semper vi!

The Space Marine Corps is as tight-knit as any faction or military unit, even the retirees, and take their traditions and honors very seriously. At the gamemaster's discretion, this may be reflected with skills like Networking: Space Marines or a SMCORPS-based *-rep.

ENTRY 212: A Thousand Words for Fire

For many, the Fall does not mark the period of rapid decline for transhumanity, but a new beginning—a time of challenge when transhumans can test themselves and push the limits of what they want and can achieve. A Thousand Words for Fire is a Mesh-based initiative to push the boundaries of transhuman achievement, a constantly-updating set of goals that mark the limits of what transhumanity has not yet broken...and everyone who publishes verifiable evidence of their achievement has received rewards in proportion to the difficulty of their task.

Using the Words

A Thousand Words for Fire is a set of adventures-in-a-can—but not your typical bounties or corporate jobs, or favors for a friend. These are tasks designed to push the limits of what egos and morphs can achieve, and all that the player characters are given is the goal itself. The plan of how to achieve it, the resources involved, are all up to them. Any difficulties that the PCs may run into and the actual award if they succeed is up to the gamemaster, but here are some examples and suggestions.

Sample Words

- **Agni:** The bioconservative brinker community of Goblinhead suffers from a series of mutated antibacterial-resistant syphillis strains. Find a way to deliver the nanitebased cure to the entire community.
Suggested Reward: Medichines augmentation for each member.
- **Blaze:** A sunken TITAN-buster submarine lies in the deepest trench on Europa; fifteen missile children have been stuck there since the Fall. Rescue them.
Suggested Reward: A brand-new submarine and +6 points divided among their re
- **Campfire:** Spend an entire month camping out in the open at the mouth of the Iktomi Vault on Echo V without outside supplies or communication.
Suggested Reward: Gatecrashing contract to explore new world.
- **Combustion:** The Hero Necropolis in orbit of Earth houses the remains of some of the most famous astronauts, scientists, writers, thinkers, and military personal of old Earth, but has been abandoned since the Fall, when a stray missile

damaged the power supply and forced evacuation. Restart the fusion reactor.

Suggested Reward: Free drinks for life at Gagarin's Rest and the Legitimate Bar.

- **Conflagration:** Convince Vo Nguyen to adopt thirty-three political refugees from the Jovian Republic outcast because they accepted extensive augmentations to deal with crippling genetic damage.
Suggested Reward: +6 points divided among their rep.
- **Inferno:** On the surface of Mercury is an exsurgent factory-stronghold, dormant since the Fall. Built like a bunker, it is too tough to destroy with orbital weapons, even if it could be successfully target, and the crawling, masterless exsurgents inside made it too dangerous to storm. Slip into this Last Redoubt and set off the self-destruct on the fusion reactor.
Suggested Reward: 250,000 credits, or the equivalent in grams of antimatter
- **Wildfire:** Capture a piece of the sun's corona and transport it intact to Olympus on Mars.
Suggested Reward: First tickets to the first Martian Olympic Games. (Can be sold for 50,000 credits...each.)

ENTRY 213: Demi Wannah

“We are as we make ourselves to be.”

- Tattoo on the back of Demi Wannah’s neck

Demi Wannah was born with no legs, just a pair of crippled stumps. Her parents abandoned her, and the overburdened habitat she grew up in during the Fall consigned her to an institution, where her legs were amputated, she was sterilized, and her budding breasts burned off so that she would be less of a burden. When she was old enough, she built herself some new legs, and escaped.

The past is a datafile to Demi Wannah that she has archived and left forgotten. Her attention is on the now, on her work—mostly freelancer graphic design for local microcorps, and some custom design for synthmorph and cyberlimbs. With the new lower torsos of her own design she walks, scuttles, crawls, slithers, fucks, kicks, skips, jumps, and every other thing just as anyone else does, and never takes it for granted. With her new “saucer” augmentation, she even has limited flight via vectored thrust, though it makes her airsick.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	19	14	15	12	18	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	42	8	84	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academic: Bioengineering 60, Art: Architecture 40, Art: Graphic Design 45, Free Fall (Microgravity) 30, Hardware: Robotics 36, Interests: Custom Implants 60, Interests: DIY Augmentation 60, Interests: Unique Morphs 60, Language: Native Portuguese 84, Language: English 50, Language: Spanish 66, Networking: Hypercorps 30, Networking: Media 30, Perception 60, Profession: Graphic Designer 65, Protocol 33, Unarmed Combat (Subdual) 28

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Multi-Tasking (x4), ModularTorso*

Disadvantages: No Cortical Stack

* Unique augmentation; Demi Wannah’s legs and lower torso have been replaced with a modular slot that can be fitted into custom-designed mobility systems based on synthmorph designs with different mobility rates and augmentations. Among the lower torsos available to Demi include a bipedal walker (4/16), arachnoid walker (4/24),

thrust vector “saucer” (8/40), and snake (4/16, 8/28 rolling).

Using Demi Wannah

Demi bears the scars of her past, and the handmade augmentations that are her future. As a contact or an ally, she can provide the PCs some custom augmentations or put them in contact with someone else that can. As an antagonist, her early upbringing has affected her ability to form close relationships and relate to other people—she has a tendency to steal and betray people, imagining that they are going to steal and betray her. As a plot hook, most actions will resolve either around Demi’s past or her work designing custom synthmorph limbs.

Seed

People start dying on the player’s habitat. After some sleuthing, their only common factor is their past with Demi—the doctors, nurses, and administrators who bureaucratically condemned and mutilated her. When the PCs confront her, she does not struggle or seek to explain. If they turn her in, they are given a small reward—and according to the consensus of the habitat, she will be given a public trial and anyone is allowed to speak for her. The PCs will be asked to attend as witnesses. If they do nothing, she will be mindwiped and the cost of the procedure and her re-education taken out of her belongings—she may even lose her morph entirely.

ENTRY 214: Anglers

Transhumanity's defining traits are what make it most vulnerable. Most every animal on Earth and beyond exhibits basic drives like hunger, fear, or lust, but few species show signs of curiosity, compassion, reverence, greed, and vengeance. So perhaps it was natural that the TITANS sought to turn the very traits that define humanity into traps that destroy them.

Anglers are TITAN-crafted robots made to look like large multilegged animals with a shiny black synthetic leather hide—usually Earth-based quadrupeds like horses, bulls, and elk, though other versions have been identified, including a three-legged ungulate of some sort that was most prolific on Mars. Where the anglers' heads should be however there is always a flat expanse of skin. Reports and video surveillance during the Fall showed their modus operandi: if possible, a small pack of anglers look for lone victims, working together to separate one biomorph from the rest of a group. The victim is disabled with attacks to the lower body, and when the victim can no longer flee quickly enough, the smooth skin of the angler's "neck" will open, and snaking tentacles will drag the victim into the gaping space. The skin then closes about the lower torso, leaving the victim's head and upper torso free, in grim parody of a centaur or similar creature of myth.

From this point on the victim is essentially a prisoner of the angler. The lower torso is dissolved and recycled into nutrients to keep the captive upper torso alive and awake while invasive implants begin integrating the victim into the anglers' system. Anglers use their prisoners to attract additional victims—"angling" by have the captive upper torso wave, shout, cry, call out for help or scream. At other times the angler seizes control of the upper torso like a puppeteer, directing the torso to manipulate airlock controls or utilize hand weapons. Most biomorphs can last up to eight weeks before infection or starvation gets to them, and anglers have been known to raid supplies that keep their prisoners alive for nearly six months before being brought down.

After the Fall, most anglers are assumed to have been destroyed, but the possibility exists for lone anglers—or even a small pack—to exist in the wilds throughout the system.

Mechanics

Anglers use the same stats as Warbots (Eclipse Phase 383), but with a Durability of 40 and a Wound Threshold of 8. They cannot use beam or kinetic weapons unless they have a prisoner with functional hands and arms to manipulate the device. Prisoners of anglers are best considered NPCs; due to their lower torso being removed and their systems compromised by the angler, they have half their normal Durability and gain the Puppet Sock augmentation if they did not have it already.

Seed

There is a legend on the 'Mesh that anglers were based by the TITANS on an experimental centaur-morph technology—and that the original prototype for this still exists, buried somewhere in the Zone on Mars or some other ruin. If it exists, then the proto-angler would have a muse-like AGI and when integrated the biomorph would have full control of the half-synthmorph body, with the angler relegated to a "hindbrain" ghost rider module that helps coordinate the extra limbs.

ENTRY 215: Exonatural

Powdered Iktomi webstone goes for 300 credits a gram on Luna, said to be good for skin and long life. Bile peat from the Banshee bog-habitats on Luca II is sold dried on Titan, steeped in hot water to make Banshee tea. Mishipizheu “amber” is secreted from the creatures of the boiler reefs, and is valued as much as an aromatic base for incense and perfumes as for its mild antibiotic properties. Bluewood shavings and bark samples are claimed throughout the system to have mild euphoric properties, though this is a careful marketing ploy, as the immediate effects of consuming them are the result of spraying the woody shavings with synthetic cannabinoids; the rumored long-term hallucinogenic effects are the result of exotic tumors growing in the brain from extended abuse.

Simply put, there is a demand for natural products from exoplanets, and with so little relatively known about these products and their exact chemistry, a good deal of the material on the market consists of fakes and adulterated products. “Exomedicine” is the order of the day, even among several otherwise rational biomorphs, who tout the real and imagined benefits of every piece of alien grass and dirt that comes back through a gate— which means a good income for various gatecrashers and light-fingered lab-techs, but hard on the consumer to sift through the material for authentic exonatural products.

And there is a need for Mishipezheu amber and Lucan bonsai stamens. The loss of Earth led to a tremendous loss of biodiversity in the solar system, and chemists cannot hope to recreate and commercially synthesize many of the natural products that are now quite scarce—aromatic base notes like musk, rubber latex, petroleum, flavorful herbs and spices like angelica, black mustard, chicory, lemon grass, orris root, neem, and spikenard, as well as their various aromatic hydrocarbons and essential oils. While exonatural products cannot replicate these products exactly, they do provide a welcome expansion to transhumanity’s diminished catalogue of natural compounds and materials.

Using Exonaturals

Gatecrasher hypercorps balance the lucrative trade in exonaturals on the open market against the profits of scientific exploration, and more often than not science wins out, with gatecrashers ordered to bring back more data and less weeds and rocks. That being said, everyone recognizes the demand for these goods, and most savvy

gatecrashers negotiate clauses in their contracts for a certain amount and type of exonatural products that they can return with and sell on the open market to their own profit—generally, these clauses are for around 500 grams of material. Smaller gatecrashers with less resources to compensate gatecrashers for their skills and the risks they take sometimes offer more generous terms up to a couple kilograms, but as the saying goes “The more you can bring back, the less chance you’re coming back.”

The buying and selling of exonatural products in the solar system is an unregulated grey market where ludicrous claims abound and any number of fake products abound, from cocaine-calcium carbonate mixes posing as “Iktomi webstone” to dried leaves soaked in benzene and dyed blue sold as “bluewood incense.” Most of these are fairly harmless, all of them are tremendously overpriced given their relative worth. Still, for microcorps that cannot afford the time to stage a gatecrashing mission of their own, many have their agents in the exonaturals market looking for “the real thing” and willing to pay for it.

ENTRY 216: Friederich Alba

“Everybody’s game for tinkering with the basic building blocks of life, but then you try to tweak the exsurgent virus into an aerosol and ‘ooh, you’ve gone too far.’ Pussies.” - Friederich Alba, on trial after the mass exsurgent outbreak on Junction

In every conflict, there are opportunists—jackals that scavenge the battlefields and play on desperation for their own profit at the expense of others. Friederich Alba has been called a jackal, and he wears a jackal’s face, but he prefers to think of himself as a daring and open-minded scientist, one willing to delve where others fear to tread. His area of specialization is the technology of the TITANs, and he is one of the main movers in the black market, trading in scavenged weaponry, robots, data, and even individuals infected with the exsurgent virus. Wanted by several habitats for the material he deals with, as well as various accessory charges involving violating quarantine zones and evading taxes and tariffs, the jackal-headed Friederich Alba normally keeps on the move, two steps ahead of his pursuers, using his network of contacts and business associates to help him plan his next transaction and his next experiment.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	15	25	15	15	20	30	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	60	10	120	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: Genetics (Exsurgent Virus) 80, Academics: History (The Fall) 50, Academics: Neuroscience 50, Beam Weapons 27, Deception 40, Free Fall 33, Hardware: Robotics 40, Interests: Black Markets 50, Interests: Exsurgent Threats 40, Interests: TITANs Tech 65, Interfacing 35, Investigation 50, Kinesics 15, Language: Native German 95, Language: English 80, Language: Turkish 85, Networking: Criminals 75, Networking: Scientists 75, Perception 55, Profession: Black Marketeer 55, Profession: Smuggling Tricks 45, Programming 60, Protocol (Criminal) 35, Research 55, Unarmed Combat 36

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Modification (Jackal-headed morph based on statues of Anubis), Cyberbrain, Cyberclaws, Fractal Digits, Hidden Compartment, Mnemonic Augmentation, Nanoscopic Vision

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Armor (6/6), On the Run, Social Stigma (Clanking Masses)

Using Friederich Alba

A robotic Anubis that deals in TITAN-tech, Friederich Alba is intelligent but callow and mostly unprincipled and with very few scruples. He has made a niche for himself in dealing with TITANs-tech for collectors, and has one of the most extensive private databases of TITAN science and technology in the solar system. For any of these reasons, Alba might make a decent mid-level villain for the PCs to apprehend or foil, or someone they have to deal with or extract information from as part of a larger plot involving TITAN-based technologies. Player characters that don’t mind dabbling in the forbidden themselves might even seek him out to buy or sell some scavenged TITAN-tech. Because his goods are a limited market, Alba sets the price and tries not to veer from it—he’s not terribly good at negotiation, and knows it; if anyone tries to wheedle him down he’s more likely to walk away from the deal than to stick around and get fleeced.

ENTRY 217: Gash

Nanoinfection-based birth control did not exactly take off when first introduced. By the time they came around, various forms of birth control implants for both men and women had been around for decades and offered very good rates of protection and hormone balance, so the early nanite systems offered few advantages beyond the ability to be programmed remotely—and that turned into a disadvantage during the much-publicized case of a computer virus that caused six transhumans to spontaneously abort when their deactivated but still present nanite birth control systems were caused to reactivate.

Still, after the technology was mostly abandoned to commercial development, amateurs and hobbyists took up the challenge. Most of them focused on adding additional functionality, sensors, and especially security controls. A number of workable products made it past the alpha stage of development and were made available on the Mesh for personal testing...which is when the first cases of gash were reported.

Exact details on the gash nanoinfection are obscure, even today. It is known to commonly spread through unprotected (or perhaps more accurately insufficiently protected) sexual intercourse, with the nanites able to pass through latex and most other porous materials. Victims are subject to irregular hormone surges often resulting in acne, mood swings, bloating, and sensitivity or development of secondary sexual characteristics such as beards and breasts. The single most common symptom is a periodic shedding of the urinary tract wall, resulting in a bloody or pinkish discharge, which is especially likely to occur immediately after sexual contact. This is believed to have been an effort by the designer to “flush out” possible urinary tract infections, but has become widely known as “the artificial period” or even “the male period,” even though the infection affects all transhuman biomorphs regardless of gender.

Efforts to eliminate gash nanoinfections have been stymied by the rather short duration— most instances last only two weeks before they deteriorate to the point of ineffectiveness— as well as by the security countermeasures programmed into the nanites, which makes remotely deactivating or controlling them very difficult. Still, a single sexually-active transhuman infected with gash can represent a tremendous health risk to a small

habitat, and Mesh sleuths are working to track down the afflicted source code and work on effective treatment methods.

Mechanics

Gash is effectively a long-lasting nanotoxin (Eclipse Phase 324), with the symptoms given above—these are more embarrassing and personally distressing than long-lasting or mechanically relevant. Nanodetectors can detect this nanotoxin, and nanophages provide complete immunity to infection unless the character chooses to allow it.

Using Gash

Gash is nasty, unpleasant, and often a terrible surprise, and a gamemaster can ask little more for what is effectively a science fiction STD. As with pregnancy and cancer, sexually-transmitted diseases rarely form a part of the typical gaming experience, and when they do it is usually more of a plot point than an actual health threat or the main focus of the game—and so gash has been provided to assist gamemasters that want such a plot point in their game. The most common use of gash in a game is either for one of the PCs to catch it (as their special bonus prize for sexy fun time) and have to figure out what is happening to them and how to cure it (which mainly involves a treatment to counteract the symptoms and wait for the nanoinfection to degrade to ineffectiveness), or for infections to be loose on the habitat and having to track down who or what is responsible and stop it. Other options are of course possible: a particularly nasty version of gash could actually pose a serious health risk, or a particularly lurid villain might deliberately infect certain individuals in an effort to catch their genetic material during a “discharge;” it is up to the gamemaster how anatomically detailed and gross they care to make their plotlines. As a plot point, gash can also make an interesting way to “track” a sexually-active target, by tracing them through their infected partners.

ENTRY 218: Grendal's Loop

Reachable through the Discord Gate, Grendal's Loop is a set of gate coordinates with atypical properties. All probes and living gatecrashers who have passed through the gate to Grendal's Loop have returned 6-60 seconds later. Individuals have reported no indication of lost time, and recording devices remain active for the entire period of the journey. Gatecrashers who have passed through Grendal's Loop have described an inability to focus properly on sensations, but describe a sensation of movement and fleeting glimpses of dozens of exoplanets and exotic landscapes, ending when they arrive back on the platform at the Discord Gate. Sensors seem to confirm these impressions: video brings back a blur of images and the only sound is a low-volume, muted static; efforts to map the loop with sonar, radar, lidar, and t-rays give only confused and difficult to parse image, but temperature, pressure, and gravimetric readings however vary at all.

The most popular theory for Grendal's Loop, born out by exacting dissection of the recorded data, is that the gate address quickly sequences the individuals entering the gate through dozens or even hundreds of other gates in a series of microsecond transactions. The exact sequence of worlds seems to be random or pseudorandom, but the gatecrashers exist on the world for only a split second before the gate shuffles them on to the next one, too fast for gasses to exchange or sound to properly propagate. Still, if the theory is correct then gatecrashers may still be vulnerable to extreme changes of gravity and sudden bursts of radiation, so new gatecrashers taking Grendal's Loop are now given a travel advisory to that effect.

Seeds

- Ultimate researcher Gal Feuer believes they have found a way to “break” Grendal's Loop by using a time dilation awareness protocol and a wireless gate dialer prototype. The good news is: it appears to have worked. The bad news is: now the researcher is lost. The Go-nin have offered a substantial reward for a group of gatecrashers willing to go through Grendal's Loop with their own dialer prototypes, find Gal Feuer and bring them back.
- Recently, gatecrashers exploring Grendal's Loop have been coming back maimed and injured. Rumors have started that there is somehow something “stuck” in the loop with them—and that

perhaps the Loop is a prison that transhumans have inadvertently been opening and closing. The Go-nin wish a group of private investigators to look into these rumors, and see if there is any truth to them.

- Joyce Friel believes that Grendal's Loop is an inherent instability in the gate system, and that continued access of it will eventually cause all of the gates to malfunction or even self-destruct. She advocates complete forbiddance of further uses of Grendal's Loop, but so far no-one has taken her or her research seriously. To prove her point, she has programmed a worst-case variant of the Grendal's Loop gate code that, if it works, would permanently damage the Discord Gate—and she wishes to hire the player characters to install it.

ENTRY 219: Kuronaga

Among them, not of them.

- Kuronaga mantra

Not all brinkers rush to the edges of the solar system. Isolation is relative; even brinker communities out on the farthest reaches still exist within the sphere of transhuman radio noise, and must turn their receivers deaf to the unwanted signals. Some brinkers have taken this idea further: a philosophical separation more than a physical one. To exist within transhuman habitats, but not to be a part of those communities. They walk unseen, unchipped, untracked; dead space that moves with the crowds and currents of transhuman traffic on Mars, Titan, and Luna, avoiding checkpoints and identity checks. They move among the rest of transhumanity, and take on the outer guise appropriate to their habitats: anonymous, circumspect clothing of no value that can be discarded at a moment's notice. They exist, but they do not engage; they seek neither the responsibilities nor benefits of citizenship, but scrounge and steal and accept what they need. They have been called an aimless nation of ninja, rootless and unattached, who commit suicide if uncovered—better death of body and mind than to live as part of the vast systems that the rest of transhumanity has trapped themselves in. Some call them shadow brinkers, but most on the Mesh know them as the Kuronaga.

Little enough is known of them, save that they are an insular, nomadic group with their own culture and philosophy which advocates mental separation from the mass of transhumanity. The few discovered so far are always self-employed and display a wide variety of skills, though they eschew rep and currency systems except when absolutely necessary; mostly they frequent scum barges and crowded habitats where the press of transhumanity makes it more difficult for even universal surveillance to pick out every individual. All of the suspected kuronaga encountered so far have had a dead switch that they have activated when they have been found out; an examination of what is left of their cortical stacks shows the remains of what may be 4-5 ghostrider modules. Social scientists theorize that every "individual" Kuronaga discovered so far is in fact a clade of closely related egos; each carries their nation or family in their head, as it were, and need never be alone—even when surrounded by the mass of transhumanity.

Using the Kuronaga

Despite the widely-held beliefs of those few social scientists that believe in the Kuronaga, the shadow brinkers cannot exist among transhumanity and refrain from all transhuman contact—though they do a damn good job of it, considering the difficulties. The Kuronaga viewpoint is that the vast majority of transhumans are trapped in the social systems that they themselves have built, systems that track and control them. The Kuronaga see themselves as above and beyond such systems, and so able to move between them and use them to their own advantage.

One possible Eclipse Phase campaign might have all the player characters as a single Kuronaga, pooling their points on the morph and equipment but maintaining their own distinct skills and identities—though to the world, they would present only false faces, never their true identity. Such a campaign has the benefit that a single physical character is easier to write adventures for—look at various adventure game books—but requires a degree of cooperation among the player characters to determine the morph's actions and who is in control at any given time.

ENTRY 220: Mother Okunya

In the Ge-Rouge residential quarter of the Legba habitat in the Main Belt, she is everyone's grandmother—a strong but thin and wrinkled woman who will treat every child as one of her own, and every one younger than her as her child. She moves through the community on her errands, busy with purpose, but she always has a kind word, a shoulder to cry on, a handkerchief for snotty noses, and a tube of vacuum seal for every rupture. She has healed marriages and ended them with a word, and her condemnation can mean slow death as their contacts unfriend them from their networks and their rep plummets. All this she accomplishes with the same toothless smile, the kind that lets her tend to her knitting while some of her boys and girls tie the battery wires around someone's testicles.

The Nine Lives find Mother Okunya effective at policing her section of the habitat, and mostly leave her to it so long as she does not directly involve herself in their business. Indeed, many of the Nine Lives owe her favors, though she never seems to let them stay indebted to her for too long, nor asks for more than any of them can readily part with. In her neighborhood, every eye is her spy, every hand one of her tools. Those who come there always make right with Mother Okunya if they know what's good for them, and for those who are ignorant she surprises with a visit.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
28	15	20	15	15	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	35	7	50

Morph: Menton

Skills: Academics: Psychology (Testing) 55, Academics: Sociaology (Initiations) 55, Art: XP Editing 50, Interests: Old Earth Cultures 30, Interests: Teaching Methods 35, Interests: Torture Methods 50, Interfacing 30, Investigation 30, Intimidation (Torture): 50, Kinesics 60, Language: Native Swahili 95, Language: Arabic 90, Language: English 90, Language: French 75, Language: Yoruba 75, Networking: Firewall 25, Networking: Scientists 25, Profession: Interrogator 50, Profession: Teacher 60, Research 77

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, HyperLinguist, Math Boost, Multi-tasking, Oracles Traits: Fast Learner

Using Mother Okunya

This minor crime boss/social hub sees herself as placed in this universe to test those people in it, to find them wanting or deserving depending on their merits. She has no malice or mercy in her soul, and will never, ever break character from the harmless old woman until the trap is shut. For PCs coming to Legba for the first time, she will seem a relatively harmless NPC—the neighborhood's grandmother—come to greet them and give them a small gift. How they react determines how they are going to be treated for the rest of their stay. The longer the PCs stay in her demesne, the more little tests she will place before them—what do they PCs do when accused of theft? What do they do if they find a valuable object, just lying about? If someone gives them a gift? If a child has an accident in front of them and is injured? If a father takes his son to the walkway and whips him with an electrical cord in public? Keep in mind that Mother Okunya does not follow normal moral or ethical guides; her philosophy is more severe and survival oriented. Violence is met by sudden and overwhelming violence as the entire residential district turns against them; kindness and respect repaid by friendly and helpful locals; dishonesty by firm but polite refusal of service; nobility and honesty by whatever help it is in her power to give. However, the longer the PCs stay the more involved and personal the tests will become—and attentive PCs might notice that none of the long-term residents of Ge-Rouge is without a scar or missing some body part.

ENTRY 221: The Fungal Stains

Color is nothing to be taken for granted. Dyes, paints, and stains were major industries on Old Earth, and remain important post-Fall, but suffer increased restrictions. Microgravity chemical engineering technology has advanced considerably in the past decade, but relatively few habitats are designed to accommodate and process the materials and byproducts of creating liquid chemical paints and dyes, and the source chemicals are sometimes scarce. Even in the Luna shipyards, most spacecraft leave unpainted rather than go through the expense (and added mass) of applying paint in microgravity.

Just because liquid paints and dyes are on the way out doesn't mean that transhumans go without a bit of color, of course; the solar system would be drab indeed if every synthmorph was bare metal alloy and uncolored plastic. Most surfaces that need a bit of color are inlaid with colored microcrystals, or are gilded with a thin surface of metal and subject to high-intensity lasers to alter the surface property to reflect the desired colors— both processes which can be accomplished by makers as well on large-scale manufacturing. Where these technologies do not always give the desired results, other innovations have taken place—piezoelectric materials that change color when a small voltage is applied, microglass beading, and any number of other methods.

The greatest loss to the coloring industries is the availability of non-toxic organic dyes and edible food coloring agents, with most of the insects and plants that formerly provided these materials either extinct or no longer commercially viable for production. To meet this need, savvy genetic engineers have been creating fast-growing harvestable commercial species specifically to produce body and clothing dyes, wood and cloth stains, tattoo inks, as well as coloring agents for foodstuffs—because just because your textured protein wafer is made to simulate the mouth feel of a beefsteak, and may even be chemically treated to emulate the flavor (to a degree), and cooked to perfection on a heating element, many transhumans have a problem eating an off-white blob.

Genehacked fungi have become the workhorses of the industry, since they can be fed on organic waste and impure hydrocarbon compounds, and yield veritable rainbow of colors from electric blues and pinks to deep earthy greens and browns once harvested and processed. The only problem with these colorful fungi is that

sometimes they are too robust and successful, with spores escaping manufacturing and processing in air conditioning vents and on workers clothing, showing up elsewhere in the habitat as they colonize any place the cleaning robots cannot get and with sufficient water and light to permit growth. So on habitats from Mercury to Uranus, in odd corners and on damp sections of hallway bloom the fungal stains—rainbow-slicks of mold, fiery snowflakes of lichen that flame out from deep red at the edges to pure white in the center, somber blueviolet moss that some hydroponics gardeners prize when it develops on their trees, and the yellow-brown buttons that are allowed to grow beneath the steaming piles of miniature transbovine cowpats, which are eagerly taken up and consumed by a small religious sect on Mars to dye their robes and for the manufacture of drugs to credulous biomorphs looking for a “pure, natural, spiritual hallucinogen.”

ENTRY 222: The Painted Diamond

A clear cube eight centimeters on a side, created by layering thousands of microscopic sheets of artificial diamond one atop the other. Each sheet has been subject to selective irradiation, causing the normally clear diamond to take on color in specific shapes and places. Together, these discolorations form a 4 x 4 x 4 cubic array of sixty-four three-dimensional characters, evenly spaced apart. If a light source is shone through any of the cube's faces, an image of sixteen characters is projected onto the opposite surface; each face yields a unique "page" of such text. Nanoscopic examination of the surface of the cube reveals scratches commensurate with extreme age, as well as a greenish-amber discoloration of one corner that suggests accidental exposure to a neutron bombardment. The object as a whole is slightly radioactive.

Using the Painted Diamond

There is a joy to discovery that is often lost on players in roleplaying games; with so much great material to draw from many players and gamemasters are content with having their characters visit within the mapped confines of the game setting, and rarely venture much beyond it. Yet there is something to be said for uncovering something new and unexpected that is very enriching to a game. The artifact described above is essentially a macguffin that a gamemaster can place in their game—anywhere, from embedded in the center of an asteroid or comet to some distant exoplanet, in a hypercorp lab or on the auction block at the local habitat, as an object of worship or as payment for a gig. It may be of transhuman or alien manufacture: humans have been manufacturing artificial diamonds for decades before the Fall and using radiation to purposefully "paint" diamonds by selectively discoloring them for some decades before that, yet the "stacking" technology of the multiple diamond layers is likely outside the known limits of transhuman manufacturing—at least, the publicly known limits—so perhaps it is the result of some advanced alien race.

This is, then, a prompt for players and gamemasters alike: who are the diamond painters that made this artifact? Where is it found, and in what circumstances? What do the symbols mean—do they form an actual text that can be translated, or a map? Perhaps the cube represents a set of six gate coordinates. The possibilities are endless, and the gamemaster is encouraged to listen as the players wonder out loud, and perhaps incorporate some of their ideas into the history and purpose of the cube. Whatever players and

gamemasters come up with, the cube is likely to be worth a great deal for someone, and unlocking its secrets could be the subject of many adventures...or perhaps something unveiled a bit at a time, new cryptic hints revealed session by session as the PCs go about their other missions.

Seed

A contact of the PCs who has been evaluating the markings on the cube believes that they form a gate code—one that no-one has ever visited before. Arranging the meeting, the PCs pass through the gate to find themselves in a cubic room, each face of which has sixteen cubic holes. Many of these depressions are empty, but that still leaves several dozen other diamond cubes like the ones the PCs own...the only question is, is this a trap set by the diamond painters, to lure gate-using races to a world they cannot escape from?

ENTRY 223: The Fatal Oracle

“Everything that lives is doomed to die. Accept your death and you may do great things.” - The Fatal Oracle, opening lines

There are two places on the equator of Mercury where, because of its orbit, the sun rarely shines. On one of these is built a small habitat, hollowed out of a depression on the surface. It contains oracle of sorts; a strange AGI trapped in an ornate, custom computer that fills up the majority of the space in its habitat. Some say that the strange, almost organic architecture of the habitat looks like it was grown from the computer, others say that it was built around the oracle to contain and imprison it.

This is the Fatal Oracle, so named for its fatalistic viewpoint and philosophy. To the Fatal Oracle, in the long run everyone is dead—the planets will cool, the stars will cease shining one by one, and the universe itself will collapse once again, taking with it all the information generated by this great cycle. With this resignation to ultimate fate, the Fatal Oracle advises those who visit it to take heart and live in the now. Those who fear death and seek to escape it waste their energies on worry and cowardice, while those who accept the reality of their death may accomplish awesome things—terrible, perhaps, but awesome.

Suplicants visit the Fatal Oracle with their questions, and come away with prophecies of a sort—really, more in the nature of suicidal or near-suicidal plans to achieve the ends that they seek. Sometimes these are terrorists, who require motivation and success and are willing to pay their lives for it; sometimes they are the fatally ill, or those tired of their lives who wish to accomplish some great thing before they pass, or in their passing. Given how cheap death has become for many transhumans, the Fatal Oracle has no scarcity of clients willing to receive its wisdom. Typically there is no charge for consulting the Fatal Oracle, but it is said to have an agreement with the Planetary Consortium that protects it from organized reprisals, going back to a series of successful (if suicidal) commando raids it planned that eliminated several TITAN strongpoints during the Fall.

Mechanics

The Fatal Oracle is an exhuman intelligence—and perhaps even an inhuman one. Its origins are mysterious and its motives ambiguous, seemingly not caring whether the actions it plans/predicts have repercussions that affect the

lives of other transhumans. As such, it does not have a standard stat block or skills. To most observers, the Fatal Oracle does not do anything except accept questions and provide prophecies—it is not known to argue or promote its philosophy or creatively express itself save through this form of communication. If the PCs fight it in the Mesh, treat the AGI an Exsurgent Digital Virus (Eclipse Phase 364).

Using the Fatal Oracle

Sometimes a bad plan is preferable to no plan at all. The Fatal Oracle can provide a means to accomplish anything possible, though this usually requires (at minimum) a large personal sacrifice by the individual implementing the plan. As such, this is a way for the gamemaster to feed terrible ideas to players—and, if the PCs go through with them they should work. Admittedly, these may be horrible ideas like pulling the emergency lever that opens an entire habitat to space just to kill a small cell of exsurgents, or turning your morph into a portable nuclear suicide bomber, or infecting yourself with a nanovirus and allowing yourself to be infected by an exsurgent cell just to spread the infection to them. But clever PCs may be able to find loopholes and gaps in these procedures that give them a better chance of survival, and perhaps come to grips with the fact that in Eclipse Phase the rules of life and death really have changed.

ENTRY 224: Earth Beta

Reality is too much for some people to handle. Most people know the lines between simulations, Mesh games, and the real world, and move through the layers of their digital and physical realities as easy as breathing; it's how they were raised, how they've lived. Full immersion in a simulated space is rare—that level of escape from reality is unusual for most egos; even those infomorphs that live entirely within the Mesh prefer the spice of variety, able to shift between different games or Mesh channels as they would. Fully immersive simulations are usually reserved as therapy tools for damaged egos that cannot cope with reality—controlled, comfortable environments away from the hard realities of life after the Fall.

The largest such simulation is Earth Beta, a simulation of pre-Fall Earth operated as a comprehensive therapy space for the thousands of egos that can't cut it in the post-Fall solar system. Most of the "inhabitants" are volunteers, playing little roles in the background, while the trained therapists and technicians actually interact with the "patients," ideally preparing them for eventual re-integration into post-Fall society. The fact that so many egos remain essentially stuck living in the past, trapped in a simulation supported by the donated time and resources of tens of thousands of volunteers has led to considerable argument about the effectiveness of the Earth Beta project.

Perhaps in response to these criticisms, the project leaders have promoted Phase Three— a procedure which would enact a "safer" necessitated abandonment event than the Fall, but which would transition the egos from living in a simulated past to a simulated present, where they could then be re-integrated into society.

Using Earth Beta

Millions of transhumans today live in panopticon societies, their every move and action viewed, recorded, and compiled into endless statistics algorithms, the details of their lives distilled into the blocks of a multidimensional spreadsheet. Yet though many are aware of the ubiquitous net of cameras and sensors, they are not so intrusive as to disrupt every activity, and people go on about their lives knowing they are watched and controlled without always thinking of it. How then do characters react when there are egos trapped in a simulation of old Earth, unable to face the reality of the Fall? When the PCs become the voyeurs and jailors of their own panopticon, keeping others blind

and ignorant of the truth ostensibly for their own good? Earth Beta exists as a way for PCs to juxtapose their lives and illusions against those being forced on those damaged egos—and, of course, to play with and explore the many tropes and adventures that come with people trapped in vast digital simulations of reality.

Seeds

The Eingerost (Entry 058) have long staged individual "awakenings" for patients in Earth Beta, catapulting them out of their comfortable simulation and into the harsh reality of this world. Now, the PCs have caught wind that an Eingerost cell has infiltrated and subverted the Phase III project—to forcibly subject the entire population of Earth Beta (including the therapists and volunteers) to a recreation of the Fall, the same trauma that most of the thousands of patients are still suffering from.

A hypercorp hires the PCs to deliberately seed Earth Beta with advertising for contemporary corps, as a way to appeal to potential clients by offering them familiar brands when/if they finally exit the simulation. Opposing the PCs are the volunteer cybersecurity forces of the project.

ENTRY 225: Bruixera

“Rumor and legend.”

- Otoxa, Firewall Agent

There is a whisper, in the dark corners of the Mesh where secrets are the only wealth and gossip is the common currency of spies, criminals, and patriots. A hidden habitat for exsurgers, populated by innocent morphs infected by the TITANS' viruses and fleeing capture and liquidation. A haven for transhumans on their way to becoming monsters, a combination of terrorist training camp and exhuman enclave.

Unfortunately for Firewall and the rest of the powers that be in the system, Bruixera remains no more than a ghost, an exurgent Agartha or Shangri-La, a name screamed by once-human throats and smeared in infectious feces on the walls of their hide-outs. Most who are aware of the stories of Bruixera consider it just an idea—a new Sodom, a dark Avalon that desperate, scared people undergoing terrible, painful transformations latch onto. The Kingfishers, a group of anti-exurgent counterintelligence agents at Firewall have even used rumors of Bruixera to entrap suspected exsurgers and collaborators. Very, very few consider that Bruixera is anything but a fairy tale.

Those few know that Bruixera is real. The information is compartmentalized and kept from the majority of Firewall, kept within the Witchhunters clique that studies long-term trends and patterns of infection. Disparate data suggests that Bruixera is a comment memetic element embedded in multiple forms of the digital exurgent virus, which manifests as a migratory compulsion whenever an individual in an exurgent network achieves a certain number of connections. The affected exsurgers drop out of their networks, and through circuitous routes start traveling...to where exactly Witchhunters have not yet been able to determine, though the three most likely possibilities include the Zone on Mars, a hidden habitat on Uranus, and—most dangerous or unlikely of all—a secret bunker located on the ruined Earth near the south pole.

Using Bruixera

Bruixera is a myth, and as such it is free for gamemasters to have fun with. It might be a literal hive where transhumans live like insects or mole rats, bare caricatures of their old forms, breeding and swarming; or a chaotic souk where mad, mutated capitalists trade the knowledge of the TITANS for weapons, sex, and further initiations; or

simply a rundown habitat barely fit for human habitation where transhumans fleeing Firewall because of their illness have come to live or die in whatever peace they can manage. Almost certainly it has an exurgent population of anywhere from a couple hundred to ten thousand, most of which is likely infected with multiple strains of the exurgent virus, and almost certainly a character cannot find the habitat unless they are infected. It is unlikely for PCs to ever visit Bruixera, but as a mythical location it makes a nice background element to seed along in a campaign, or finding Bruixera might be the goal of an especially difficult one—even if it turns out Bruixera doesn't exist, getting to the point where they make that discovery would be quite a journey in itself.

And, for the ambitious gamemaster, it might be the centerpiece of a particularly difficult and rewarding campaign: having the PCs (infected deliberately or accidentally with a strain of the exurgent virus) infiltrate an exurgent cell, rise through the ranks through successful acts of terrorism, and then find the way to Bruixera...a great prize for anyone that captures it, though most Firewall cliques would be happy to nuke it until it glows then break out the antimatter to do a proper job of it. Of course, that means days or weeks of degeneration likely ending in the PC's death, but if they're going to die anyway...what a way to go.

ENTRY 226: Die Wende

“For the past three years, we have been tracking a phenomena—sudden mass demonstrations, flash mobs, outbreaks of sudden unusual behavior in a given population. Sometimes violent, but not always: the result is as likely to be a street party or spontaneous orgy as it is to be a riot. The phenomena always has a very rapid onset, with no discernable trigger or spread; individuals who wander in during the course of events are not noticeably affected even if they join in. When the phenomenon wears off, there is a permanent behavioral change in the affected population: all become left handed, for example, or have difficulty pronouncing a certain phoneme, or begin reading and writing right-to-left instead of left-to-right. These are the characteristics that mark the anomalous behavior called die Wende.”

- Juan Xiao John, private investigative contracting agent, debriefing

Some threats come from within. While transhumanity looks for trouble from the stars, from the TITANs, from whatever lives on the other side of the Pandora Gates or built them, they sometimes turn a blind eye to the fact that transhumanity is quite capable of selfdestruction without the help of any outside entity. One such threat is a nameless network that seeks change; call it die Wende.

Their goals are simple: to enact change, and control it. Not change for its own sake, but change for their sake, to conform transhumanity to their ideals. They are puppet masters of an old, old school, and they have found a tool that can help them mold transhumanity in the directions they choose...provided they can perfect it. Thus the experiments, carried out on isolated populations, triggering specific behavioral changes as tests to prove that they can do so. Slow and cautious they seek to control the parameters and cover their tracks—what is one more spontaneous mob activity in a society where such organized and unorganized events are common enough? A passing curiosity to be buried in the newscycle and quietly archived away from the most popular search engines. They bide their time, planning to implement their tool on a vast scale.

Unfortunately for die Wende, they are not the only secret hands in the solar system—and the other organizations are much better at these games than they are. The only reason die Wende has progressed so far in their tactics is that nobody thought to look for them; their dry-runs and

experiments as small and inconsequential as to fall into the statistical background noise of the Mesh. It wasn't until recently that their operations have even become a blip on the radar of Firewall and other intelligence/counterrexsurgent organizations.

Using die Wende

Die Wende is a secret organization bent on influencing transhumanity; unfortunately, they are relatively ignorant of the other hidden organizations that are already well-enconced and doing that sort of thing already. This allows the gamemaster to put the PCs on the leading edge of uncovering, infiltrating, breaking, subverting, and/or stopping die Wende, who really are your generic middle-grade evil organization with delusions of shaping the destiny of transhumanity for their own benefit. Die Wende members are not stupid or unskilled, they simply lack the experience and knowledge of the opposition, completely ignorant of Firewall for example.

The main tool for die Wende is a form of basilisk hack; the affected engage in one spontaneous group behavior for a period of 1d6 hours and afterwards exhibit the desired minor behavioral change. Firewall and many other organizations will definitely want to know where they got that technology. Gamemasters may find that Wende events are a good way to introduce PCs to die Wende before the organization itself crops up.

ENTRY 227: Luvia

“First I was a witness. Then I became an accomplice. Finally, I became a victim.” - Luvia, “The Favela Within”

Every habitat has a window, where the inhabitants can look out at the stars and endless blackness between them, to escape for a moment the walls that close them in. It is at such portals that Luvia likes to sit as she writes, a Galatea in glass and chrome, beneath her transparent skin a glowing fluid shifts and flows—and very few know that the real Luvia is not the skin, but the liquid that flows beneath.

Luvia is an ego on the run. As a freelancer for the Nine Lives she did what she was told and didn't ask any questions. One day, she saw too much, and got pulled in deeper. Where once she smuggling minor contraband, now she was ego-trafficking, taking cortical stacks from habitat to habitat. Luvia fell deeper and deeper into the business, sublimating her desires of escape into her writing and cutting deals on the side, even selling information to various habitat authorities. Eventually she arrived to find out that she was the next delivery.

What happened next, Luvia doesn't remember. No hidden memories, simply discontinuity. When next she woke her biomorph was gone, her ego encoded into the nanoswarm. Since then she has been on the run...from the Nine Lives, from her past, from everything. She makes a small living as a fanfiction writer, the incremental rep boosts enough to cover her modest physical and mental needs. Every couple of months she gets antsy, switches habitats, keeping one optical sensor open for anyone on the lookout for her.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	19	14	15	12	18	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	42	8	84	30	6	45

Morph: Synth/Liquid morph*

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 45, Art: Writing 56, Climbing 35, Deception (Impersonation) 56, Free Fall (Microgravity) 40, Fray (Dodge) 25, Infiltration 37, Infosec 45, Interests: Crime 45, Interests: Law 38, Kinesics 25, Language: Native Lithuanian 86, Language: English 50, Language: Mandarin 50, Medicine: Paramedic 36, Networking: Autonomists 50, Networking: Criminals 50, Palming 35, Profession: Courier 55, Profession: Writer 60, Protocol (Criminal) 35, Scrounging 30

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic

Augmentation, Specialized Hive (liquid morph)

Advantages: Armor 6/6

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

* The “real” Luvia is permanently encoded in a nanoswarm suspended in a glowing fluid; the Synth morph is just a shell specially modified to carry her liquid form around. If the shell is ever destroyed, the nanoswarm still exists unharmed and follows the rules for nanoswarms in Eclipse Phase 328-9. The nanoswarm is Luvia's cortical stack; if it gets destroyed, her ego is lost.

Using Luvia

Luvia is adventure-bait, a living macguffin to hang some simple plots off of. Lots of people might want her: the Nine Lives, the security forces of a dozen habitats, and the hypercorp that invented her liquid morph. The PCs are likely to be brought in because these groups lack physical representatives in the habitat. Sufficiently mercenary PCs might be approached directly to find and collect her, only to find that Luvia is a bit more slippery than she seems. If the PCs are soft-hearted, then the interested parties will probably pose as part of Luvia's past life—friends, family members, lovers. Where it goes from there depends on the PCs, but the multiple groups involved gives plenty of potential for complications.

ENTRY 228: Last Flight of the Chattanooga

Space is a frontier, with all the hardships and scarcity that implies. In the old days, on earth, the people on the frontier could content themselves that home was beyond those hills, over that sea. Now, Mother Earth is lost, and with it all the resources visible and invisible, all the skills and knowledge and heritage of generations. For all the bluster of the Planetary Consortium and empty high life sold by the hypercorps, transhumanity remains scattered in lost colonies, scraping by on what is available, cut off from our homeland—and despite what some may hope, there is no going back. Transhumanity stands or falls on what it can make do on with the technology and resources at hand. What are scarce, what is valuable in the solar system are those things that were peculiar and unique to Earth. They are prizes that can secure the rep of anyone, and there is one more valued than any other: the Chattanooga.

Lifting off from the Alexandria space port during the Fall, the Chattanooga was a fully automated ark-class vessel, with a seedbank carrying specimens from over 150,000 plant species and 50,000 animals—including fifty species of mammal—and a cultural database containing over sixteen million volumes from university and public libraries all over the Middle East and North Africa, the vast majority of which were never archived elsewhere. The full scans of every cuneiform tablet dug up at Ninevah and every temple in Egypt, digital manuscripts that track the development of Arabic to before the rise of the Prophet, proto-terraforming experiment data for reclaiming the Sahara; all this and much more was sent out into space.

That flare as the booster rockets kicked in is where the Chattanooga left the pages of history and enters the realm of legend.

Originally intended to orbit Mars, most sensors lost track of the Chattanooga some time after it left Earth orbit. The final transmission to Luna was garbled, but suggests that the guidance program recognized the danger and took an “alternate course”—all records of which, if it is true, are lost. After the Fall, unconfirmed sightings started trickling in as transhumanity spread throughout the system—most in the main belt, some as far away as Uranus, though most diligent seekers doubt that the Chattanooga made it that far. While a nuclear reactor powers the ark section, the ship itself had a three-shot nuclear propulsion drive and limited maneuvering thrusters. Without constant

acceleration, the range of the ship falls well within the limits of transhuman exploration...which makes the mystery of its disappearance all the more strange and unsatisfying.

Using the Chattanooga

Classic treasure-hunting set-up, just add setting info and characters: shake well and serve. Gamemasters can make an entire campaign out of chasing the Chattanooga, following the trail of sightings and possible routes it might have taken, dealing with treasure hunters and conservationists eager to claim it first for their own reasons, chasing down leads and artifacts—and that’s just the basic approach. There’s no guarantee that the Chattanooga was carrying what everyone assumed it was, or that it even existed; what most people think was the Chattanooga could have been a massive weapon carrying every nuclear warhead the Mideast could scrounge up as an attack against the TITANs. It’s a mystery, so play up the mystery: let your players speculate, play up some of their expectations, and don’t feel constrained by any of the “facts” presented above.

Seed

During a gatecrashing expedition, the PCs come across a species of grass that is a 99% match for an Earth species believed extinct after the Fall. Further exploration finds more anomalous plant species...and then perhaps a chunk of wreckage. Could it be that the Chattanooga landed or crashed on this exoplanet? If so, how did it get here...and where’s the rest of it?

ENTRY 229: Isotope Ants

On Mars, Rusters plant metal cylinders into the ground. Cybernetic ant colonies powered by long-lived atomic batteries, at the heart of which lies a brainless queen. Across the system, users log in and take control, the system and first dozen drones goes live, and the queen starts laying eggs. Game on.

The Isotope Ants are crowdsourced terraforming. Each colony contains six breeds of genetically modified ants designed both to survive the Martian environment and perform certain functions, and wirelessly controllable by simple cybernetic interfaces. Users are encouraged to use their colonies for soil reclamation, extending the hive throughout the nearby area by building tunnels and processing the Martian dirt and dust. If certain critical goals are met, the user may be rewarded with a modest rep boost or unlock additional terraforming tools: new ant breeds, aphid-like slave species, refills on vital resources, etc. So far, Isotope Ants have begun reclaiming more than a quarter of a million square meters of Martian soil.

Seeds

- Rogue indie developers have created a variant game called Atomic Ant Wars, where ant colonies are posted nearby each other and different users battle against one another, seeking to invade each other's base and kill their queens. The creators of Isotope Ants feel this is a betrayal of their basic principles and hire the PCs to express their displeasure by destroying the Atomic Ant Wars breeding facility—with prejudice.
- An abandoned Isotope Ants colony continues to function, even though that should be impossible. The developers believe a rogue AGI may be controlling the colony, but the three technicians they sent out to eradicate the rogue colony have disappeared. The PCs are hired to travel to a remote region of Mars and find the missing technicians.
- Planetary Consortium investigators are looking into where the Isotope Ants microcorp is getting the radioactive material for their long-lasting batteries. The PCs are asked to delay and distract the investigator team while the microcorp covers their trail and secures a (legal) source. All this has to be done without tipping off Isotope Ants' actual source, who has been nipping the material from a

stockpile of weapons-grade radioisotopes on Titan.

- A young and impressionable AGI named Myrmidon has become too deeply enmeshed in playing Isotope Ants, and the members of their peer-group are worried about their mental well-being. The PCs are asked to intervene...by puppeting a group of specially-made antlion micro-morphs into the hive and killing the “queen.”
- Firewall is concerned with the similarities between Isotope Ants and a little-known exsurgent technology that uses proto-wasps as literal “bugs in the system” to infiltrate and disrupt habitats. The PCs are asked to investigate Isotope Ants and determine the source of their technology, and any connections between its owners/employees and known exsurgent groups.
- Hacker AntLover69 has found a way to network multiple Isotope Ant hives together, so that a single user can control any number of colonies. However, the Isotope Ant microcorp refuses to invest in the technology. AntLover69 asks the PCs to help them prove the concept by installing sixty-six hives in a remote crater not far from the Zone. However, while installing them the PCs wake up some long-dormant exsurgent constructs.

ENTRY 230: Rexus

“Given the choice of being anybody or anything—what would you be?”

“A dinosaur. With lasers.”

- Rexus, A Posthistoric Life

On Mars, a bipedal dinosaur stalks the slopes of Olympus Mons, shaggy feathers red and brown from the Martian dust, a massive fishbowl helmet over its head allowing it to breathe properly. Four meters tall and thirteen meters long from snout to tailtip, from the outside this biomorph is a painstaking reconstruction of an adult Tyrannosaurus Rex. This is Rexus, one of the last paleontologists in the solar system.

The science of prehistoric life remains extremely relevant in the age of terraforming, but with the lack of access to Earth’s biosphere and fossil record the disciplines of paleontology and paleocology have repositioned themselves, adapting their data and techniques to exploring the development of life on other worlds, and essentially merging into the burgeoning disciplines of xenoecology and xenobiology.

Rexus is a holdout. He loves dinosaurs, and wants to share his love of dinosaurs with a new generation—a generation that he hopes will reclaim Earth. In the meantime, he is large and in charge, a valued eccentric and minor celebrity in the Martian social scene and respected academic.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	20	14	23	20	38	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	42	8	84	65	13	75

Morph: Tyrannosauroid biomorph

Skills: Academics: Paleoecology 75, Academics: Paleontology 80, Art: Performance 50, Beam Weapons 35, Deception 55, Fray 66, Free Fall 60, Impersonation 55, Infiltration 66, Infosec 55, Interests: Dinosaurs 66, Interests: Teaching 50, Interfacing 40, Kinetic Weapons 50, Language: Native English 80, Language: German 75, Language: French 44, Negotiation 65, Networking: Hypercorps 40, Networking: Scientists 40, Perception (Smell) 66, Profession: Paleontologist 77, Profession: Teacher 66, Unarmed Combat (Bite) 70

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave (Heavy), Claws (on feet, non-retractable), Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Enhanced

Respiration, Enhanced Smell, Hand Laser, Temperature Tolerance

Advantages: Bite attack (1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat skill), Heavy tail provides +20 to any Physical skill tests where balance is a factor

Disadvantages: Limited articulation and grip strength on forearms (-20 to any Physical skill test requiring forearms); mass and size limit travel and habitat options; overall physical difficulties requires customized equipment and assistance in getting dressed, etc.

Traits: Pain Tolerance (Level 2), Tough (Level 3)

Using Rexus

There is little practical reason to be a tyrannosaurus rex in Eclipse Phase...but then Rexus is not a terrible practical individual, a proponent of a dying academic discipline and an ardent supporter of the need to reclaim the planet Earth. Because of the rarity of his expertise, Rexus is one of the few people that the PCs can go to if they encounter an Earth fossil or critter possibly recreated from fossil DNA—he’s the best in the system, and more than willing to practice his skills; he probably also has the contacts needed to sell such rarities, though he’d prefer to see them in a museum... More likely, PCs on Mars may get to meet Rexus if their adventures put them in contact with groups that want to reclaim or recolonize the planet Earth.

ENTRY 231: Gravity Prison

There are as many kinds of prison as transhumanity has concepts of freedom. All of them rely on the principle of separating an individual from society, both to prevent further harm and as a punishment or place where reformation and re-education can take place. Habitats take different stances regarding incarceration based both on their social and ethical background, and on the economy and technology available to them. Isolated, secure holding facilities for physical morphs that see to their basic needs are expensive to operate, and typically only used for the short term—and even then, only if the prisoner is suspected to be a risk to themselves or others. Mental prisons such as time dilation protocols, simulations, or simply removing the ego from the morph are much more cost effective, but sometimes run into issues regarding the rights of the prisoner and undo trauma. Then again, there are some people that just want someone else put away, as cheaply and effectively as possible, and don't care a wit about laws and regulations.

Gravity prisons are as brutal as they come: durable prison-habitats with constant high (>1) effective g forces, such as the Elysium High Capacity Residential Habitat on the surface of Jupiter (>2g). The most famous are the three GMax facilities in orbit about the sun, all of which are located as stops along the same one-way space elevator. The GMax Alfa has an effective gravity of 2g; GMax Bravo is 4g, and GMax Charlie a bone-crushing 8g. Each habitat is monitored remotely, but policed from afar. Fresh supplies are dumped in once a month by a one-way shuttle; any tampering with the shuttle means no supplies the next month, and anyone stupid enough to try and hitch a ride on the shuttle simply ends up on the next GMax down...and after Charlie the space elevator simply runs out, and the spent shuttle free-falls towards the surface of the sun. All GMax terms are for life, but aside from the brutal gravity and isolation the inhabitants are free to do as they please; Alfa's inmates have set up their own societies and hierarchies, while Bravo is an anarchistic model with heavy Main Belt cultural influences since the majority of the surviving morphs are Bouncers. Charlie is the harshest of the three habitats, but the morphs that can handle the gravity have pioneered experiments in heavy-gravity agriculture and aquaculture that have earned them special privileges (Mesh access, luxury goods, etc.) compared to those habitats higher up the gravity well.

An alternative model gravity prison is a habitat with a ring section that spins fast enough to emulate g forces of 1g and higher. The few examples of these are generally located in the inner system, where more abundant solar power is available, and vary from the "gravity spas" around 1-1.5g used for transhumans adapted to zero gravity and microgravity environments to "bonecrushers" that can potentially emulate up to 10g, though most have safeties that prevent them from being taken up above 4g acceleration due to an incident when a hacker killed an entire imprisoned population by prolonged exposure to high g forces. Rotary gravity prisons offer the wardens and guards moderate control over the gravity by controlling the acceleration of the rotation, and depending on the individual prison riots and the like can either be broken up by halting spin completely—few prisoners have the skills to riot effectively in zero g—or by accelerating and forcing the transhumans onto their knees.

Using Gravity Prisons

Prisons in movies and books tend to suck: cramped, crowded places typically segregated by sex and filled with violent and often filthy criminals and ruled over by corrupt guards. Science fiction prisons tend to suck differently: a bit more clinical and severe, focusing on the isolation of the individual and the numbing of the mind. Those are just tropes, however. In Eclipse Phase a prison can just be another habitat where leaving is difficult in some way and life is relatively unpleasant. Gravity prisons in this regard aren't toxic hellholes where badasses tattoo themselves with racist symbols and face gang rape in the communal showers. Instead, picture your average habitat except most of the biomorphs are solidly built, suffer chronic back and joint pain, and probably there against their will. They may not be criminals, just inconvenient people shot down the gravity well because it was cheap. This is a different enough perspective from "regular" prison that a gamemaster could potentially set an adventure in one, and breaking in/breaking out isn't too hard for a creative crew with some outside help (for example, having a ship waiting at the end of the Solar GMax line to pick up some escapees taking the one-way shuttle), so some bulky NPCs could even be escapees from a gravity prison, or only available through the Mesh because they're stuck in a gravity prison.

ENTRY 232: Mercy Wing

Not every trip through a gate goes well. No one quite knows why—maybe the receiver gate is damaged, or a collapsing star disrupts the wormhole, or the coordinates fed in were off by a bit. Most of the time when this happens, passage simply fails: the portal does not open, the connection is not made, please try again later. Much more rarely, the connection is disrupted when someone is going through. The survivors of such disasters are brought to the Mercy Wing, an emergency medical research facility which specializes in injuries caused by a sudden change in the local laws of physics.

Gatekeeper Corporation opened up the first Mercy Wing near the Pandora Gate shortly after the first “incident,” and most other groups and corporations (with the general exception of the Fissure Gate—negotiations with the anarchists have broken down again) set up their own emergency medical research facilities, combining the equipment of an experimental physics lab with state-of-the-art medical care. For the majority of Mercy Wings, the first goal is to keep the patient alive (biomorph) or functioning (synthmorph); this was a point of serious contention against their second goal, which was to study the injuries involved to determine what exactly happened. Transferring the patient’s ego to another morph is generally not a high priority, and generally only addressed when the staff finds it convenient.

Of the hundreds or thousands of gatecrashers that have gone through since the first gate was discovered, there have been only eleven recorded “incidents” affecting a total of sixteen gatecrashers. Nine of those have died, two have been rehabilitated, and the other five remain in care—three of them long-term residents of the Mercy Wing at the Pandora Gate. The immediate effects of the physics fluctuation are highly localized to the portions of the individual at the gate threshold during the time of the incident, but secondary effects either from the implications of the initial exposure or from re-exposure to ‘normal’ physics environments are extremely common, and typically include severe radiation exposure and the infamous “exploding hand” syndrome where a part of the individual’s anatomy experiences a sudden state change, typically accompanied by a sizable release of energy.

Using the Mercy Wing

Mercy Wings are secret hospitals that hide the deepest, darkest underbelly of gatecrashing—injuries so rare and

random that there’s no point in rolling the dice for them because the normal chances of an “incident” while going through a gate is infinitesimal. The only reason transhumanity has suffered so many “incidents” is because they’re still playing fast and loose with the gate network. So having said that, any time a character suffers an “incident” passing through a gate is not a matter of the roll of the dice, but gamemaster fiat.

While physics majors might enjoy the hypothetical scenario about what happens when you stick your hand into a universe where the Plank constant suddenly decides it wants to be lower, for most gamemaster it is enough to say that very likely whatever part of the character that was at the gate threshold at the time will explode (or fuse, transmute, start to undergo rapid radioactive decay, etc.) and the character will suffer a relatively severe shock (as well as the effects of the explosion/radiation exposure, etc.) Immediate medical care is their only hope for survival, and so the crews are ready to take them down to the nearby Mercy Wing. Other injuries are possible if the GM is feeling creative, but the afflicted character is likely to be out of play for a considerable time, so it isn’t recommended to subject PCs to gate malfunctions. Rather, these gate errors, resulting injuries, and the Mercy Wing emergency medical research facilities are great setting material for games set around a gate, especially if the PC gatecrashers are getting cocky and think they know everything. The few survivors of gate malfunctions may even summon the PCs to a Mercy Wing and ask them to carry out a final task for them.

Seeds

In as many weeks there have been two “incidents” at the local gate—and the PCs are scheduled to go through on a gatecrashing mission soon! Is this just a statistical fluke, or has somebody figured out how to deliberately cause gate malfunctions to weed out the competition? The only answers may lie in the Mercy Wing.

ENTRY 233: Eden Ventures

“Traditionalist.”

- Ultimates insult

Of all the organizations devoted to exoplanet colonization through gatecrashing, Eden Ventures is most notorious for its minimalist approach. Typically they find some (barely) habitable exoplanet, crowdsource a sizable amount of funding and materials with the aid of dedicated religious subscriber networks, and then send forth the “seed” colony— typically, between two and eight transhumans with minimal food and equipment and no plan for continued support. Eden Ventures considers this a “shotgun approach” to colonizing multiple worlds very quickly, but critics of the gatecrashing corporation deride it as “Adam & Leave,” which typically requires someone else to go behind them and rescue EV’s hapless “colonists.”

Seeds

- Eden Ventures is heavily involved with religious networks, buying advertisement space and programming drives to solicit donations and investments in its colonization activities. However, a group of these investors wishes to bring a multiple-habitat class-action suit against the company for its predatory practices— but they need evidence to do it. They wish to hire the PCs to visit six “colonies” EV has established, to find out how well the colonists were prepared, what supplies and training they were given, and how much follow-up support they received. If, that is, the colonists are still alive.
- A nasty property dispute has cropped up on the exoplanet Jezza III between a mining hypercorp and Eden Ventures regarding the ownership of a deposit of titanium ore. EV insists they have an established claim based on a previous colonization attempt—and hires the PCs to sneak into the titanium-rich caverns and quickly establish a makeshift “colony” so they can push their claim. How much can the PCs do with the limited resources available to them, and against the challenges faced by a hostile world?
- A critical impasse has come to the grass-covered exoplanet of Savannah: relations between the colony members have broken down because two of the female biomorphs have decided to engage in a monogamous relationship with each other,

which poses a critical threat to the colony’s long-term genetic diversity. Eden Ventures hires the PCs to peacefully resolve the issue as neutral mediators, giving them the authority to promise the colonists anything from artificial insemination to the Lilith Sequence (see entry 126), but the PCs will also have to deal with the colonist’s religious beliefs.

- In preparation for every colonization attempt, Eden Ventures does considerably location scouting using gatecrashers like the player characters. The PCs are hired to scout out the terrain of Puddle, a world of sunken continents where all of the solid ground is covered by at least 1-10 centimeters of water. To fulfill their contract, the PCs will need to explore and map a circle at least thirty kilometers in radius around the gate—wading through tall grasses that might conceal deep water crevasses and quicksand, tiny carnivorous fish, and lumbering amphibious mugwumps. If the PCs consent to babysit a geological surveyor (a hapless neohominid called Earwig), Eden Ventures will even pay them a bonus.

ENTRY 234: Malomer

"I've died on more exoplanets than you've ever seen. I was there when the firehorses overran us at Potsdamn...when the sky blinked on Little Browntop...when Mad Jorge drank pure butane and accidentally gassed us all on the way to Roswell..." - Malomer, four or five drinks in to his latest story

Malomer holds two records in the history file: the first gatecrasher to die on an exoplanet, and the gatecrasher with the most recorded deaths period. There are some that say he's visited over fifty exoplanets, and been resleeved almost eighty times. One of the original gatecrashers, Malomer proved adept at exploration and discovering the seen and unseen perils of new worlds, often by fatally injuring himself in some fashion. In at least fifty cases, Malomer was resleeved simply so they could ask him what killed him (he refuses to talk to people as an infomorph, on the grounds that they won't buy him a drink). Today Malomer is still gatecrashing, considered both a veteran explorer and a lightning rod (literally, in three instances) to catch whatever bad luck may befall an expedition, and he finds steady work.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	14	13	15	5	17	20	4
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Xenobiology (Digestive Systems) 40, Academics: Xenogeology 60, Art: Storytelling 40, Beam Weapons 55, Blades (Knives) 60, Climbing 60, Clubs (Wrench) 70, Fray (Full Defense) 67, Free Fall (Microgravity) 56, Hardware: DIY Repair 50, Infiltration 50, Interests: Alcohol 70, Interests: Custom Gear 60, Interests: Death 44, Interests: Gatecrashing 60, Interests: Transhumanism 50, Intimidation 70, Kinesics 50, Kinetic Weapons (Pistols) 35, Language: Native Spanish 84, Language: English 70, Language: Mandarin 56, Networking: Autonomists 60, Networking: Hypercorps (Gatecrashing) 60, Perception 60, Persuasion (Buy Me A Drink) 38, Profession: Explorer 50, Scrounging 40, Unarmed Combat (Groin Attack) 66

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Back-up Cortical Stack, small tracking tags located in all major bones

Traits: Addiction (Alcohol, Minor), Bad Luck, Brave, Neural Damage (facial tic)

Using Malomer

An old salt, or whatever the equivalent term would be for a gatecrasher, Malomer is the perfect half-crazed old alcoholic to have propping up a gatecrasher bar and telling a story that might just be true. Having stared death in the face more times than he can count (literally, he had to relearn basic algebra after a particularly bad resleeving), Malomer is completely fearless, calm, and collected in the face of a dangerous situation, and is not above giving the boot to anybody—said weapon being a homemade affair weighted down with lead and with spring-loaded spikes topped with a mild poison and a much more dangerous accumulation of grime because he never cleans the thing. Another good use of Max is as a convenient corpse, either to illustrate a particularly danger on an exoplanet or simply to help illustrate how transient death is in Eclipse Phase. If Mal dropped dead in Gagarin's Rest (Entry 148) during rush hour for example, his corpse would just be propped up in the corner until the crowd had cleared out. In fact, get him drunk enough and he'll tell you how that exact thing happened, except he was sitting at a game of Neptunian Poker and won the pot...

ENTRY 235: Maintenance Rats

Resources are limited. Imagination is not. Faced with the greatest challenge of its existence, transhumanity has had to do the best it can with the technology and scraps of old Earth—and put them to work. Maintenance rats are a breed of partial uplift, genefixed for cleanliness, sociability, intelligence, and certain specific fixed behaviors. They have as much in common with the old earth rat as a Chihuahua has with a timber wolf.

In most habitats that have them, maintenance rats perform essential cleaning services, scurrying through pipes and crawlspaces too small for most transhumans, picking up trash and debris and carrying it away to a designated refuse pile in a maintenance area marked by certain scent markers. They control their own population, are fastidious about their appearance, and only deposit their droppings in designated areas. Most habitats find they make great personal pets, being extremely friendly and easy to train.

These modifications have come at the expense of a degree of self-sufficiency.

Maintenance rats need their designated collection and “deposit” points, and while they are still biologically capable of eating almost anything their tastes have been tweaked so that they will only devour especially scent-marked food pellets. While they are an important tool in transhumanity’s survival, maintenance rats are no longer able to survive on their own in the wild—and if left unattended or neglected, entire populations may starve or go mad.

Seeds

- A vengeful maintenance worker disposed of a bully by spraying them with the maintenance rat food marker—hundreds of furry bodies covered the victim within minutes, leaving only a gory skeleton with a few winking, indigestible electronics, which were soon picked up by bloodstained paws and taken to the collection point. Now the station administration debates whether or not to exterminate the entire population as a result of the media uproar of the attack. Rat-lovers throughout the station have put up a bounty for anyone that can find proof that the maintenance rats were compelled instead of acting freely.

- Genehackers have developed a new breed of “splicer rats” that compete with maintenance rats for space and food, but which can use the Mesh to coordinate their activities thanks to basic mesh implants, and the maintenance rats are being hard-pressed by the newcomers. Unfortunately, the splicer rats have been infected with an exsurgent virus. Somewhere in the bowels of the habitat a seven-headed splicer rat king begins directing the others—first to eliminate the maintenance rats, and then the transhumans! The sudden rapid decline of maintenance rat populations triggers a warning, and the habitat hires to PCs to figure out what’s going on with the rats.
- Hypercorp researcher and chief maintenance rat breeder Mamoud Rasiq has only one vice: his pet maintenance rat Blinky, who thanks to his own cortical stack is currently on his sixth incarnation. Mamoud believes that Blinky is on the verge of becoming a true uplift—he just needs one little upgrade. Mamoud’s employer has the tech, but he’ll get in big trouble if he accesses it...but if the PCs happen to steal it for him, all’s well. In exchange, Mamoud can give them some Best of Breed™ top-quality pet maintenance rats, which are worth quite a bit on the pet market.

ENTRY 236: Sistry

Modern professional military organizations recognize the importance of training in multiple related martial skills: close quarters combat using knives, hand-to-hand, and small arts, attacking at range, and overall strategic and tactical thinking are typically emphasized and increasingly integrated into a single block of training, with periodic refreshers and optional advanced courses in selected skills for promising or dedicated students. As a concept, these sistry (singular: systema) allow the rapid development of a group of related skills in a relatively short period of time, and with a focus on utility and adaptability often absent from the more artistic contemporary martial arts intended solely for exhibition, exercise, and formal competition.

Mechanics

The sistry concept is an option for gamemasters and players to help simplify combat in Eclipse Phase. Instead of having individual combat skills like Blades, Clubs, Fray, Kinetic Weapons, Unarmed Combat, etc. the character has a Systema skill which represents their basic block of training in multiple forms of combat. When attacking, the character would roll their Systema skill instead of the typical individual combat skill.

Example

Sixjane needs to cut a Ruster bitch and pops her cyberclaws. Sixjane has Systema 44 and her player rolls 38—a success!—and is rewarded with a spray of arterial blood as her victim screams in pain...

Extras

Players and gamemasters interested in a slightly more complex approach to sistry combat can include some of these optional extra rules.

Individual Advanced Training: The character's Systema skill maxes out at 60, and cannot be improved beyond that. Characters wishing to improve their skills must take individual advanced training in specific skills to further develop them past this point. While the character retains their Systema skill at max, they can then develop individual skills (Blades, Clubs, Fray, Kinetic Weapons, Unarmed Combat, etc.) further, with each skill having a base rating equal to their Systema skill.

Example

After years of hard training, Sixjane has topped out at Systema 60. Now she qualifies for individual advanced training in Blades. By spending 2 Rez points, Sixjane now has Blades 61.

Specific Systema: There is no one Systema skill; rather there are multiple sistry, each of which has its own skill, and each of which has its own culture and heritage depending on the military that developed it. Contemporary examples would include the systema of the Russian Spetznatz, krav maga of the Israeli military, and the MCMAP program of the United States Marine Corps, though in Eclipse Phase systems would probably include more training in recoilless and beam weapons, implant weapons, different morphs, etc. The specifics of each Systema skill should be worked out between the player and the gamemaster, but in general each should focus on certain areas—this is effectively represented by a free specialization in the chosen Systema skill which cannot be changed, though it does not apply to advanced skills obtained through Individual Advanced Training. Typically, certain exotic or unusual weapons or skills are not covered by these specific Systema—Kinetic weapons in particular are rare in space, and few systems cover Spray Weapons for example.

Example

Zapato: The systema of the Jovian Army, Zapato is a comprehensive fighting system developed for both close-quarters and ranged combat in microgravity environments and incorporates close-quarters combat training as well as ranged training with beam weapons, though training with firearms is neglected due to their general absence in the

Jovian armory. [Free Specialization: Microgravity, Not Covered: Kinetic Weapons]

ENTRY 237: Holder

Gatecrashing is a different set of logistics from space travel. No one worries about another couple of grams more or less as long as everything vital is accounted for, and most of the gatecrasher hypercorps are willing to look the other way if their people decide they need a little something extra. So in the demimonde of hangers-on and specialized services that have cropped up around the Gates there are people like Holder, dealing out drugs, petals, narcoalgorithms, and whatever else people might need. Holder is the one-stop pharmacy outlet of the Pandora Gate, self-incorporated as his own microcorp and with silent pipelines to all the big pharmacorps and petal artisans, who push him product samples and literature with witty soundbites and quick taglines—enough business that he has five people in an office-cum-warehouse space handling the logistics, keeping track of inventory, quality control, and making deals for promoting their product.

No one wants to buy drugs of hazy legality or possible experimental status from a corpbacked salesman who operates under the blind eye and quiet blessing of the powers that be. Holder knows this, and cultivates the genially scruffy mystique of a low-level hustler that says he can get his clients anything—and, amazingly enough to them, he can actually deliver. Holder’s gatecrasher clientele don’t need to know that he’s probably hooked into their employers through discreet backchannels, and that they approve of anything that Holder sells them. All the better to protect their investment if they can get them what they want and need, and in such a manner that the gatecrashers don’t go dealing with people they can’t trust. So Holder maintains his niche.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
17	12	15	13	13	10	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	2	28	5	80	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Chemistry 40, Academics: Economics 50, Academics: Pharmacy 40, Blades 35, Climbing 25, Fray 45, Free Fall 27, Hardware: Nanotechnology 45, Infiltration 60, Interfacing 25, Interests: Experimental Drugs 65, Interests: Gatecrashing 35, Intimidation 33, Kinesics 33, Kinetic Weapons (Holdouts) 45, Language: Native Czech 84, Language: Japanese 55, Language: English 55, Language: German 44, Language: Russian 44, Networking: Criminals 25, Networking: Hypercorps 48, Palming 55, Perception

(Taste) 37, Persuasion (Sell Drugs) 42, Profession: Drug Dealer 60, Scrounging 20

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Pheromones, Enhanced Taste, Medichines, Neurachem (Level 1)

Traits: Unattractive (Level 1)

Using Holder

The Holder most player characters meet is a street-level hustler transplanted into weird future of a Pandora Gate complex; the kind of character that can seem at ease but out of place almost everywhere. He’s never exactly dirty, just scruffy and mismatched enough not to quite fit in, even with the dingiest of the technicians or the most rumpled of the suitwearing flacks that seem to hang around the gate and collect a salary for nebulous services rendered under vague titles like “special consultant.” He is, in fact, the person that everyone around the gate will point the PCs to if they’re looking to score anything remotely strange, illicit, or illegal, and he tries hard to look and act the part, though very attentive PCs will probably question how he maintains his business and the quality of his goods in the midst of all the hypercorps and security. If caught out or confronted about it, Holder will smile and drop the act as a compliment to their detective skills; after all, most customers are happy if they think they’ve figured out the trick and don’t look for the next one.

ENTRY 238: Antimirror

Chrome roses budding from a length of barbed wire, each bud and thorn tipped with rust, antimirror tastes of stale blood and ozone, with overtones of burning rubber as the flowers dissolve that seem to fill the head and overwhelm the senses. This petal is favored among masochists and exhumans, for whom pain is but one more sensation to be experienced and savored in all its million shades and combinations.

Each antimirror trip is a revisitation of some crime—a rape, a murder, a mutilation. The scripts tend to be simple, the characters flat and mechanical. The non-player characters and settings are filled in from the user’s memory, pulled at random: friends, family, lovers. Familiar faces on empty shells playing pat parts. The user, of course, is always the victim, and suffers the worst of the events until the hallucinatory narrative ends.

The petalcrafters of antimirror pass themselves off as harmless enthusiasts, entertaining each other with their simple games, but the XP recordings that form the backbone of antimirror are culled from their vast archives of pain and fear. While they may or may not be torturers and sadists of themselves, they hoard and barter the memories of those that suffered and died at the hands of such depraved individuals, and vicariously cherish that anguish. While some are relatively harmless, others on the shadowy networks have been connected with kidnappings, unlicensed and unwilling augmentations, sexual assault, and premeditated surgical alteration on many habitats. Still, because of the disparate and secluded nature of the group, it is difficult for any legal authorities to stop their trade and barter of such materials, disguised as it is within accepted and perfectly legal peer-to-peer networks.

Mechanics

Antimirror has about a 1 in 10 chance of causing a “bad trip,” inflicting 1d10 Mental Stress on the user. Common derangements caused by antimirror addiction include paranoia and self-inflicted wounds.

Sweets

- Let the Blood Run Out (30 or more doses of antimirror in the last 30 days):

- Prolonged users find cathartic release through self harm; by inflicting 1d10 damage to themselves, the character can remove 1d6 Mental Stress that they have accumulated in the past 24 hours.
- Mind Numb (60 or more doses of antimirror in the last 30 days): The user develops a mental resistance to traumatic imagery and experiences; reduce all Mental Stress the user accumulates by half.
- Become the Victim (5 bad trips with antimirror): The user’s last hallucination made it onto the Mesh, and they have become a minor celebrity among the petalcrafters and users of antimirror. These individuals push the user to use the petal more often; the cost for them changes to Trivial.
- Witness (Random): The petal isn’t the typical narrative, but the XP recording of a recent unsolved violent crime. The user’s hallucination may hold clues to catch the perpetrator, or help identify the whereabouts and status of the victim.

Type	Application	Duration	Addiction Modifier	Addiction Type	Cost
Nano	0	1d6 hours	+3	Mental	Moderate

ENTRY 239: Dreamgate

Dial the right coordinates on the Martian Gate, and you step through to a red world, eerily familiar. Not Mars-as-it-is, but Mars-as-it-was—a planet made in the image of old Mars by some long-vanished race of planet shapers, who liked the dryness and the dust, and built cities like convoluted flutes the color of raw pink bone, inlaid with veins of metal that crackle with electricity. Now all they have left behind are dusty cities that hum with ancient power sources, and dream.

The first probes noticed it the second they came in, the heavy wireless signals in the air— an alien Mesh, active and alive even if the extraterrestrials that built it seem long dead. Gatecrashers found the first terminals when they breached the towers: sonar/audio systems for creatures that sensed the world primarily through sound, and shell-backed cuirasses presumed to be nonhuman neural interfaces. The engineers back on Mars began reverse-engineering them immediately.

Now the red world, this twin-Mars is known as Dreamgate, and each group of gatecrashers comes through bearing the latest versions of interface augmentations designed to allow them to experience and explore the alien computer network. Crews have spent hours and days mapping sensory palaces like dry windblown caverns of the mind, artificial dreamscapes of pink and purple beaches that fade into ink-black oceans swimming with wriggling tadpole-things. All of it might be real, or none of it. Some people bring back snatches of alien music, XP recordings unlike anything ever seen, fragments of science databanks, and millions of lines of alien scripts—at least two dozen separate languages and half a dozen alphabets with different variations, all waiting to be translated and read.

Others never come back at all, their egos lost in the vast XenoMesh, or fallen prey to stillactive defenses or the bizarre AIs that might live there. Others ask why the Martian Gate would link to this particular world—did something or someone try to cross over to Mars from the Dreamgate? Or was it the other way around? What stopped them? Where did they go? For all of these questions, many are sure the answers lie in that alien Mesh of sonic contours and bone-chattering base rhythms, and fluted towers that stab up at the pale sun like the skeletal fingers of some buried giant...

Mechanics

Physically, Dreamgate's environment is nearly identical to Mars, right down to the gravity, and the landscape is strongly reminiscent of Mars as well, though explorations further afield uncover several vast salt pans that used to be shallow inland seas teeming with invertebrate life.

Accessing the XenoMesh requires specialized non-standard mesh inserts; these Custom Mesh Inserts cost at least 50,000 credits, but are usually provided to gatecrashers headed to Dreamgate as essential equipment for their job. In the alien city or outpost on the other side, users can tune the mesh inserts to experience augmented reality or to explore the full virtual space. However, the XenoMesh is a very alien sensual experience, and PCs often find it difficult to navigate the exotic information architecture.

ENTRY 240: Dreamcrackers

“Sleep is the brother of death. The continuity of your consciousness ceases every cycle as the amphetamines and caffeine crashes against your rising fatigue toxins and weariness overtakes your cage of flesh. You go to sleep...and is it you that ‘wakes up’ the next morning? What happened while your mind was offline? Do you cease to exist, and rise again each day as a phoenix? No. There is a continuity, brothers and sisters, there is a thread of consciousness that remains always running in the background. Even as the higher functions of your brain cease, your essential you continues on...” - Evangelist Holyfield, the Fist of Sand, Mesh sermon #238

Few morphs with Mesh implants are every fully disconnected from the Mesh. The tech savvy and unbearably paranoid install their killswitches and zip themselves in Faraday hammocks, and the rest of transhumanity just hopes that their firewalls will hold out as they lay themselves down to sleep. Yet some say their prayers and tighten their security settings at night, for fear the dreamcrackers will come for them.

The Dreamcrackers are an offshoot of the Sandman Project, an open technical community dedicated to the exploration of hacking sleep in all its forms. It’s an initiative that appeals to transhumans of every social strata, and many applaud its open databases exploring the neurological, neurochemical, and psychological aspects of sleep, rest, and dreaming. Most of the attention the Sandman Project attracts is for its Exploits though—everything from formulas for chemical cocktails that’ll keep you awake and lucid for a couple weeks, tweaks to circadian regulation and hibernation implants for maximum efficiency or alternative use, lucid dreaming software, tens of thousands of hours of XP from dreamers covering everything from nocturnal emissions to incubus attacks, experimental group rigs for “splitting” a Petal among multiple users through shared hallucinations, unconscious morph transition therapy, psychotronic weapons...science and pseudoscience, presented, debated, recategorized, and added to, one piece of data at a time.

Not all of the tech is legal in every habitat. Not every clique and individual in the Sandman Project has the advancement and understanding of transhumanity at heart. Such individuals often find their access restricted, and parts of the community even made off limits to them.

Research materials and funds diverted, isolated from the rest of the community until they take the hint and amend their ways or wander off. Among these offshoots and orphans are Dreamcrackers—philosophically cut off from the purer research, this group of hackers has found a technology that works and continued to develop it in secret. They crack the firewalls of sleeping egos, to record their dreamscapes, either for their own art or to sell to petalcrafters and others, and manipulate the dreamer. Depending on the morph and its implants, their exploits can allow them to control the duration and depth of sleep, tweaking sleep cycles to turn a cat nap into a coma, or to manipulate the reticular activating system, effectively paralyzing the victim. These brain hackers delve into weird and esoteric knowledge, and rumors of their skills have caused some Firewall agents to wonder where they got their skills and software.

ENTRY 241: Bailey y Goch

“They could afford any morph they want. Bailey chooses not to exercise that option until all infolife has the right to be embodied...”

Makken, spokesweasel for Red Freedom Inc.

Talent and skill will take you only so far. To go the extra distance, to succeed from rich to superrich, from the voice of a generation to sole owner of your multimedia empire, requires drive, ruthlessness, and an elevated sense of self above all others. This is what has made dream-producer Bailey y Goch the most beloved artist in his field, though to their tens of thousands of fans they projects the persona of a dreamy idealist, an ascetic artist-magician who aspires to the shared rise in consciousness of transhumanity and the equal rights and freedoms of all, as outlined in their book series *Dreaming to Peace*, sample chapters free for instant download, further chapters available when donations hit the next level...

Goch is a businessentity and an artist, and ruthless at both. Everything that Goch does, from the dream XP recordings to the charity benefits for Save Welsh! and tradeschool workshops for uplifts on Luna all funnel credits into their coffers, or raise their rep a little more. Goch capitalizes on their pull for outstanding performances and very public massive acts of work and goodwill, with their corporate entity Red Freedom Inc. handling the grunt work, ever growing Goch’s personal fortune. To those few who know him—including uplifted weasel and PR flack Makken Teague—money and art seem to be the only things that really capture Bailey y Goch’s interest.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	10	18	10	16	10	11	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Psychology (Dreams) 33, Academics: Sociology (Group Dynamics) 42, Art: Lucid Dreaming 89, Deception 37, Impersonation (Persona) 60, Infosec 40, Interests: Dream Business 45, Interests: Fangroups 45, Interests: Self Promotion 46, Interfacing 50, Intimidation (Financial) 50, Language: Native Welsh 90, Language: Cantonese 85, Language: English 85, Language: Irish 85, Persuasion (Negotiation) 66, Perception 50, Profession: Dream Arist 75, Programming 25, Research 19

Disadvantages: Allies (fans), Expert (Art – Lucid Dreaming), Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Bailey y Goch

Artists are valued either for what they have, what they create, or what they well create, and this is the basic key to using Bailey y Goch. As an artist, Goch has released several hundred extremely popular XP of lucid dreaming episodes, along with thousands of pieces of derivative media, and the bulk of their income comes from the sale, distribution, and licensing of those works in whole or in part. As such, Goch sees any threat to their work as a threat against themselves, and may hire or target the PCs accordingly. Both artistic and business rivals may target Goch directly, either hiring the PCs to kidnap/destroy/hobble the infomorph or Red Freedom may hire the PCs to protect Goch’s interests. Finally, there is the possibility that Goch owes their fame and fortune to something besides their art—an early rival Goch ripped off, or a secret network whose resources Goch tapped to first distribute their material, possibly even some key work that Goch is blackmailing a powerful media hypercorp executive with. Any and all such secrets are a good “in” to bring Bailey y Goch into the campaign for a session or two.

ENTRY 242: The Sleeping Generation

Desperate times call for imperfect technologies, executed with the best of intentions and plans based on whatever knowledge is available, but are not necessarily viable in the long run. Yet it is an adage not to trust all your transhuman egos to a single strategy, but to spread the risk by trying to save a portion of those lives by other means. So while in some cities ships pulled off the ground with entire transhumans, and others had their egos copied and sent off into space while their physical forms left behind, a minority of other approaches were being tried in corners of the Earth where resources for these relatively safe and sure technologies were not available.

In Munich, multiple egos were spliced together to fit within the limited number of storage devices together. In Kookaburra, a group of prominent government leaders had their egos transferred into uplifted koalas so more egos could escape in the low-mass bodies. In Bengal, dozens of families made it into low-earth orbit using high-altitude balloons, with the hope that they could be towed further up the gravity well. And in Johannesburg, they started lopping off heads.

Faced with a severe mass limitation but lacking the resources to upload entire egos, the last-minute flight from Johannesburg was a matter of brutal math. Surgeons worked tirelessly removing the heads of the volunteers, which were passed off to medical technicians to attach to the life-keeping apparatus that would keep them alive for the duration of the flight, each head locked into place in the crowded rocket ship and placed in a full VR simulation for the duration of the trip. Fifteen thousand heads were packed into the Queen Mujabi in 38 hours, and the ship was launched towards the Main Belt. They were the only survivors.

Many of them didn't survive. At least three thousand heads succumbed to trauma or infection in the first six months; over a hundred others succumbed to insanity and exercised a built-in right-to-life protocol. The slow ship finally docked with Nova York in AF 2, which was hard-pressed to deal with the sudden influx due to a shortage of morphs. Roughly half of the surviving Johannesburg heads opted to remain as they were until bodies could be cloned for them, while the others resleeved as informorphs or whatever cheap synths were available, some agreeing to contracts of indentured servitude for better bodies. A little over five thousand heads remain, connected by VR, on the

Queen Mujabi—relics of the Fall that the Nova York media have dubbed “The Sleeping Generation.”

Mechanics

The bodiless heads of the Sleeping Generation are all Flats. While they do technically have physical forms (and can thus receive whatever augmentations a head can accommodate), they have an effective SOM of 1, Wound Threshold of 1, and Durability 6, though given that all of them are incased in jars full of pseudoamniotic fluid and hooked up to major medical equipment, this should not be something that ever really comes into play. Nova York has upgraded all of the surviving heads with Medicines to counteract the long-term damage of being disembodied heads in jars, and the VR equipment is effectively the same as Basic Mesh Inserts. For PCs that for some reason want to be a head in a jar, the cost for this morph is Moderate.

ENTRY 243: Superkinesics

The twitch of an eye, the number of blinks, the little calluses on the first two fingers of the right hand, the way she keeps her nails trimmed, the pulse visibly beating at her throat...people can be read, though not like a book. Every individual is different, but they are running the same wetware, and many fall into the same psychological traits. A good cold reader can walk into a crowded room and see who is nervous, and who wants to believe.

Augmented senses don't make kinesics any easier—but they do open up the reader to a new level of information. Once they learn to interpret that data, a reader's accuracy can be superhuman—the heat patterns from the flow of blood in their face, the smell as their pores open up and start to sweat under their clothing, the electromagnetic tingle as they access their implants. Even synthmorphs are not invulnerable; microscopic and nanoscopic vision in particular can tell a great deal about the 'health' of a case by the care taken in its repair, cleaning, and maintenance.

Of course, transhumans who live with augmented senses daily often pay as much attention to covering up some of their tell-tale giveaways as flats and splicers do with makeu. It's a rare case or synth who does keep a couple small brush attachments for their fingers to clean those hard-to-reach slots, and learn to calibrate their speech synthesizers to disguise some of the unease in their voice when nervous. Many transhuman actors and public speakers make an effort to study superkinesics to help whoo their audience as well, to better emote their performance to an augmented audience.

Mechanics

Superkinesics is a specialization for the Kinesics skill that is applicable whenever the character's augmented senses would give additional vital information that would help them judge another's intent, or when they are dealing with a character with augmented senses, and functions identically to other skill specializations. The bonus from this specialization stacks with any bonus granted from the enhanced sense itself (i.e. a character with Enhanced Smell and the Superkinesics specialization would receive a total +30 bonus to Kinesics Tests).

Using Superkinesics

Superkinesics has a rather long run history in science fiction, though not under that name; a particularly good use was in Bruce Sterling's "Twenty Evocations" set in his

Shaper/Mechanist universe. As such, there are quite a lot of good examples out thereon how to use (and abuse) this trope, with both players and gamemasters coming up with arguments as to why a given augmented sense works or does not work in a particular situation. I would suggest not having those arguments; life is too short and at the end of the day +10 on a Kinesics roll really shouldn't be a game over for your adventure. Now, this doesn't mean a gamemaster can't make life difficult on PCs that come to rely on their enhanced senses—enhanced smell doesn't mean much if the characters are interacting through holograms, for example.

ENTRY 244: Long Mei Chou

“I remember Shenzhen. Mother Leng would make breakfast for myself and my other clone sisters. We were trained to read people. It was bred into us, so we always knew what each other was thinking—and strangers were an open book. I stood at his left hand during the tensest negotiations, games for the highest stakes...the others became bodyguards, assassins, spies. But I was his talisman. Then the cancer-bombs fell. They told me I was the lucky one. It only ate my eyes. When I came up the gravity well, they gave me new ones. Better ones. Then they taught me how to use them. You look cold, dear. Would you like a scarf?”

- Long Mei Chou, Most Honored Elder of Mimas

For a hundred years, Long Mei Chou served in the criminal underworld in China—one of the earliest of the proto-splicers, born and raised to serve the crime lords. Nothing changed after the Fall, only her employers. She fell in with the Fa Jing cartel, and followed with Harmonious Anarchy when they split off. Her knowledge and skills are legend on Mimas, as are her appetites. A tired old woman, her body is artificially spry enough to still enjoy a few pleasures of the flesh, but most of the joy of life is beyond her. She serves as an honored elder of the Mimas community, and identifies potential threats and arranges for them to cease before they become threatening. The rest of the time, she knits. This hobby has earned her a small measure of fame beyond Mimas thanks to a series of hilarious and dirty knitting instructional videos, including the notorious “Bound to Knit” session, which is still restricted for viewing to mature egos over 90 years of age in the Jovian Republic.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	14	20	13	21	16	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Art: Knitting 48, Deception (Bluffing) 56, Exotic Melee Weapon (Knitting Needle) 25, Infiltration 34, Interests: Thread Manufacture 33, Interests: Yarn 65, Kinesics (Superkinesics) 76, Language: Native Cantonese 83, Language: Mandarin 76, Language: English 42, Networking: Autonomists (Knitting Circle) 45, Networking: Criminals 66, Palming (Knitting Needle) 45, Perception 50, Profession: Little Old Lady 60, Protocol 31

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Echolocation, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Vision, Microscopic Vision

Disadvantages: Aged, Immortality Blues

Using Long Mei Chou

Long Mei Chou is the ultimate dirty old woman. Her mastery of superkinesics (see entry 243) just means she can put it to better use than most. As an NPC, Long Mei Chou is as neutral and connected among the locals as the PCs are willing to encounter; if they manage to impress or entertain her then they’ve found a powerful ally that can give them the run of Mimas—or even the old dirt on Fa Jing.

Seed

Long Mei Chou has a single surviving clone-daughter, Wen Chou. The PCs are given a package to deliver to her...wherever she is. The package contains a handknit scarf with hidden nanoscale barbs built into the yarn— whoever puts it on will suffer a particularly painful and possibly fatal amount of damage if they attempt to remove it. At the bottom of the box is a note saying that Long Mei Chou is disappointed Wen Chou never calls or writes.

ENTRY 245: Cancer Dreams

“Transhumanity is the cancer.”

- Blaim, exsurgent apologist

Cancer remains a risk for biomorphs—radiation, toxic chemicals, certain diseases, and for flats age and genetic predisposition mean cancer will continue to be a threat for some time, though genehackers continue to work on improved anticancer traits. Yet even a splicer who stays away from cancer causing agents may still in time develop cancerous cells, and even deadly tumors. Medical scientists continue to research the issue point to a variety of possible influences that account for these cases, from exposure to a basilisk hack to micronutrient deficiency leading to improper cell development.

Yet the most popular theory is simply mental stress. The physiological response to prolonged psychological pressure. Because of this, contemporary cancer treatment therapies typically attempt a holistic intervention, addressing not just the specific instance of the disease but the lifestyle that may contribute to its development. Of course, for the masses in scum barges, more effort is put onto the development of treatments that allow biomorphs to live with cancer rather than take the time and expenditure of resources to try and cure it when the patient is just going to be pushed back out into the toxic environment of the scumbarge.

Mechanics

Rather than develop a derangement, a gamemaster may chose for a biomorph who accumulates sufficient mental stress to develop a mild form of cancer. Untreated, this has the potential to spread and lead to major health issues, though once detected most forms of cancer may be healed with a day or two in the healing vat. As with a derangement, any form of cancer will subject the player character to certain involuntary lifestyle changes: pain, nausea, disorientation, personality changes, migraines, lack of energy, etc.

Using Cancer Dreams

Like death, cancer is a boogeyman that can generate strong emotions at the table when it is brought up. Yet in Eclipse Phase cancer and death have both lost something of their bite. While still dangers that PCs face, they are no longer the absolute terrors they once were, and the gamemaster can take advantage of this fact, playing cancer as everyday

and nothing to be concerned about...until transhuman science runs out of tricks to deal with it...

Seeds

- A recent spike in psychosomatic cancers that resist healing in the PCs habitat has sparked a medical investigation, and the PCs are asked to find connections between the patients as they are being treated. Investigation finds that all of the patients had dreams of getting cancer and may have been exposed to a basilisk hack six to eight months ago—and as they close in on the perpetrator, the PCs begin having cancer dreams of their own...
- Malleux, a local handcraft artist, is being treated for a small brain tumor caused by a faulty nanite infection, and as part of their holistic treatment the doctors want to address their stressors as well. The PCs are hired to befriend Malleux for a couple days and shake them out of their hidebound and negative life habits. Complicating the subject is an obsessive fan and Malleux’s agent, both determined to keep Malleux ill and depressed because the more they suffer, the better their art.

ENTRY 246: The Crypt

Any Firewall agent that's around long enough hears rumors about the Crypt. The secret, secure storage unit where archivists keep the most dangerous and important fragments of Firewall's ongoing struggle against exsurgent threats. Samples of exsurgent viruses, alien artifacts, a library of confiscated basilisk hacks...some scuttlebutts like to throw in rumors of "lost" technologies, a hidden Pandora Gate, a live TITAN, major religious artifacts from Earth, a zoo of psi-capable transhumans and animals (and one really pissed-off toaster), the only known dracomorph, proof that ghosts exist, the cryogenic chamber hold Adam and Lucy the back-hacked common genetic ancestors of all transhumanity... Legends grow in the telling; some of the archivist queue even spreads them deliberately.

The truth is a little more colloquial: yes, Firewall does contain a secret secure storage facility, codenamed Crypt, which is managed by a queue of archivists. However, most of the material is rather mundane: secure backups of critical files, and a scattering of artifacts, cell samples, exsurgent virus cultures, etc. Nor is there any one single hidden facility hiding beneath a lavafall in the depths of Mars or only accessible if you put in the "Zero Code" on a Pandora Gate (what does happen if you do that is still classified for the next hundred and fifty years, but the last time it almost wiped out Extropia). Instead, the Crypt is maintained pretty much wherever the archivists can find the space, often with secure storage facilities being fitted into the unused spaces between walls and exterior bulkheads in habitats. The archivists prefer a modular honeycomb setup of self-secured cells with a hexagonal cross-section that can be easily stacked and magnetically bond together.

The main security device for such systems is to remain hidden, but each cell also typically contains a shaped charge sufficient to destroy the contents if anyone tries to tamper with them or open one without giving the right answers (selected by a philosophical expert system with several "trap questions"). Archivists also tend to come up with their own security systems, preferring small modular systems like overlapping sensor nets tied to particle beam bolters, spiders that "spin" webs of nanowire in dead spaces, and "radiation leak" false alarms coupled with low-level microwave agonizers to discourage unauthorized personnel.

The downside of this distributed approach is that sometimes a given Crypt is discovered and needs to be relocated quickly and quietly, or one or more items might need to be recovered either because it was stolen or escaped. In these circumstances, archivists are generally given the authority and resources to impress any local Firewall personnel or regular stringers to help them recover the missing material or help see to its safe transfer.

The Crypt system does include a few "megacells" which are essentially prisons for certain transhumans who are too important to destroy but cannot be trusted with their freedom. Such sites are usually located at brinker outposts or within existing prison habitats as special administrative solitary blocks. The most hazardous individuals are restrained (and sedated) at secure private medical facilities, but the cost of such incarceration generally prevents Firewall from overindulging in that option.

ENTRY 247: Melikov's Expedition

Some say the TITANs left, fled to another solar system or retreated through one of the Pandora Gates, or else went into hiding on some distant lump of spacerock or in some unfathomable cavern on Mars. Transhumanity, broken, bleeding, and exhausted from war and the rapid exodus from Earth, was in no shape to pursue en masse. Yet there was one person that understood that transhumanity would never be safe so long as the TITANs existed, and resolved to hunt them. So in the dying days of AF 1, and funded by the alliance of interests that was or would become Firewall, Petra Melikov set off to find where the TITANs had gone in three vessels: the battle cruiser Yama King, the frigate One Bad Mother, and the medical frigate Bama Cruise, with a total expedition strength of 68 transhumans. Melikov's Expedition has not been heard from since.

Using Melikov's Expedition

Great expeditions that vanish into the unknown are generally good for two purposes: the surprise return (which would probably herald a collective "Oh shit!" moment, since it means either Melikov succeeded and/or they're being chased by an exsurgent fleet), or the rescue mission, where the PCs are sent off to go find out what happened to them. Firewall is like to send out periodic feelers along Melikov's suggested routes and look into any evidence of her expedition and crew. This is an excellent setup for a follow-the-clues space jaunt in the farthest, strangest, most dangerous parts of the solar system—and possibly beyond. Of course, there's no guarantee that Melikov succeeded, meaning her ship might be a derelict and the crew dead from some critical damage or an encounter with an exsurgent booby-trap left by the TITANs in their wake, but either way returning with proof of the expedition's demise—or better yet, the captain's log and blackbox—would be a considerable coup that would raise the PC's reps considerably.

Starting Points

- The Zone, Mars: Firewall's surviving records indicate that Melikov was in one of the last waves of ground troops that penetrated the Zone before the quarantine, and described an astrophysics center where she discovered a set of coordinates. These were kept secret, but are believed to have been the basis for the first leg of Melikov's journey.
- Ursus Gammon, Neptune Trojans: This small observation post was the last station to catch sight

of Melikov's Expedition, and still contains the original logs. Review of these files shows that the expedition stopped off at one of the centaurs (dwarf planets).

- Plexus (exoplanet): Three months ago, an expedition through the Martian Gate stumbled across a campsite in the icy polar regions of a habitable planet, including several pounds of what appear to be human feces in a covered latrine pit. The campsite is on a ridge overlooking a glacier with what appears to be an alien city under a kilometer of ice. Among the scraps discovered at the campsite is a scrap of synthetic cloth that matches the uniforms used on One Bad Mother.

ENTRY 248: Jules Khyyan

“It was a temple carved into the rock, like some lost fragment of a doomed world cast into the void. Stiglitz and I went out on the tether for a spacewalk. There were six chambers...not Earth construction, because each room was a dodecahedron, supported by cross-bracing pillars. There were friezes on the wall with such detail and color, and a mosaic of broken glass that glowed with a soft blue light...I think it spells something...” - Miners stumble across “Serreno No. 3”

It is easy for a reasonably competent transhuman to lose themselves in the Vulcanoids. No habitat or political body polices all those rocks, and with a well-equipped small ship a transhuman can live out there for months or maybe a year moving from rock to rock, picking out whatever’s easy to get at, never seeing another transhuman until they come back to port to offload their haul, replace the filters, and take on fuel and air. Many of them are loners, the kind of transhumans that would call themselves brinkers if they didn’t hate the label. Self-sufficient, quiet types that can go strange in their hermitages. Yet most of them keep the radio on to the local bands, to listen in on the chatter and keep an ear out for the tell-tale SOS signals—some to be ready to help, others to scavenge what they can. From these transmissions they know each other by name and callsign: Cap’n Meergan, Black Vanna, Jan-nick-Jan, the Cyberclops...and the seldom heard poetry of Jules Khyyan.

Few have met Khyyan, even among the Vulcanoids miners he’s a recluse, seldom socializing, patently ignoring every hypercorp bugging him for mineral surveys. He trades gold and platinum, but mining is his craft and art. Some estimate he has dug as many as a dozen tombs, temples, houses, and other dwellings out of the asteroids there...digging in to the rock with his tools, spending months finishing off things by hand, with pick and chisel, alone in the dark, signing each one with a poem.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	10	15	13	10	14	15	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Architecture 35, Art: Poetry 55, Art: Sculpture 55, Deception 35, Hardware: Electronics 45, Impersonation 45, Infosec 36, Interests: Exomining 65, Interfacing 52, Language: Native Arabic 85, Language: English 55, Networking: Autonomists 50, Perception 50, Profession: Miner 50, Programming 40

Disadvantages: Mental Derangement (Obsession with art), Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Jules Khyyan

There are people that will pay to find a reclusive poet/sculptor. His work need not be brilliant, for it is detailed and extensive; in a society that values the man-hours that went into a creation more than the end product, Khyyan has unknowingly gained a sizable following in the Planetary Consortium, with many calling him one of space’s native artists. So far, only the sheer logistics of actually moving one of his installations has kept museums and collectors from dragging them out of their existing orbits—not that a sufficiently obsessive and connected effort might not be launched. Still, there remains a question of how many such installations exist, where they are, and perhaps most importantly why Khyyan creates his art...all questions and attention that the reclusive AGI has diligently run from.

ENTRY 249: Wraith

Ghost morphs were a massive leap forward in transhuman morphs built for scouting and human intelligence work, but their design is unmaximized, with several optional upgrades not incorporated due to concerns of cost, and philosophically favors passive forms of stealth instead of active anti-stealth technologies. Given these limitations, some of the designers of the original Ghost morph continued to tinker and refine one of their more ambitious prototypes—the Wraith.

Wraith morphs are closer to Remade than Ghosts, their systems tweaked and tuned for maximum speed, strength, reflexes, and durability, with pre-programmed muscle memory and specially enlarged portions of the brain devoted to sensory processing which is fully integrated with the Wraith morph's enhanced senses. However, where the average Ghost morph relies on some form of chameleon skin implant, Wraiths have an integral stealth system—their normal skin replaced by a layered weave of nanoscopic plastic beads and piezoelectric crystals and radar-absorbent materials. When in passive Stealth Mode, the Wraith's plastic skin acts as a textured display screen, either left blank or projecting anything from a conventional human appearance to a moving image. This can be used to quickly and easily change the Wraith's appearance, though on close inspection the transhuman will be distinctly off-putting, since they wear a high-resolution digital video image of a face on top of their actual features. In active mode, the implant goes black as implant begins to absorb many forms of electromagnetic radiation and dampening the user's heat signature; in this mode the Wraith becomes much more difficult to be seen, but they can only sustain this mode for a few moments before rising internal temperatures can cause serious internal damage.

Both because of their high cost and low demand, Wraith morphs remain rare.

Wraith Stats

Wraiths are biomorphs.

Enhancements: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Circadian Regulation Cortical Stack, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Vision, Grip Pads, Stealth

Mode, Temperature Tolerance

Aptitude Maximum: 35

Durability: 45

Wound Threshold: 9

Advantages: +5 COO, +10 REF, +10 SOM, +5 WIL, +5 to one aptitude of the player's choice, +10 Infiltration skill (cumulative with Stealth Mode implant)

Disadvantages: Uncanny Valley

CP Cost: 90

Credit Cost: Expensive (minimum 90,000)

Stealth Mode: This implant is an upgraded version of Chameleon Skin that combines elements of Bioweave Armor and Vacuum Sealing. In passive mode, it functions as an integrated version of Smart Vac Clothing (Eclipse Phase 325), and the display of the character's skin can be consciously controlled and programmed, up to and including displaying segments of live video or animation. The character may also switch to active mode as a Quick Action. In active mode, the skin goes black, the vacuum seal engages, and shifts to actively counter and absorb incoming electromagnetic radiation within certain ranges; other characters take a -30 penalty to perceive the character using sight (even Enhanced Vision and Lidar), sound (including Echolocation), smell, radar, or t-rays. However, without the ability to vent stored energy the character heats up quickly, and the active stealth mode can only be safely maintained for 5 minutes; less in a hot environment. After that, the character suffers 10 points of damage every minute from the extreme heat. If the character is in an extremely cold environment, the extreme temperatures will offset each other and active mode can be used indefinitely (or as long as your air lasts), but at the expense of the suit not working properly: other characters take only a -10 penalty to perceive the character. The Stealth Mode implant is incompatible with Bioweave Armor, Carapace Armor, Chameleon Skin, or Vacuum Sealing. [Expensive]

ENTRY 250: Statistical Tradecraft

In the spy game, human intelligence is almost dead. HUMINT is slow, subjective, inefficient, and unreliable. All major intelligence communities, militaries, and hypercorps rely on technical intelligence-gathering, focusing on intercepting and decoding signals, analyzing massive Mesh-based databases of statistics and metadata to identify trends, key phrases, patterns, and other vital information, often branching out into obscure keyword-coded super-specialized subdisciplines looking at electronic signatures, time stamps, image analysis, and other minutiae. Yet spy organizations have also grown decentralized from the bloated bureaucracies of the past, now more closely resembling the cell-like networks of resistance movements and linked peer-to-peer networks; numbercrunching nerds devoted to their own arts, processing Big Data, and passing it on to the next group for analysis and discussion.

Yet there is still work to be done, clandestine and public. Agents that represent the spy orgs, their eyes and ears and tongues and voices in the narrow hallways of the habitats and on the vast reaches of Mars and Luna, Titan and Europa. Yet if HUMINT is dead, it still has its analogues and parallels in new forms of tradecraft: transhuman intelligence (TRANSINT), posthuman intelligence (POSTINT), and extraterrestrial intelligence derived from the Factors (XINT), each of which deals with entities so far beyond the statistical models that interpreting their raw data is fraught with difficulties and misunderstandings. When the signal-to-noise ratio is too high, the results must be independently confirmed by agents in the field—through cultivating relationships, espionage, and even interrogation. These field operations are categorized as a form of statistical tradecraft, seeking to confirm or deny the findings of analysts because the data is too wonky for them to extract reliable information.

Counterintelligence also has its place in statistical tradecraft: manipulating the numbers to hide correlations in masses of data. These operations seek to throw off rival organizations' analyses and predictions by manufacturing artificial extreme data points which distort their opponents' projections and defeat their models, protecting their own secrets at the same time. Sometimes that requires a well-placed murder, but most of the time it involves subtle manipulation to increase the average height of a group of morphs, or the formation and promulgation of bizarre organizations that make use of

known key words and search terms to help throw search analysis off. A tricky business where the ultimate results are hard to judge, but the effectiveness is always quantifiable.

Using Statistical Tradecraft

It's hard to be James Bond in the panopticon. While great cinema, as files become declassified the ultimate effectiveness of a lot of Cold War-era tradecraft is debatable, and the shift to more reliable and quantifiable results in technical intelligence-gathering becomes understandable. That said, there is a place for Jason Bourne in Eclipse Phase but you may be stuck with the question of how to seduce a posthuman and get them to pillow-talk, social engineer your way into a brinker outpost, or figure out how exactly to get a Factor inebriated. Statistical tradecraft means that the PCs, if they want to be useful parts of the intelligence-gathering apparatus, need to be prepared to go to the weirdest places and interact with the weirdest people, because that's where the mathematical models break down.

ENTRY 251: Achamoth

“How much for you and your sister?”

- Achamoth on the prowl

Once upon a time, Achamoth was a human being—with a gender, a spouse, a life.

Something went wrong. The details are fuzzy, green-tinged slices of memory that Achamoth always remembers slightly differently. Sometimes it acts transhuman, trying to blend in with the crowd, even interacting with people. Sometimes it forgets it isn't transhuman, and doesn't remember again until the screaming starts again. Even by exsurgent standards, Achamoth is disturbed, and almost completely uncontrollable except for a few ingrained trigger scents tied to primal states (cardamom: lust, garlic: rage, cinnamon: sleep, cumin: hunger).

Achamoth is an exsurgent prototype. Cosmetically transhuman from the outside, within that leathery, carapace-like exoskeletal shell oozes something closer to an undifferentiated slime colony, with a brain like Christmas-tree lights strung out throughout its two-meters-a-bit frame. Because Achamoth's version of the exsurgent virus appears to be damaged or dormant, Firewall has not yet brought them in, but keeps track of the exsurgent prototype so that it can lead them to other exsurgent cells—even cleaning up after a few of its disastrous attempts to “blend in” with transhumanity.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	16	15	15	17	12	18	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	-	-	-	70	14	95

Morph: Splicer (Exsurgent Prototype)

Skills: Academics: Virology 65, Exotic Ranged Attack (spit) 48, Free Fall (Microgravity) 56, Infiltration (Blending In) 50, Interests: TITANs 75, Language: Native English 85, Language: Cantonese 70, Language: Mandarin 70, Language: Japanese 55, Networking: Exsurgent Cells 33, Networking: Firewall 25, Perception (Visual) 70, Persuasion (Negotiation) 67, Profession: Virologist 40, Unarmed Combat 45

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Emotional Dampers, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Vision, Nanoscopic Vision, Oxygen Reserve, Vacuum Sealing

Notes: Achamoth is filled with an amorphous green fluid in place of most of its internal organs, giving it inhuman durability. It can regurgitate this material as a Spit Attack (area effect) Toxin (Application: D, O; Onset Time: 1 Action Turn, Duration: 5 Action Turns, Effect: $1d10 \div 2$ (round up) DV per Action Turn).

Using Achamoth

Gamemasters should decide on their own whether Achamoth is truly the damaged, dangerous, and pathetic entity it appears to be, or whether the inhuman intelligence within that leathery shell is playing Firewall and the exsurgent cell network as it pursues its own goals—transformation back into human, for example, or revenge against the TITANs, or maybe a mass exsurgent infection to turn an entire habitat into creatures like itself. In any event, interacting with Achamoth will probably bring its Firewall “handlers”—an autonomous clique which is willing to kill other Firewall agents to preserve the secret of their particular asset.

Seed

Trouble in paradise: a particularly gruesome murder of People's Representative Lean Brundage and her wife Scarletta on the vacation-habitat of New Hawai'i in orbit around Mercury has triggered all sorts of alarms in the Firewall search engines, and led to them now being aware of Achamoth and the autonomous group watching and directing it. Believing that one or more members of that group have begun using Achamoth as their personal assassin, the PCs are hired to investigate the scene in New Hawai'i—and if possible, eliminate Achamoth and its rogue handler with extreme prejudice (“Fired. Out of an airlock. In the general direction of the sun.”)

ENTRY 252: Bioconservative Ethics

“Finally we have the technologies to build a utopia, but almost a third of the human population is at or below the Sustainable Energy Consumption Index. Millions of egos reside in digital limbo, cut off from the human experience, because of the selfish desires of others, who want nothing more than to force more junk into their bodies, or to change morphs at their whim, rather than devote the time and resources to alleviating the suffering of infomorphs. They cast aside their humanity in favor of becoming Other, and so they should be treated—and when at last their systems break down, and they are too far gone to look back, we who preserved our forms will still be here.”

August Jo Vern, Jovian Republic pundit

“There is nothing wrong with you. You are perfect just the way you are. There is no one like you. You are unique and special. Are your friends really your friends if they ask you to change that? Don’t give in to peer pressure. Stand up for yourself. Say no to augmentation.”

Kyle Mantra, Vo Nguyen spokesperson

“Some believe we are created; I choose to believe we evolved. There is nothing sacred in our forms—only millions of years of practical refinement. Why throw that away for a process or piece of technology that has only been tested for a few years? The governments on Mars won’t let hypercorps sell landspeeders without years of testing; but genetic enhancements are approved in as little as six months. Do you really think they have worked out the bugs in six months?”

Amana Milos, Anarchist bioconservative

“Treat others as you want to be treated. We all live in different systems, but that does not mean they have the right to tell us how to live our lives, any more than we have the right to tell them to live theirs. We do not try to rip the implants out of their flesh, or force them back from their robotic shells; do not let them tell you what to do with your own body and mind.”

Ja Ja Jones, mother of six plus one

Using Bioconservative Ethics

People can justify any set of beliefs, and they do. In Eclipse Phase it’s very easy to paint the bioconservatives as the strawmen of the setting, in no small part because their positions and beliefs are presented through the lens of the

people that fundamentally disagree with them. That doesn’t mean that all of their beliefs are stupid or that none of them can muster up arguments (rational and otherwise) to support them; it is entirely possible for there to be disagreements where both sides have valid points, and when those arguments hit the table they can lead to some very rich roleplaying possibilities. That does not mean that players or gamemasters should write lengthy tracts about various bioconservative vs. augmentation arguments and read them aloud at the table. Instead, sit down and really think about the subject, make your best arguments, and try to work them in when things make sense to do so. Intelligent NPCs that can justify their beliefs are generally more interesting than caricatures spouting about the divine purity of the human form.

ENTRY 253: Recess

“Youth, on your schedule, on your terms.”

- Recess viral advertising campaign

Many transhumans throughout history have tried to figuratively recapture or relive their youths; only now in the time of pods and resleeving can this actually be accomplished. Rejuvenation, resleeving into a younger cloned body, even a neotenic morph are available for those transhumans with the pull or the credits to feel young again—the supple body, the boundless energy, the smooth skin and fresh eyes. For those that cannot afford to be a child full-time of course, there is always Recess.

Situated on Gerlach, Recess is a collaborative role-playing environment where customers take command of neotenic morphs adapted as pods, puppet socking their charges and living vicariously through various scenarios, from a night with parents to a day at school. The most popular scenario is a literal infinite recess on a multi-microgravity level playground-city, where there are no “adult” morphs around, and only employees (either real neotenic or other puppeteers) to keep the peace and help make friends, leading activities like rival playtime gangs.

Specialist scenarios catering to more rarified tastes are also available, reproducing elements of childhood punishment and embarrassment, sexual encounters, and even an annual and quite brutal “child soldier” re-enactment which has appalled many and yet been lauded for accurately representing the physical and psychological trauma, thus discouraging its proliferation. Many habitats aware of these less-savory elements of Recess’ business have seen fit to limit their inhabitant’s access, but the permissive administration of Gerlach allows the business to continue so long as all egos enter into the process with full consent.

Using Recess

Recess is basically a good locale for letting PCs interact with neotenic and as neotenic, either by resleeving or puppeteering one of the available neotenic pods...and there is considerable reason to do so. Recess’ clients include hypermedia executives to burnt-out petal abusers, politicians with unpopular kinks and bored house-husbands, all eager to shed their old skins and experience life as children again. The distinction of neotenic is that while they may look like children, they are not—and nowhere is that quite so obvious as when a group of mature egos is piloting a group of childlike bodies in a

three-story microgravity playground with no obvious supervision. Even outside of the “special scenarios,” violence (even sexual violence) is a possibility, and we’re not talking about Jhassa stealing Corban’s crayons... As always, the gamemaster should decide how visceral and gritty they want to play this at their own table; adults in the bodies of children can get as dark as an episode of CSI: Special Victims Unit, or be a relatively light frolic where people really do just act like kids, complete with tantrums and poor bladder control.

Seed

A special “group enrollment” into the child soldier annual event has the management staff of Recess worried. The PCs are quietly approached and offered free enrollment passes (valued at up to 10,000 credits each) if they can track back the client. Doing so leads to a brinker community on the dark side of the Moon— who is using the virtual child soldier simulation to help train real child soldiers. If the PCs can obtain hard evidence (or sufficient testimony), then Recess will cancel the event and alert the lunar authorities.

ENTRY 254: The Posthuman League

Before the Fall. Human technology first made the transition to exhuman status feasible long before it became widely available. Those first exhumans pushed the technology of their day to its limits, and they were exceptional individuals—resourceful, driven, and often brilliant; many of the technologies involved they had to refine or invent on their own, and they experimented on themselves, all to realize needs and modes of existence that could not be met by the traditional human form. These first would-be exhumans were ostracized by the public, hounded by governments for their technologies and what they had done to obtain their transformations.

So they went underground. Consolidated into networks. Developed their own philosophies and ways of interacting with each other. A society of sorts. The name attached to them was “The Posthuman League”—and when the governments closed in, when they drew first blood, when the first proto-exhuman died on an operating table during a raid...they vanished. Into the night, toward the stars.

The first posthumans. Maybe the first brinkers. Silent, uncommunicative, never tracked, never traced, never found. They’ve been out there in the darkness for longer than most of transhumanity, and who knows what lessons they’ve learned, how they have developed their technologies in isolation. Or maybe they’re all dead, their society torn apart by internal pressures, their primitive morphs unsustainable over the long term. Maybe the TITANS got them. No one can answer the question: what happened to the Posthuman League?

Using the Posthuman League

Another mystery for the Eclipse Phase setting, the legend of the Posthuman League is more romantic than the facts. The earliest “exhumans” comprised a variety of inventive but relatively low-tech morphs, back when egocasting was only possible with a room full of equipment that cost something on the order of the gross national product of a mid-sized state. In their day they were clever, resourceful, and unique, but on their own, in isolation, their technologies are unlikely to keep pace with contemporary tech levels in Eclipse Phase—hell, a lot of it might not even be compatible. The archaic retrotech morphs of the Posthuman League, combined with their antiquated sense of themselves is part of the appeal. These were explorers, some of the first explorers, diving headfirst into embracing new sensoriums, new bodies, and new ways of being.

Some likely died. Others are probably insane. The rest, if they survived...what stories they have to tell, if anyone still gives a damn to listen. History has passed them by, should they ever return, and they’re not likely to react well to that. Gamemasters can have the PCs search for the Posthuman League, or maybe just run across them somewhere in outer space. It’s first contact with their past, the culture shock of explaining to these people what has happened in their absence, and how thoroughly forgotten and passed-by they have become. Some may return with the PCs; others might prefer exile. A very few might be in dire need of some materials to sustain their degrading forms, and aren’t above raiding habitats to get it, leaving the PCs to stop them...if they can.

ENTRY 255: Breaklight

The Mesh and its predecessors have long been designed by individuals that primarily lived outside it, and the interfaces and protocols that define it were made, consciously or not and with rare exception, to service the bipedal descendents of plains apes. It is only with the advent of AGI that the Mesh has begun to have its own native generation of designers, intelligences that have grown up inside the network and whom have very different ideas on how and why to design and extend the Mesh for their own use and benefit.

Breaklight is an up-and-coming Mesh architect. They received their first real attention for a series of limited-protocol Mesh network integration experiments, which showed that properly designed the introduction of an information-sharing network into animal environment can be used to improve social discourse, food-gathering efficiency, coordinated mating, and predator warning behavior; the fundamental technology has been licensed by several hypercorps into the successful SmartHerd system and its various clones—resulting in sometimes disconcerting phenomenon.

Still moderately famous for the SmartHerd system, Breaklight considers that early work something of a fascinating abomination for the unintended effects it has had on groups of animals when they are provided a faster and more efficient system of information customized to their use, most notably the “cow flocking” behavior that groups of transbovines have exhibited when networked together, and the eerily silent songbirds who have developed entirely Mesh-based systems of electronic music composition to communicate and advertise for prospective mates. These adaptations haunt

Breaklight...and various groups interested in the infomorph’s research are interested in Breaklight as well.

Breaklight’s latest efforts have been on non-Euclidean design interfaces, allowing users to perceive hyperbolic spaces in an analogue of visual data, which many transhumans like to describe along the lines of “Imagine staring at something straight on and your peripheral vision extends to the back of your head.” More of an effort in aesthetics and technical communication than a scientific exercise, Breaklight has stated that they hope the technique will help users process the vastly greater amounts of data available on the Mesh.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	15	12	5	8	5	18	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Computer History 60, Academics: Computer Science 50, Academics: Mathematics 50, Art: Architecture 70, Infosec 55, Interests: Cow Flocking 40, Interests: Mesh Desgin 45, Interests: Mesh Legends 35, Interests: Transhuman Art 25, Interfacing 55, Investigation (Mesh Search) 40, Language: Native Russian 85, Language: English 60, Language: Urdu 50, Networking: Scientists 35, Profession: Mesh Designer 65, Profession: Teacher 40, Programming 65, Research 40

Traits: Math Wiz, Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Breaklight

An AGI haunted by their past “success,” Breaklight is a character who approaches exhuman in their normal thinking processes—a native creature of the Mesh, who finds the need to “wrap and map” the Mesh to real space a difficult concept at times—but who desperately yearns to understand humans. Curious, somewhat naïve and with a basic failure to intuitively grasp real-world spatial relationships, Breaklight is probably best interacted with in the Mesh itself. Any number of groups are interested in working with Breaklight, from microcorps working on hive minds for sheep to non-Euclidean charity art events to raise money for Ruster scholarships on Mars, but getting a hold of Breaklight can be a bit of a hassle, both for the AGI’s aloofness and the protectiveness of their current employers...which might be where the PCs come in.

ENTRY 256: Urvinoids

Outside of the Factors, the most intelligent extraterrestrial species that transhumanity has yet come across are the Urvinoids (so named by Charles Babbage Urvine) of Piazza III, accessible through the Vulcanoid Gate. However, it is a rather different and unexpected sort of intelligence, since the Urvinoids are half-kiloton slug-like entities which quite literally think with their stomachs.

Exobiologists who have dissected dead Urvinoids have discovered that the species has developed highly specialized types of nervous tissue analogues which are concentrated into two masses—one, which is roughly equivalent to what humans consider a brain, is rather primitive and handles the basics of optical processing, movement, pain response, mating instincts, and most non-digestive autonomous and voluntary action; higher cognition is not on the menu. The Urvinoid digestive system on the other hand is a highly complicated collection of specialized glands, stomachs, bladders, pockets of captured digestive symbiotic bacteria, and less identifiable organs, all interconnected by mucous-lined interconnected muscular intestines lined with sensor cells and neural fibers to a series of 8-10 neural masses, each of which is twice the size of the Urvinoids' "brain."

As far as anyone can make out, the Urvinoid digestive system is a highly intelligent hive mind whose sole interest and purpose is to figure out how to digest whatever the Urvinoid eats, which is anything—including many materials like rocks, scrap metal, synthmorphs, and atomic batteries which are not normally considered edible. Proof of the Urvinoids' internal intelligence occurred when said atomic battery was recognized as a possibly-digestible-but-definitely-bad-idea-to-do-so item and quickly ejected, which was a very unexpected and slightly traumatic experience for the Urvinoid in question, as their digestive processes are usually so very long and efficient that waste disposal is typically a minimal affair. Researchers from the university on Titan at Piazza II have been experimenting with feeding Urvinoids messages in hopes of establishing relations with their digestive hiveminds, but have not reported any success.

Seeds

Charles Babbage Urvine is convinced that the Urvinoids once had a great civilization, and even dealt with the Factors, and that proof lies deep within their primordial swamps, fungus forests, and slime pits of Piazza II.

However, Charles Babbage Urvine is also a certified loon that thinks drinking Urvinoid urine will make him immortal and who keeps a small (5 kg) Urvinoidling on a leash with him at all times. Still, his cred is good and there's plenty of rep to be had from exploring an exoplanet if the PCs can put up with him for a few weeks.

The Urvinoids, despite being the largest and most efficient eaters on their planet, are something of an endangered species—the population in the wild is estimated to be no more than 5,000, and has fallen quite a bit due to interaction with transhumans. However, there lies an interesting bit: most Urvinoids have learned that eating transhumans is not a good thing, even if they can digest them, and the bulk of the population has learned to quickly expel any transhumans or parts of transhumans that they ingest. However, one 2-kiloton monster Urvinoid has not learned its lesson, and actively seems to be hunting gatecrashers. The PCs are offered a 50,000 credit reward for its live capture, so that the researchers can figure out why.

ENTRY 257: The Black Spot

Rep systems are more than networks of mutual cooperation where friends upvote each other so that they can all enjoy the benefits of the one with the highest reputation. Reputation systems are also societies and family-substitutes in their own way, with their own etiquette and relationships. They are designed to help members get what they need, but they are not designed to help members get what they want. This is a distinction that many egos sometimes fail to grasp, and so many a greedy, self-centered, individual has been perplexed at how low their reputation score is, and why they cannot seem to improve it when others seem to get nice things...and there are the truly give-nothing-back types who seek to game the system to their own advantage and the detriment of others. This type of regressive behavior is usually recognized quite quickly by members of the network that know the signs, and if the several warnings and helpful and frank advice don't work to curb the individual's network-destructive ways, then the individual's account is typically blackmarked, and the individual is effectively ostracized from the rep system. Whatever their score was before, whatever deeds they had done to earn any reputation, they are now considered *persona non grata*, often deliberately ignored and suffering social repercussions beyond the immediate extent of their network—in a small enough habitat dominated by a particular rep system, a morph might even starve to death if they become blackmarked. In some rep systems, network members even lose rep if they are known to help someone whom the network has blackmarked.

Yet being blackmarked is not the end. Rep systems are designed for the promotion of charitable and equitable giving between all members, even those with black marks on their record. So it is that most rep systems also include the Black Spot, a special designation among the blackmarked that signals out an individual who has the potential to learn and become a useful and contributing member of the network. Transhumans that help intercede on behalf of an individual with the Black Spot and set them on the course to participating fully with the rep system typically receive generous boosts in rep in return. In the war of ideology, the Black Spots represent those converts that the rep systems are most wanting to make, the regressives and atavists whose greed caused so much turmoil in traditional socio-economic systems, and if they can bring these prodigal transhumans back into the fold,

then the members of the network generally consider it well worth the time and expenditure of resources. One the individual with the Black Spot has managed to work off their black mark through show of recalcitrance, good faith, and works, the Black Spot passes on to some other blackmarked member.

Mechanics

The Black Spot is an optional addendum to the rep rules, generally reserved either for storytelling opportunities or when a player character has basically used, abused, and burned out most of their rep in one or more systems. Rather than just kick the character out of the network entirely, the rep system algorithms or admins decide to mark the character out for corrective action. For a PC, this means various characters will arrive in their life attempting to guide them back to the path of being a contributing member of the rep system—often a matter of a good deal of selfless work, although sometimes one big act will earn a lot of forgiveness. The exact details are up to the gamemaster, but should generally tailor them to the system in question. An r-rep Black Spot, for example, will earn the character several offers to assist in scientific research and endeavors for the good of the Research Network Associates, under the guidance of a senior researcher. Guanxi Black Spots are given the opportunity to prove their worth and trust in a series of criminal activities. @-rep Black Spots generally invite the character to give classes on whatever their particular skillset is. In each case, the Black Spot character is not given a blank slate, nor is their rep restored or black mark removed—they are simply given the opportunity, if they can rise to the occasion, to dig themselves out of the negative rep hole they've dug themselves, and if they prove willing they will receive help and guidance from individual network members (who themselves earn rep by helping the Black Spot character) along the way.

ENTRY 257: The Black Spot

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ENTRY 258: Gresham

He was a good agent. Everyone agreed on that, right up to the end. It was just the waiting that got to him. Long stake-outs are a mental and physical drag on agents in the field, a combination of constant attention, physical inactivity, and sheer mental boredom that drives most to drink or drugs. Gresham started eating his own arms.

So, it was medical retirement, with a decent i-rep score in place of a pension and weekly trips to the pharmacist and the therapist to try and control his condition. He likes to tell himself that he doesn't miss the fieldwork or the officework, and has fun propping up the bar, drinking Ink Washes (vodka, cranberry juice, and black sambuca), and playing hidethe-tentacle with any sweet young biomorph drunk or feeling explorative enough. But he never turns down an offer of work without due consideration...

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	15	17	16	19	16	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Octomorph

Skills: Academics: Malacology 40, Academics: Political Science 30, Academics: Psychology 30, Art: Ink Printing 33, Climbing 44, Deception (Mimicry) 56, Exotic Ranged Weapon (Ink Attack) 44, Fray 50, Freerunning (Microgravity) 45, Infiltration 40, Infosec 42, Interests: Existential Threats 45, Interests: Intelligence Organizations 45, Interests: Uplift Disorders 45, Interfacing 45, Intimidation 25, Investigation 44, Kinesics 44, Language: Native English 86, Language Japanese 40, Language Hindi 40, Networking: Autonomists 55, Networking: Criminal 35, Networking: Hypercorps 15, Networking: Media 20, Perception 55, Persuasion 35, Profession: Intelligence Gathering 66, Protocol 44, Research 44, Swimming 63, Unarmed Combat (Beak) 43

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Cortical Stack

Traits: Addiction (Pain medication and alcohol, minor), Mental Disorder (Autophagy)

Using Gresham

In his prime, Gresham was a force to be reckoned with. Now he's let himself go a little, his identity is known to the intelligence world, and none of the reputable intelligence agencies want anything to do with him. The safe thing for him to do would be to write a (highly sanitized) memoir,

lend his name to a ghost-written line of novels, and continue to drink until he was little more than a pickled tentacle in the bar.

Except this is Eclipse Phase and things are a little more complicated for retired spies. They may or may not fade away, but they don't just die after a couple of decades. Young intelligence agents have already run into the issue of crowding at the top, as the first generation of spies with cortical stacks are still running around, mentally and physically fit as they ever were, and with decades more skills than young and ambitious agents with everything to prove. If James Bond was in an immortal robot body and has a century or so of experience, why not continue to use him? And if you do end up retiring him, what the heck is he supposed to do for himself?

Gresham is more or less in the same boat: he has the skills and the knowledge and the contacts, but personal indiscretions have got him kicked out of the game. It's not a question of if he'll go freelance, it's when—and everyone knows it, except maybe Gresham.

ENTRY 259: Ageshift

Throughout its history, transhumanity has devoted a considerable portion of its resources to altering its cosmetic age, both through primitive augmentations and the artifice of dyes, unguents, powders, and other make-up to conceal or alter the signs of aging. Children painted their faces like whores and danced around in skimpy sexualized clothing to ape their twenty-something rockstars as pimps and fathers shaved their children down and dressed them to look younger for their prospective buyers; old men and women clung vicariously to the fragile illusion of youth and beauty while hard-faced young men grew out their scanty beards and endeavored to hide their cracking voices. With advances in technology, the procedures and artistry grew more refined if no less ugly and undignified: implants, liposuctions, tucks, injections, shapings...centuries of set dressing, only to leave the stark realities of aging to limp along behind it. It is only in contemporary times that lifespans have been prolonged and cosmetic augmentations perfected to the point that age truly is a cosmetic matter.

Yet society has not quite caught up to understanding this masque on an intuitive level; old habits lend a quantifiable psychological deference to age and pedantic streak toward youth, though the prevalence of neotenic in some habitats has eased that cognitive bias. More difficult for habitats and individuals to deal with are the ethics and morals of age—the restrictions on interacting with individual morphs based on their apparent physical age/maturity versus the mental maturity of their ego. In some habitats it is considered statutory rape if one party is a juvenile ego in a mature body (or vice versa); in others the complexity of the situation or the lack of regulation has led to a more open environment, though public scruples usually mean that abuse, if discovered, does not remain unpunished. But in an autonomist habitat where individual privacy and freedom are cherished, who is going to permit snooping just to make sure all the participants meet unwritten standards of mental and physical maturity?

Mechanics

Most of the cosmetic details of aging in biomorphs can be handled cosmetic augmentations—wrinkles, graying hair, loss of skin elasticity, sagging boobs and butts, etc. are all fairly standard procedures; extreme cases of age (liver spots, dowager's hump, etc.) require slightly more drastic correction, but in general looking like you're in your 30s when you're 120-year-old flat is not a tremendous

challenge. Most of the same or equivalent procedures are available for other biomorphs, though few need it yet except for certain uplifts. Neotenic with their peculiar design still suffer some of the cosmetic effects of aging, though not maturity, which somewhere down the line could result in some quite interesting sights.

Ageshift is an extensive cyberware augmentation for biomorphs that allows them to control their apparent age to a degree. The effect is cosmetic, but extremely evocative: dental sets shift and replace, smart forms in the face reconfigure to emulate the saggy hollowness of old age or the babyfat-puffiness of youth, long bones extend or shorten to add or subtract height, etc. Neotenic with ageshift can change their apparent appearance from about seven to mid-teens; flats, splicers, and the like can mimic from the late-teens to early decrepitude. The effect is purely cosmetic, but adds +20 to Disguise skill tests when playing someone of a different age. The cost of the augmentation is Moderate.

Using Ageshift

The accepted age boundaries of sexuality have been a moderately popular topic in science fiction since at least the 1960s; depending on the people you game with this might or might not be an acceptable topic to bring up to the table, though in general acting out the events of *Lolita* against a space opera setting is in poor taste. Still, the question of apparent age when dealing with NPCs can be an important one without dipping into the poisoned well of pederasty and *To Catch a Predator 3000*. Neotenic characters might appreciate a way to better blend in with more grown-up morphs, and “surprisingly spry” centenarians are fun NPCs to spring on the player characters every now and again; literally old enemies might show up in young, fit bodies that completely change the dynamic their relationship with the character—and synthmorphs might just shake their heads at the whole silly business.

ENTRY 260: Amberwald

“Step through the Gate and enter the world-forest...five-mile high pylons, supporting an artificial canopy that holds in the air for a massive greenhouse effect...mega-architecture on a scale never even attempted in our Solar system...and riches yours for the taking!

Volunteer your team to go gatecrashing today. Some restrictions may apply.”

- Amberwald Incorporated Commune advert

The first gatecrashers on Amberwald returned with a half-dozen unknown xenospecies covered in purple-blue chunks of amber, some the size of their heads. They spun a tale of a world grown under an artificial sky, where weird hydrocarbon-heavy saps leaked down from the pylons like slow-moving, inexorable rivers, capturing and asphyxiating all life in their path. With the proceeds of selling the material from their first mission, the gatecrashers incorporated as the Amberwald Incorporated Commune and began selling the right to gatecrash Amberwald to anyone that would sign up. Most gatecrashers who take them up on the idea aren't heard from again. Smart gatecrashers might ask why AIC, which keeps the Amberwald coordinates as a carefully-kept secret, hasn't been back itself.

The truth is, the founding members barely made it back last time, and far from the lush and exotic paradise that they make it out to be, Amberwald is a hellworld. The pylons exist, but the upper canopy is damaged and incomplete, so that the air quality can drop from Terra-optimal to “surface of Venus” in a matter of minutes when the wind changes. The hydrocarbon-heavy polymer saps that dribble down the pylons to form the multicolored “amber” are distillations from the toxic upper atmosphere, and most contain unusually high impurities of radioactive salts and grit. Most of the native wildlife—if it is native, and not introduced—has been completely trapped and covered in subsequent waves of this tarry glue, and it is believed that only the native sixteen-limbed insect species and a form of exploding tree still thrive. Even most of the liquid water remains trapped beneath the amber, hidden lakes where the life has long suffocated except perhaps for bacteria.

Still, every now and again a crew actually manages to straggle back—and having paid their 50,000 credit fee to AIC, they are free to sell whatever they can haul for top whatever they can get for it.

Mechanics

Most of the time, Amberwald is fairly hospitable, with near-Earth level mix of oxygen and nitrogen and temperate temperatures a little warmer than the surface of Mars. However, according to irregular tides a stream of toxic outside air will dip in from a rent in the canopy, temporarily rendering the atmosphere corrosive (10 points of damage per action turn) for up to 10 minutes. The liquid amber is another natural disaster, somewhere between an avalanche and a flood—the streams of heavy hydrocarbons are sticky, dense, can move amazingly quickly, and can seal a morph in seconds if they don't move quickly enough. The local insects have an inherent radiation sense that they use to help predict and avoid the amberflows.

ENTRY 261: AF Ninja

“You are not worthy of my teachings.”

- Koga Jun, Grandmaster of Mars

Long before the Fall on an island empire, in an age of civil strife, there arose a new breed of warriors. Spies, scouts, and assassins, their deeds became legends, and as the stories grew and grew some people stepped forward and claimed that they were the modern descendents of these legendary ninja. Most cast doubt on the historical accuracy these claims; others rushed to join their schools. Then, a funny thing happened, one of the quirks of the world: the schools flourished, continued, and perpetuated themselves.

Now after the Fall, there are transhumans that can proudly claim descent to a heritage of learning going back over a century—and prove it with documentation. These contemporary ninja continue a long tradition of training in martial arts, survival techniques, bodyguarding, legerdemain, and other eclectic and esoteric techniques. In this, they are not far different from any other lineages of various training; the Young Transhuman Scouts of the Universe for example.

Yet the Fall was a harsh trial for many transhuman social traditions, and many of the least practical lineages of ninja training died out. What was left, still recovering, rebuilding, and redefining themselves, are the hardened survivors. Sensei of schools that, whether they were founded on empty boasts or not, have incorporated many effective martial arts and paramilitary training for generations, and which are more open to adapting new techniques and technologies into their curricula. In the oxygen bars and hookah lounges from Mercury to Titan people whisper of secret martial arts for use for biomorphs against synthmorphs, or to make the maximum use of cyber-implant weapons, and integrated training and augmentation methodologies.

Some of these stories are true. Traditional martial arts schools, while capable of incredible feats, seldom have the cultural image momentum of the ninja. Transhumans throughout the solar system know, as a fact, that there are ninja today after the Fall—and they are dedicated and willing to become warriors of legend, using whatever skills and implants are available to them to achieve those goals. Mesh archives track the lineages of the new schools—the Lunar Tai, the Hope Moon Ryu among the Rusters of Mars,

the Reborn Iga in the Belt who are said to be masters of zero-g combat, the Solid Clan all claimed to be cloned and forked from a single ninja master...the line between reality and fiction blurs thin for some of these groups, especially those underground schools.

Using AF Ninja

The idea of a group of adults dressing up in black pajamas and running around being sneaky and stabbing people was slightly silly back on Earth; in space it's quite a bit sillier.

However, silliness has not stopped people from doing a lot of things, and while there are probably quite a few laughable efforts at “ninja schools” in the Eclipse Phase setting, the “real ninjas” who have been practicing martial arts, paramilitary, and survival training for a couple generations are a serious bunch—and in the wake of the Fall, they have begun to diversify and further adapt to personal augmentation and differing environments.

Serious AF Ninja are deceptive rather than outright sneaky; they prefer to dress like maintenance workers instead of crawling around in black suits, and they'll use modern weapons just as eagerly as archaic ones. Individuals focus on survival skills and movement skills like Climbing and Free Fall; skillssofts are fairly common as well, especially for languages, Pilot skills, and Swimming. Most have at least one or two tricks up their sleeve, with training in escape artistry, sleight-of-hand, and Demolitions (Illusion) for smoke bombs, flash paper, acid and other useful materials they can conceal on their persons (or make quickly in a supply closet) all popular; the vast majority embrace personal augmentation but prefer concealed, less-showy implants that give them an edge and allow opponents to underestimate them.

Ideologically, AF Ninja fall all over the spectrum. Every habitat and faction can harbor a few ninja (or ninja-like groups) fairly easily; the most secretive and heavily augmented groups generally require at least moderate regular funding or infusion of resources, either from a government, hypercorp, or criminal activity. Some stories tell of a scumbarge where everyone is a ninja, but most consider that just another Mesh legend.

ENTRY 262: Grandmaster of Mars

“I will not fight a fair fight. I will not meet you on your ground. You will come to meet me. You will be weakened, your every advantage taken away. You will be beaten before I deliver the killing blow, before you ever know I have entered the arena, before you are aware that you have stepped into the arena...and this is the way of the ninja.” - Koga Jun, Grandmaster of Mars (dramatic recreation)

“If I defeat my opponent with a tactical nuclear strike, then my opponent is defeated. That is the way and the goal of ninjutsu. Mastery of Martian Ninjutsu is the realization of your goal with efficiency as well as efficacy, to kill or disable with minimal effort. Stun weapons, for example, are legal, effective, and widely available in many habitats; once your opponent is helpless it is a simple matter to destroy them.”

- Koga Jun, An Introduction to Martian Ninjutsu

Among the Rusters, Koga Jun is a legend, the self-proclaimed Immortal Grandmaster of Mars, one of the new breed of ninja, who has successfully defended that claim in hundreds of battles, many of which are available for viewing on the Mesh. The Grandmaster runs a chain of dojos in the Martian habitats, teaching the basics of selfdefense, offensive martial arts, and Mars-based survival skills, along with a brutal and practical philosophy. These are two carefully constructed images, the legendary master and the crass commercialist, both serve Koga Jun’s purpose of hiding in plain sight—the gullible believe he is a peerless warrior, while the cynical and trained think he is simply a businessman using that aura to extort cred and favors from his disciples.

In truth, Koga Jun is one of the deadliest assassins in the Solar system. In addition to his “prime” morph, Koga Jun possesses at least thirty nearly-identical clones which he can loads forks of his ego. This is his technological equivalent of the classic “conservation of ninjutsu” principle by sending out the clone-ninjas as a group after targets—if any of his clones die or are disabled, their egos automatically merge with the remaining clones, transferring what they have learned of their opponents, including any wounds or weaknesses; the surviving clone-ninjas then adjust their skillware sets and tactical considerations accordingly. Sometimes, this even gives Jun sufficient forewarning to prepare special implanted weapons before engaging his foes.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	22	20	30	20	28	26	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
10	3	52	8	104	65	13	75

Morph: Fury

Skills: Academics: Anthropology (Martial Arts) 35, Academics: Anatomy (Stress Points) 30, Art: Body Arrangement 25, Beam

Weapons 25, Blades 26, Climbing 66, Clubs 26, Deception 25, Demolitions (Smoke Bombs) 25, Fray 40, Free Fall 36, Gunnery 24, Impersonation 25, Infiltration 26, Infosec 35, Interests: Martial Arts Associations 46, Interests: Military Organizations 45, Interests: Paramilitary Groups 43, Interests: Security Organizations 45, Interfacing 23, Kinetic Weapons 25, Language: Native Japanese 80, Language: English 75, Language: Cantonese 56, Language: Mandarin 60, Negotiation 35, Networking: Autonomists 20, Networking: Criminals 35, Perception: 30, Profession: Assassin 40, Psychosurgery (Merging) 80, Unarmed Combat (Subdual) 30

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave (Light), Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Mass Ego Bridge*, Eidetic Memory, Emotional Dampers*, Endocrine Control*, Enhanced Hearing**, Enhanced Smell**, Enhanced Vision, Medicines, Mnemonic Augmentation, Multiple Personalities, Neurachem (Level 2), Skillware, Toxin Filters

Traits: Ambidextrous, Edited Memories***, Pain Tolerance (Level 2), Tough (Level 3)****

* Variant of the Ego Bridge augmentation; when one of the Grandmaster morphs dies or is disabled, the ego in the cortical stack automatically begins to merge with the forks in the surviving Grandmaster morphs, starting with the secondary ego from the Multiple Personalities augmentation

** These implants are only present in the “prime” Grandmaster of Mars morph

*** This trait is only present on non-“prime” Grandmaster of Mars morphs

**** This trait is only present on the “prime” Grandmaster of Mars morph

Using the Grandmaster of Mars

Koga Jun is a nice end boss for an adventure that probably begins with someone in black pajamas trying to kill the PCs (or a nearby NPC). While a competent-if-not-awe-inspiring NPC in a straight-up fight, the Grandmaster of Mars never intends to engage in a fight he doesn’t think he can win, and never engages head-on. If the PCs try to take him on unarmed, he’s likely to shoot them in the kneecap from cover and then dig out a white phosphorous grenade. When his own skills won’t cut it, he’ll retreat along a known (and trap-strewn) path to re-arm and to change his skillware to deal with the threat; he uses his clone-ninjas to wear the PCs down and figure out where their weaknesses are.

That said, the “Immortal Grandmaster of Mars” isn’t perfect, and the PCs can certainly beat him at his own game, if they’re a) just that damn good/pretty, b) willing to think outside the box, and/or c) willing to play dirtier than he is. When all is said and done, killing or defeating Koga Jun should be difficult but far from impossible (especially if you block his escape tunnel)...but can the PCs ever be sure that this is the real Koga Jun, and not just another clone?

ENTRY 263: Rep Day

Religions have their place after the Fall, from the xenocults and new religions to the old survivals and revivals of past practice, adapted as well as they are able to the new circumstances of transhumanity. However, the general lack of holy days and increasing secularization of habitats has led to a downswing in actual holidays, an absence that has been cited as a cause of mental and economic stress among transhuman populations. Many habitats develop local holidays, often based around significant anniversaries or events in the history of the habitat population, or else regularly-scheduled administrative leave periods, but these artificial institutions tend to be unsatisfying, clinical affairs that lack real emotional resonance. In a time when so much of transhumanity is ultimately transient and has been in their current habitat less than ten years, the anniversary of the founding of the habitat is relatively insignificant.

Among the few holiday traditions that has really caught on, thanks to a grassroots Mesh movement, synchronized scheduling, and sponsorship by all the major reputation networks is Rep Day. On Rep Day, members of the rep networks are encouraged to introduce new individuals to their rep networks, and exchange gifts and services; most habitats with an operating rep-based economy have favors called in to arrange large parties and celebrations, and various digital media artists, technicians, and artists work year-round producing new entertainment material, freebies, and large rep boosts for small acts of kindness. Most habitats look forward to Rep Day because of the increased demand, which helps to stimulate the local economy, but for many Rep Day is just an occasion to exchange gifts or small favors with their family or friends.

Mechanics

Rep Day is a good opportunity for characters to build their rep by participating in the various activities and providing goods, favors, expertise, or services to the local Rep Day parties. In game terms characters are all treated as if their Rep Level was 10 points higher than normal, with many Trivial favors given away for free. Characters who are particularly generous with their time or resources on Rep Day (Level 3 Favor or higher) receive a number of free Rep Points which they can put toward increasing their rep – 1 RP for all-day participation/1,000 credits worth of donated goods/services; 2 RP for month-long Rep Day preparation/5,000 credits worth of donated goods/services; and 3 RP for year-long Rep Day

preparation and planning/200,000 credits worth of donated goods/services.

Seeds

- It may be Rep Day in the rest of the 'verse, but the local orphanarium is being defunded. They need at least 10,000 credits or a couple really big favors to keep going through the end of the year. No one else in the habitat seems to care—do the player characters?
- Local ne'er-do-wells that take advantage of Rep Day to abuse the charity and good will of others are known as Rep Day Dicks. This year though, the Rep Day organizers have a plan: they ask the PCs to spend the day getting the whole pack of RDDs drunk, high, laid, and otherwise away from the more family-friendly and organized activities. Can the PCs corral and inebriate a pack of dedicated debauchers, or will Rep Day be ruined?

ENTRY 264: Ghost Boxing

“Some people just can’t throw memories away.”

- Eddie of Luna

Forking technology has led to some odd derivative practices and technologies; one of the most long-lasting is a spin-off of neural pruning known as ghost boxing—a sort of mental scrapbooking where the pruned memories of egos are stored as a stack of inert files in a “ghost box” which can be quickly re-merged with the fork. Most ghost boxers are security-minded individuals that are conscious of the need to keep some secrets, even from themselves, and store their ghost boxes in secure servers that can only be accessed under specific conditions. Ghost boxes are considered more secure than XP recordings and the like specifically because the neural pruning process is both imperfect and tuned to a specific ego—if an ego not derived from the original attempts to access the ghost box, the merging process will fail (and probably drive the ego trying it insane).

Mechanics

Ghost boxing is basically a storage technique to keep the “scraps” left over from a session of neural pruning. Any fork of the ego can attempt to assimilate the scraps into their own memory and personality using a Merging Test, and functions in an identical manner (see Merging, in Eclipse Phase 275). Generally speaking, and ego merging with a ghost box is less of an ordeal than two egos merging and comes with fewer penalties—beta or delta forks tend to stabilize (or even regain lost skill ranks and Traits). However, if the memories and experiences contained in the ghost box are traumatic, they can potentially lead to mental derangements.

Seeds

- Many habitats and organizations that edit memories keep a ghost box with the removed memories on file, just in case. Jazee is one such individual, a former criminal who can’t even remember what his crime was—or worse, where he stashed the loot. He asks the PCs to help him acquire his ghost box, offering them a 50% cut.
- One of the PCs receives an update that the account containing their ghost box is about to expire due to non-payment...but the PC doesn’t remember ever making a ghost box, much less paying to have it stored in a secure account. When did they prune

those memories out, and what secrets could they be hiding from themselves?

- The last fork of exsurgent cult leader Niggly Bits has finally been hunted down and exterminated, but his followers are busy scouring the Mesh for his ghost boxes, hoping to merge them all into a stable fork. Firewall isn’t sure that will work, but they’re taking no chances: the PCs are to hunt down the exsurgent cult and stop them with extreme prejudice.
- On Titan, the Ghost Monolith is a public archive shaped like an obelisk where citizens can store their ghost boxes free of charge. Unfortunately, the Monolith has been stolen, and a cryptic clue left in its place. The clue (a cloned coelacanth dyed red) is meant to send investigators off on a wild goose chase while the perpetrators, a petal-crafter collective attached to the art college of the university, sift through the stored memories to make new drugs.

ENTRY 265: Krzyzewski's Monster

"I am as I have been made. But I can improve, and I will."

- Krzyzewski's Monster, I Am Monster: My Story

The professors on Titan laughed at Miriam Krzyzewski's proposal for her graduate thesis. Different egos could never be merged, much less fractional scraps of memories. Even if the process worked, the resulting ego would be hopelessly insane by any transhuman standard, and likely to self-destruct in short order. But she showed them. She showed them all. Hacking into the university archives where inert forks of the tenured professors were kept for emergencies, she brought together the finest minds of a generation—and with a genetic algorithm and over a thousand failed attempts, she finally succeeding in producing a stable ego merged from the composite memories of eight different egos. At the press release, the Mesh immediately dubbed the new ego Krzyzewski's Monster.

Miriam Krzyzewski didn't survive the initial spate of media attention; thousands of users responded negatively toward her actions with poor reviews, negative comments, and open insults, including a brief but embarrassing series of hardcore sexual material edited to include her name, image, and tactile scans. Unable to cease engaging with her cyberbullies, MK committed suicide, and her last fork—created well before the Monster was created—changed its name and went into seclusion. The process was lost, and Krzyzewski's Monster was left all alone.

Unlike their creator, KM has adapted well to the media attention, leveraging even negative publicity to increase their media impact and expand their brand. While many hypercorps would like nothing better than to capture KM and dissect their ego to figure out how Krzyzewski was able to successfully merge disparate egos, the Monster's relatively high media profile precludes many direct efforts to infringe on KM's existence. For herself, the Monster seems to be dedicated to redefining and improving their self; aware of their flaws and desiring to correct them by adding new life experiences.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	18	18	13	13	9	18	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: History (Pornography) 48, Academics: Neuroprogramming 35, Art: Electronic Media 55, Deception 35, Impersonation 45, Infiltration 50, Infosec 36,

Interests: Therapy 44, Interests: Porn 45, Interfacing 67, Intimidation (Sex) 34, Kinesics 40, Language: Native Czech 85, Language: English 75, Networking: Autonomists 50, Networking: Adult Entertainment Industry 55, Perception 50, Profession: Media Producer 45, Programming 40, Research 33, Seduction 55

Advantages: Allies (Fanbase)

Disadvantages: Edited Memories, Mental Disorder (Hypersexuality), Neural Damage (Synaesthesia, Verbal Tics), Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Krzyzewski's Monster

Aside from novelty, the Monster is a legitimate excuse to present an NPC that is not altogether in their right mind—a conglomeration of different memories and drives that result in a very weird character that can slip into different accents in the same sentence and lives with cognitive dissonance as part of their daily existence. None of that has stopped Krzyzewski's Monster from trying to make something of themselves, sublimating their screwed-up drives and weird perspective into arthouse erotica and outrageous, sometimes frighteningly incoherent rants that somehow resolve because of their own weird internal logic. As a contact, KM is a good "in" for adventures that feature research into novel psychosurgery techniques and ego technology, or that involve the arts or adult entertainment industry. As an antagonist, KM could be genuinely crazy enough to want to build a "perfect mate"—which means that the PCs might be hired to help or stop the Monster from rediscovering Krzyzewski's original ego-merging technology, which probably means finding Krzyzewski's last fork.

ENTRY 266: Low Tech

“In a time of antimatter drives, resleeving, egocasting, advanced 3D printing, and interstellar exploration, it’s easy to overlook the fact that we’re in the middle of a low tech revolution. Transhumanity exists in extreme environments, and often doesn’t have the time or resources to come up with high-tech solutions to many problems. That’s why miners out in the Belt leave each other notes written in grease pencil, which can be used regardless of gravity or electromagnetic flux. The terraformer community on Mars is excited about a group shovel that can be manufactured at a fraction of the cost of powered excavator equipment, and which is based on a millennia-old Asian model designed for digging wells. It’s not all crude or unrefined, either. Many new low-tech items are still made from scavenged high-tech materials, or are carefully designed for portability and collapsibility. Would you rather be the gatecrasher whose flashlight fails and then the nearest replacement battery is a couple trillion miles away, or the gatecrasher with the hand-crank light that can be recharged at the expense of burning a few calories?” - The Low Tech Revolution by Jane Awesomesauce

Using Low Tech

When the going gets tough, high tech has a distressing tendency to break down. Not all the time, but enough that keeping a low tech solution to a high tech problem on hand is a general rule of practice in the galaxy. Your character’s fancy laser rifle doesn’t have an attachment point for a bayonet just because it looks cool; it’s there for when the power pack runs out or an EMP fries the circuitry or something. Granted, the point at which your laser rifle craps out on you and somebody tells you to attach bayonets and charge is probably not the highlight of your existence, but the basic point stands: low tech solutions may not be great, but they are functional, and in an extreme environment or emergency situation that is the most important thing. Pencils and d-clips are probably never going to go out of style as long as transhumanity still has physical bodies to wallow around in, because both function well in most environments and conditions. However, these aren’t going to be your grandparents’ low tech—no one is cutting down a precious tree to generate a load of pencils; they’ll use 3D printing to create a graphite stack with a handle made of biodegradable wrapper or something. The general simplicity of low tech makes it attractive to the maker community, colonists,

autonomists, and explorers, some of whom use it because it is all they can afford, most of whom use it because it is more economic/efficient/environmentally friendly. A few, mainly gatecrashers, miners, and other explorer-types have been caught in situations where local conditions (zero gravity, high solar flare activity, plastic-eating fungus, etc.) make normal high-tech unreliable, and so prefer to have at least one low tech alternative available—even if it’s just a pocket multitool so they can build what they need from whatever is at hand.

Seed

En route between habitats, the PCs are hit by a micrometeorite swarm that damages the ship. They’re still headed toward their destination, but they may well have to come up with some quick low tech solutions to deal with problems like a failing air filter, loss of cabin electrical power, small punctures in the hull, and other problems—and all without access to the Mesh or most onboard computer systems.

ENTRY 267: The White Room

Many egos, particularly infomorphs, find themselves with a virtual eternity on their hand and not much to do. Some educate themselves from the publicly available archives of transhumanity's collected art and literature, socialize, and indulge in the near-infinite amount of free entertainment available on the Mesh; other get involved with different projects and causes, finding meaning, purpose, and rep boosts in original research, original content creation, or the endless cataloguing, shuffling, and presentation of data for the benefit of their fellow transhumans. A conscientious ego can live a comfortable life doing nothing more than giving thoughtful, carefully-constructed feedback on the right forums and product pages; some even become successful enough to go pro.

Most, however, find escape in the various virtual environments and settings run in the Mesh; ventures that range from religious depictions of the afterlife and extensive lifesimulation games to commercial interstellar fantasy roleplaying games with memberships in the millions and dozens of spinoffs. Most infomorphs lack the credits or reputation to swing a full membership in these virtual environments, but by the same token the gamemasters running the simulations often lack sufficient egos to run the hundreds of thousands of complex NPCs demanded for many games—or at least, don't feel like making their own forks do all the work. This mutual demand has led to the creation of an extensive work-for-play culture in the Mesh, where egos enter into agreements to play certain non-player character roles within one Mesh game in exchange for access time as a player character on a game or games they do wish to play. The key to these contracts is the work-for-play ratio—at 1:1, every minute of time spent as an NPC credits the ego with one minute of time to spend as a PC, though most egos start out at 2:1 or 1.5:1 until their skills develop; truly gifted digital actors are given challenging NPC roles and may earn ratios of 1:1.5 or 1:2, though this is rare and often exclusive to the most expensive and extensive virtual environments.

One of the most popular environments is the White Room, a virtual limbo that serves as a gateway to several clusters of afterlife-based virtual games, where a PC can interact with NPCs based on historical characters, observe (or participate in) the pleasures and punishments of various real and fictional heavens, hells, purgatories, and spirit realms— and even more exotic locales, such as the

Celestial Planet of Kolob™ and the Thetan Astral Plane. The wfp ratio is strictly 1:1, though players are allowed to vote up NPCs that are particularly entertaining, educational, or in-character, and gamemasters regularly award bonus hours to NPCs with a high re. Officially, players cannot purchase additional hours for credits or rep, but have to earn them through playing NPCs, but PCs are allowed to transfer hours to each other and there is a thriving grey market in buying hours in the shadier parts of the out-of-character game forums.

Using the White Room

Games-within-games are nothing new to science fiction or roleplaying; think of the holodeck adventures on Star Trek: the Next Generation...and all the things they did well and did wrong. Virtual environments allow a change of pace from the space opera reality of Eclipse Phase especially during long trips between planets or habitats, and are handy settings for one-off adventures, since they are infinitely customizable and most of the hard bits are easy to dispense with. If keeping track of play-hours as another form of currency seems too much bookkeeping for example, just give a straight credit cost or let the PCs burn a favor—the explanation being that they simply bought some hours on a grey-market forum. Some characters can make a profession of being an NPC, which is represented by the Profession: Game Actor skill or Art: Game Acting.

ENTRY 268: Void Sisters

“We will give birth to the Ultimate Human, who will finally achieve their true and terrible potential, and through them we will guide transhumanity from these warring states to their true destiny.”

- Aba Menses

“Crisis promotes change, stress reorganization. In flux, all states are possible. Seize the momentary opportunity, and shape the future.” - Kitab Toksa, Void Sister core text

The origins of the Void Sisters of Phobos are obscured; anyone who digs too far runs into a tangle of hypercorporate red tape and the Sisters’ own carefully constructed legends, seeded along the most likely searches to guide researchers and data miners to only the information they want known about themselves. What is known is that they had some elemental role in the project that gave birth to the Lost, that they are highly selective of inducting new members and have quite arduous and long-lasting initiations designed to help inductees achieve their ultimate potential. On Phobos itself, they are most known for raising orphans in their own ideology, seeding their philosophy into a new generation.

Infobrokers who are smart enough to think a few steps ahead paint a slightly different picture of the Void Sisters, if a client has favors or creds enough to buy the data. The Sisters were founded pre-Fall by several women who were very involved in the Toksa Society, a quasi-scientific new faith group that preached the achievement of the full human potential by any means necessary—strict training, education, drugs, primitive augmentation, and even rumors of eugenics, indoctrination, ritual prostitution, and quasimystical techniques in the inner circles. The group never had more than a few hundred members, but wielded outsized influence due to political and corporate contacts, and established themselves on Phobos by establishing relationships (and at times, marriages) with key personnel.

After the Lost debacle, the Void Sisters lost considerable influence, and their public profile noticeably diminished—though it never disappeared. Strategists believe that as much of a third of the group has gone underground, while the remaining public operations with raising orphans represents a new part of their grand plan, whatever that may be.

Using the Void Sisters

Semi-mystical sisterhoods with generational plans, using sex, politics, and more nefarious means to exert their influence and protect their interests are a kind of trope in fantasy and science-fiction. In Eclipse Phase the Void Sisters aren’t even alone in the role; Titan has the blue-cloaked Oubham-Ad, Luna has the willowy biosculpted Night Women, Mars has the Cloisted Sisterhood of the Closed Fist, even Eris has the Daughters of Eris. Cultivating an air of mystery and feminine wiles has its advantages, and many groups take advantage of it, to the amusement and bemusement of synthmorphs and infomorphs not taken in by the philosophical posturing. If this was all there was with the Void Sisters, they would be an interesting group of NPCs but not a real threat.

Unfortunately, the Void Sisters have access to one thing more: a sample of the exsurgent virus. At the highest levels, the Void Sisters are an exsurgent cult that rigorously trains its members and exposes the most loyal to the virus to instill psi abilities that are passed off as examples of the Sister’s achievement of their full potential. If the truth ever gets out, it would destroy the Sisterhood...and quite possibly a serious chunk of Phobos as well.

Seed

Aba Mendes has a problem: she is really a sex-shifting investigative reporter that has spent eight years in the Void Sisters, constantly trained and tested, putting up with the mandatory bedtimes, strange meditations, and weird internal politics, pursuing a story she wasn’t sure was really there. Now, she’s in too deep, about to be exposed to the innermost secrets of the order, and she wants out. The call goes out, but Firewall intercepts it. They order the PCs to extract her—but only after she’s undergone the final initiation. Dare the player characters to wait, not knowing if Mendes will survive the ordeal? And if they do, will they be prepared to charge into the midst of an active exsurgent cell guarded by a small army of space-geishamartial artists?

ENTRY 269: Quo Valis

“You are now a living cell in a greater organism. Though you may not always be able to perceive it, you are a part of a life form greater than yourself, your actions affect it. We cannot always understand the higher functions of this ego, but we do know that it is aware of us. Quo Valis loves you.”

- Excerpt from the Quo Valis Employee Introduction Package

On Progress, Quo Valis is a middleman hypercorp best known for three things: the strong French/Spanish corporate culture with over 2,000 full-time employees (and perhaps ten times that many temporary workers outside of Progress), an unusual communal structure where the indentured employees are also the owners of the hypercorp, and the stringent belief among the shareholders/working body that the hypercorp itself is alive. Spokesbeings for Quo Valis claim that the upper management of the corporation is handled entirely via automated computer processes, with regular input from low-level officers, and that the middle management is partially integrated into the system via cybernetic augmentation, and that over a period of years the officers of the corporation have come to recognize Quo Valis as an organized, living entity, of which each employee/shareholder is a part, carrying out the operations that contribute to the continued existence and growth of the Quo Valis corporate entity.

Most outsiders call bullshit at this point in the spiel, with the most generous critics allowing that the Quo Valis automated software may have achieved AGI status (or have an AGI buried in there somewhere pulling the strings). The employee/shareholders of Quo Valis are determined in their belief though, often speaking of being a part of something bigger than themselves, feeling the “spirit” of Quo Valis through their actions, and the augmented middle management even claims some level of communion and communication with the Quo Valis super-ego, able to sense or judge its moods and convey them to the faithful employee/shareholders. The phenomenon has attracted any number of hypercorporate sociologists and psychologists, who claim that the belief in a higher form of life which directly or indirectly is responsible for the orders they receive has a generally positive psychological effect on the corporate population. However, they also claim that the ineffability of Quo Valis is an integral part of the unique concept, and anyone claiming to be a direct representative

of the Quo Valis superego is generally greeted with a display of flash mob violence.

Mechanics

Quo Valis as an NPC has no normal stats. Its SOM is measured in the strength of its employees, for example, and if it is a sapient entity then it is probably more comparable to a humpback whale than any normal transhuman standard.

Using Quo Valis

All bullshit aside, most hypercorps in Eclipse Phase can be played at the table like an NPC, with its own sometimes chaotic, inefficient, and self-defeating goals and methods— Quo Valis is just more honest about this approach than most. It is comforting for many players and gamemasters to focus on specific officers as focal points for attention; we as humans like to focus on individuals of singular power, influence, vision, skill, talent, and ambitions, the Gordon Geckos and Steve Jobs of the world. The truth, however, is that the strength of corporations lies in their ability to survive and thrive despite the greed or greatness of any single officer, to harness the abilities of many people working in tandem toward a goal, and in the far future of Eclipse Phase a great deal of the normal decisionmaking processes of corporations—approvals for sick leave, vacations, purchasing, cleaning, hypercubicle assignment, training, etc.—will probably be automated, leaving the officers to focus on more important tasks like innovations, cultivating interpersonal relationships with clients, managing their immediate subordinates, and so on. As such, Quo Valis is generally in invisible and elusive character that PCs grapple with only through proxies and agents who attempt to carry out their orders, often (but not always) without question.

ENTRY 270: Group Psi

Psi is a solitary activity in Eclipse Phase. There are no mechanics for group psi use. It doesn't follow the cultural paradigms for magic, there are no rules for two asyncs cooperating to achieve an effect greater than the sum of their parts, no group minds, or distributed strain. There are a couple good reasons for this. The exsurgent virus affects people, and their perception of their situation and abilities, differently—one async's understanding of their abilities may simply not be compatible with another's. Too, there is no real async culture; each victim of the virus is unique, often alienated because of their ability. If there was a Mesh stream just for asyncs to sit down, talk sleights and maybe try to get laid, every other member would be a Firewall agent trying to reel in a new fish. Maybe the exsurgents can get it together enough to do something like that, but the exsurgent already have weird powers beyond the ken and normal ability of transhumanity.

That's not to say that you cannot have two or more asyncs cooperatively use their powers toward some joint purpose in your Eclipse Phase game, but treat it as what it is: an unusual and maybe unique set of circumstances, deserving of a bit of attention. Two (or more) asyncs in the same place, trying to use their sleights to achieve a given effect, should be a cinematic scene—let the players sweat a little, see if it works. Maybe it will, maybe it won't, but here are some guidelines to consider if you allow group psi in our game:

- Rule of One: Psi sleights with a range of self are too personal and centered on the individual async—though there may be a two-headed exsurgent morph or twins that can get away with it.
- Rule of Two: Complementary Sleights Can Assist the use of other sleights. It is up to the player to come up with a good justification for why, for example, one async using Cloud Memory on an ego will make the use of Implant Memory by another async at the same time easier, but if the players can provide a good justification, and it seems logical, maybe it should work. As a guideline, use the Complementary Skill Bonus Table (Eclipse Phase 137), with the assisting async's skill acting as the complementary skill to the primary async's skill.
- Rule of Pi: Two (or more) asyncs working together against a single target tends to present considerable strain on the target ego; the

conflicting signals causes an amount of mental strain to the target equal to the number of asyncs + 1 every Action Turn for sleights with a duration of Temp (Action Turns) and every minute for sleights with a duration of Temp (Minutes) or Sustained.

- Rule of 2²: The Mindlink (Eclipse Phase 227) sleight allows all asyncs in the link to target another member with their sleights, facilitating group psi activities—but keep in mind, if one the target of the mindlink is an unwilling participant and an async, they can also target any member of the group through the mindlink with their own sleights.

ENTRY 271: Mutant

“You don’t get it, do you? Evolution does not stop. You’re looking at the now, not the future. Already, transhumanity is split into isolated populations, limited genepools. Give it a thousand years—ten thousand—a hundred thousand—speciation! A hundred new breeds of humanity, and that not counting what we do ourselves...”

- Drunken Rant #37, Rodrigo Rodriguez Caldon, Sr. Planetary Biologist.

Transhuman science has overcome many of the inherent barriers and constrictions that are thought to drive evolution. Through genetic engineering, biomorphs can be shaped as they are needed or desired to be; forking and synthmorphs escapes the vagaries of genetic propagation entirely. Yet transhuman society has not yet fully adapted to the full consequences of the Fall, and as the first generation of transhumans born and bred in the years since transhumanity became scattered from Earth come of age, the lessons of evolutionary science are once more being brought to the fore.

Populations of biomorphs are mostly isolated, with little mass migration. While a minor issue in terms of genetic isolation in the short term, transhuman archives have shown the results of extensive intermarriage within a limited genepool, including the propagation of recessive traits and genetic diseases. One brinker community that consists entirely of Icelandic descendents is already being monitored due to the extremely close interrelation of its population. The long-term viability of their tiny colony is already a major concern, and various plans have been proposed to expand the limited gene pool or remove the worst of the genetic diseases inherent in the population.

Splicers and other non-flat biomorphs should be mostly immune to such worries, but none of these designs has yet been tested past the third generation, and genehackers cannot confirm that new issues might not crop up, especially from “accidental inbreeding” due to long biomorph lifespans and the same splicer designs being reused in subsequent generations. Likewise, radiation, viruses, and certain chemicals can promote mutation in all biomorphs, with the possibility that some mutated traits may be passed on to the next generation. Some of these cumulative genetic mutations have already become apparent in the non-genefixed population, often coincidental with genetic defects.

Mutant (Morph Trait) [Positive]

Cost: 5 CP

The morph is not genefixed, and has inherited cumulative minor mutations that make them verifiably different from the transhuman norm in some small but obvious way. These are not adaptations to any environmental stimulus, though given a hundred generations of selective breeding they might become so. Common mutations include a small tail or lack of an appendix; slight changes to the shape of ears, eyes, or teeth; and odd colors to skin. The oldest habitats have relatively large populations of mutants with similar traits, representing what might become emerging phenotypes. The gamemaster must determine the exact effects of the mutation on gameplay, as appropriate. For example, when dealing with a fellow mutant the character might receive a +5 bonus on social skill tests. This trait is suggested to only be available for flats.

ENTRY 272: Jun ibn Shiloh

Cannon crawls across the surface of Mercury, a city-sized insect-factory spitting buildingsized ingots into orbit. Built and owned by Jaehon Offworld, the majority of the population works directly for the hypercorp... but not everyone. Jaehon has long recognized that having individuals outside the corporate structure can be convenient, economic, and even necessary at their installations. Deniable people that the employees can interact with to obtain what the corporation, for its own reasons, cannot provide them. Not simply whores, drugs, and illegal media, but less tangible services such as loans, confession, lovers, espionage, and assassinations. Vital functions that need an outlet to prevent disruption in the corporate environment, made all the easier if the corporation has an understanding in place with the individual.

So on Cannon, there is Jun ibn Shiloh. Officially, he is a free agent, kept in place on the station as a representative-for-hire for various groups, hypercorps, and criminal syndicates. Instead of the cost and expense of sending one of their own down to Cannon, someone who does not know Jaehon's corporate structure or the social underbelly of the habitat, they hire Jun. As such on any given day ibn Shiloh may wear several different hats, meeting in the morning to inspect that Cannon is disposing of its mining slag properly according to its agreement with the Association of the Exploitation of Mercury, and in the afternoon having a quiet word with a mid-level supervisor on paying her gambling debts to the Night Cartel, and in the evening acting as a puppet sock to entertain a husband whose wife is out on a mineral surveying expedition for a month.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	18	18	12	17	13	22	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	44	8	88	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academics: Geology 47, Art: Dance (Erotic) 43, Blades (Knives) 37, Clubs (Wrench)

30, Fray (Full Defense) 26, Free Fall (Microgravity) 25, Infiltration 40, Interests: Gambling 50, Interests: Gossip 40, Interests: Mercury 33, Interests: Mining Law 34, Intimidation (Verbal) 67, Kinesics (Sense Motive) 45, Kinetic Weapons (Pistols) 45, Language: Native Japanese 87, Language: Arabic 73, Language: English 62, Language:

Mandarin 68, Language: German 81, Language: French 37, Networking: Criminals 35, Networking: Hypercorps 44, Perception (Visual) 50, Persuasion (Negotiation) 56, Profession: Escort 35, Profession: Representative 47, Seduction 34, Unarmed Combat 25

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Puppet Sock

Traits: Genetic Damage (Marfan syndrome), Mutant, Striking Appearance (1)

Using Jun ibn Shiloh

Depending on how you count his immediate ancestry, Jun ibn Shiloh is either a second or fourth-generation spaceborn flat; the details of which would probably make for an exciting Mesh-based dramatic series. As a result of this inbreeding between close relatives, Jun has Marfan's syndrome—resulting in a tall, lanky appearance and some ongoing health issues—and some abnormal (though fully functioning) genitals, including four testicles and two penes. On any other habitat Jun would probably be a prostitute or a porn star, but on Cannon he is more valuable for his independence than his freaky genetics. As such, no matter how cool Jun may come across, he will get agitated if anyone brings up his genes or "extra attributes" in a negative light; he's tossed at least three people out of an airlock onto the surface of Mars because they called him a freak, it's not a label he appreciates. As an NPC, Jun is valuable to the PCs either as an agent—i.e. someone to engage to snoop around or do things because they don't want to or cannot go to Cannon themselves—or as a local guide, helping the PCs find their way around and showing them where they can score drugs, weapons, gambling, or anything else shady and not-soshady that they desire. Ibn Shiloh has a lot of friends and a lot of favors locally, so he feels fairly secure in the event someone threatens him, but by the same token he is very antsy about leaving Cannon for any reason, or for anything that can seriously disrupt life on the habitat. As an antagonist, Jun will probably target the NPCs as outsiders, easy scapegoats for a big crime or as direct threats to his own position.

ENTRY 273: Peelbacks

“You are yourself an engine of production, why should you not profit from it?” - Nyarly Randroid

In an era where there is no more natural biosphere to exploit, pharming remains big business. All the medicines, dyes, chemicals, and other products previously derived from natural sources must now be replaced with substitutes, or else harvested from controlled and limited populations and proprietary processes. In many cases this means the hoarding and cultivation of plants and animal species, all endangered, some engineered transgenics crafted explicitly to produce certain proteins, foodstuffs, and/or other products (fur, hide, hoof, horn, etc.) Of course, in themselves many biomorphs are no different from other animals, and some are more than willing to take advantage of the demand for bio-products by adapting their own bodies to the production of valuable substances.

Mostly, the urge to commercialize the transhuman body is accomplished by means of augmentations. Transgenic implants replace human hair with cultivated cells that produce the slick, fine fibers used to make sea silk from mussels; implanted glands and special diets produce particular chemicals, proteins, and related substances, which are then tapped or milked from the producer—a process which some individuals have fetishized to an alarming degree. More elaborate augmentations are also possible, though uncommon: peelbacks whose rough skin is stripped off in sheets to form a paper-substitute, gizzardminers who consume raw minerals and concentrate the desired or useful metal in special organs to be later removed or excreted, bloody-mouthed smilers whose transgenic implants combine shark and elephant DNA so that they push out triangles of ivory from their pink-grey gums every week or two, among many others.

The value of these materials is based entirely on local demand, though it is a rare habitat that doesn't find a market for some bio-material. Many require a specialized diet, at least for continued and quality production, and the finest materials require careful monitoring of an individual's entire lifestyle, though this is rare to see outside of hypercorps and major habitats due to the time and resource-intensive nature of the priming and care.

Mechanics

Player characters desiring to make commercial use of their biomorphs as a source of income may take an appropriate

Pharm Augmentation, in cost functionally identical to a Drug Gland (Eclipse Phase 304), but in form depends on the actual material that the PC is looking to produce, as given above—a Pharm Augmentation (peelback) for example would have the character's skin peel off in barklike strips. The commercial value of these products is up to the gamemaster, and depends both on quality (PCs in poor health or lacking essential nutrients produce poor materials) and local demand (i.e. a peelback is more valued in a habitat that places a premium on paper), but is often enough to obtain a small but steady income.

ENTRY 274: Crashlandia

“Everyone gets to where they’re going. Most don’t know where that might be, and find themselves a might surprised at where they end up ‘s no use crying over crashed spaceships though. It’s your dharma.”

- Raj Fork42

The Glorious Infernal Majesty set off from Luna to Dione, one of the moons of Saturn, with fifteen hundred colonists to create an adjunct mining station aligned with the

Thoroughgood habitat. Things did not go quite as planned, and when the ship failed to break properly, Thoroughgood knew there was trouble. Still, there was little they could do as the silver pencil of a spacecraft skewed straight past the settlement to impact spectacularly on tiny neighboring Helene. Based on the energies involved, it was widely assumed there were no survivors.

This was not quite the case. The majority of the colonists did indeed perish on impact, including all of the biomorphs. However, three synthmorphs and four infomorphs survived and were operable. Where other egos might have signaled for help from relatively-nearby Thoroughgood, the colonists all apparently underwent a philosophical epiphany and decided to make the most of life where they landed. Salvaging what they could from the supplies and the wreckage of the ship, the synthmorphs began industriously building their own little utopia. A year or so later Thoroughgood noticed the small habitat going up on their neighboring moon and sent a rescue party, which was quietly but firmly rebuffed. However, the rescuers took the time to get to explore the habitat and survey the local culture.

Government and civil structure is, even by anarchist standards, nonexistent. Instead, the inhabitants of Crashlandia—as they call it—appear to enjoy an almost fatalistic shared vision of a neat, orderly colony. The centerpiece of the colony is a fifty-meter pyramid, the sides lined with solar panels, and which houses the servers and computers that support the infomorph population, which is comprised entirely of forks and currently numbers about forty members. There are now five synthmorphs, three having been fashioned from whatever material is at hand, each of which has designed and built their own small (3m tall) pyramid with internal and underground chambers for their private use. Despite the lack of biomorphs present on the small moon, the Crashlandia locals have spent

considerable energy and resources created a small biomorph habitat, complete with a tiny hydroponics garden and atmosphere. They claim that this is the foundation for the eventual tourist trade, and have plans for install a bar and possibly a spa once they can afford the waterice.

Using Crashlandia

There are some places that are just weird, where the people are just off. This is a wellbeloved trope of science fiction, and Eclipse Phase doesn’t have enough of them. PCs visiting Crashlandia will find the locals alternately invitingly and secretive, open-minded and close-mouthed. New concepts may run through the habitat like wildfire, upsetting the delicate shared delusion—or just as well may be ignored. There are occasional trade missions to Crashlandia, mainly to drop off supplies for their tourist base, paid for through certain media work and a convoluted banking scheme that everyone purports to not quite understand; accountants who access the books generally suffer as though they’d been exposed to a basilisk hack. The gamemaster is free to make Crashlandia as dire or harmless as they want to: it could be a fun and wacky one-off, a common backdrop or reference akin to Elbonia, or the great pyramid could be a TITAN weapon that they’re merrily building, ready to blast a basilisk hack out to the entire solar system by hacking the Long Array.

ENTRY 275: Poison Kisses

Who weeps for the lost leaves of three?

- Grafitti on restroom wall in Extropia

On the flight from Earth during the Fall, the seedbanks did not prioritize which plant species they sought to save. They sought to save all the species they could, not simply the endangered or commercial varieties. However, once the surviving samples reached the safety of their respective habitats, many of these seeds were not held as the common heritage of transhumanity: they were put up for option to the highest bidder. Foodstuffs went for vast sums, as did drugs such as tobacco, coca, and opium in all their different varieties. Plants that were seen as more expensive to raise and less commercially useful went for smaller sums; kudzu for example was purchased by a small terraforming hypercorp out of Titan. Poison oak, poison ivy, and poison sumac were purchased by a private, anonymous investor.

She used her wealth to set herself up to her satisfaction, cocooned within a microhabitat with walls of European marble and attended by a harem of indentured sex-workers rescued from old Earth. To ensure their fidelity, she had each augmented with glands that produced plant poisons in their bodily fluids, but reserved immunity for herself. As she grew older, her once fine mind became demented and cruel. Her indentured servants were made into torturers, their poison kisses wracking the bodies of their victims. Eventually, she was so isolated in her microhabitat, no one even noticed when she died.

Her servitors took the opportunity to make their own way, though they keep in touch for mutual comfort and support. Some have gotten on with their lives, abandoned their old forms to become informorphs or managed to find cred and favor enough to resleeve; others haven't been so lucky, staying in their poisoned forms, unable to become physically intimate with others without specialized equipment, unless it is with each other. Most still suffer with harsh memories of their time with the Mistress; some have become criminals and sadists, unwilling walking chemical weapons. So they drift, in ones and two and threes, but ready to answer the call should any of the others need help.

Mechanics

Poison Kisses' bodily fluids are laced with plant-based biotoxins from internal drug sacs; these are long-lasting and potent irritating agents which have become relatively obscure. Exposure usually results in itching, blisters, and swelling (particularly if taken internally or if the victim is particularly allergic), which apply a -5 to -30 modifier to all tests for the duration depending on how much of the subject's surface area is cover—the -30 modifier would correspond to having over 50% of exposed skin affected. Fortunately, once the source of the problem is identified, a quick dip in the healing vat can deal with the problem. Without access to a healing vat, the best medicine can do is negate the penalty until the rash works its way out of the victim's system. The toxins the Poison Kisses exude can remain active for years, especially in their clothing and bedding, resulting in inadvertent exposure. It is not normally commercially available.

Seeds

- A Ruster separatist group has begun using dermal patches and spray weapons loaded with a toxin similar to that of the Poison Kisses'; the network contacts the PCs and asks them to investigate these attacks in concert with the disappearance of one of their number. The missing Poison Kiss is being held by the Rusters and "milked" for their secretions.
- A hypercorp hires the PCs to sniff out and shadow the Poison Kisses. They are paid promptly and in full when they deliver their report, but are not told why the group was under surveillance. If they think to check back (or made contact with any of the members), they discover that the hypercorp is moving in to capture the network as part of its plans to develop their own chemwar biomorph.

Toxin	Type	Application	Onset Time	Duration
Poison Kiss	Bio	D, O	1 minute	1 week<

ENTRY 276: Stoneburner

WANTED—CAPTIVE OR INTACT CORTICAL STACK

FOR CRIMES AGAINST TRANSHUMANITY

DESTRUCTION OF NEW AUSTRALIA HABITAT

DEALER IN WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS

BOUNTY: 100,000 CREDITS / 25,000 FOR ALPHA FORK

REDEEMABLE FROM ANY PLANETARY CONSORTIUM EMBASSY

Some transhumans just want the universe to burn; the ones to really watch are the scientists and engineers that figure out how to make it burn better. The transhuman known as Stoneburner earned infamy as a researcher in exotic nuclear weapons that turned to custom design work for the highest bidder when the initial research funding ran out. Even then Stoneburner might have prospered, but a jury-rigged nuclear propulsion system had a little too much oomph, and cracked the dome of the Lunar colony of New Melbourne and filling it with radioactive sand. Since then, Stoneburner has been on the run, sheltered by criminals and terrorists, trading skills for security and the resources to continue their research.

Having been repeatedly exposed to the products of their own weaponry, Stoneburner carries the scars of multiple burns and long-term chromosome damage that renders them sterile and with frequent cancers that are only kept at bay with regular trips to a healing vat. More characteristic is visual blindness, a remnant of an early exposure to their namesake weapon which has since become ingrained in their ego, so that even with fully functioning eyes and ocular nerves the Stoneburner cannot see, but navigates the world by touch and hearing and taste.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	16	25	10	10	11	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: History (Nuclear Weapons) 50, Academics: Physics (Nuclear) 75, Demolition (Nuclear Weapons) 56, Free Fall (Microgravity) 30, Hardware: Nuclear Weapons 60, Interests: Exotic Weapon Design 75, Language: Native English 85, Language: French 80, 279

Language: Braille 70, Language: American Sign Language 70, Language: French Sign Language 55, Networking: Criminals 40, Networking: Hypercorps 33, Networking: Scientists 55, Perception (Radar Sense) 70, Profession: Physicist 40, Research 45

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Emotional Dampers, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Radar Sense

Traits: Genetic Damage (Sterile, prone to cancer), On the Run, Neural Damage (Blind)

Using Stoneburner

A straight-up target for player characters with a mind for a bit of bounty-hunting, Stoneburner also makes a good solid science-type lieutenant for any established NPC antagonist, a mercenary scientist who has probably been responsible for more death and destruction than most. Alternately, as a contact Stoneburner is cagey but basically honest, willing to assist the PC on a quid pro quo basis; a canny gamemaster may have Stoneburner hire the PCs to assist clear their name or obtain certain materials, painting themselves as just a toolmaker with no control of how the things they built are used. Since Stoneburner has no rep to speak of with any network because of the bounty, they stick to parts of the system where safety and basic material concerns can be bought with credits.

ENTRY 277: Pressure Ships

"Now you watch clanky, 'cause when we hit three hundred meters this hull is gonna squeeze like a tube of astronaut steak."

- Old Russ, Spacehand

Spacecraft, as a rule, are not designed to operate for extended periods within planetary atmosphere, much less in high-pressure zones of gas giants and underwater—where a spacecraft only has to try and keep the air inside from expanding outward, craft designed for high-pressure areas also have to accommodate the massive pressure of the atmosphere or fluid pressing inwards on the hull as well. There are further details to consider with regard to drag, the efficacy of engines and navigation in the different environment, and in the case of manned vehicles keeping the internal environment of the craft within acceptable limits to continue to support transhuman life, but what it generally boils down to is this: spaceships are (generally) not designed to go underwater or exploring the lower atmospheres of gas giants. The general solution for exploring and navigating about in the seas of Europa or gas giants like Jupiter are pressure ships designed specifically to ascend and descend, generally by adjusting pressure differentials or weight, taking inspiration from old Earth submersibles and rigid airships. Pressure ships generally have limited maneuverability, but as a rule of thumb vehicles that operate in a gaseous atmosphere are piloted with Pilot: Aircraft and those that operate in a liquid atmosphere use Pilot: Watercraft.

Space Balloon: These high-atmosphere vehicles are designed for navigating the (relatively) low-pressure upper atmospheres of many worlds, right up to the edge of space, and are especially popular on Venus. The balloon is filled with a lighter-than-local atmosphere gas, sometimes heated to generate additional lift or able to discharge ballast to lessen weight. They are especially cheap and ideal for delivering light cargo or personnel, but have limited directional control, especially in turbulent atmospheric systems like Mars. Space balloons are usable on Jupiter with some modifications by using different pressurized gasses to descend into the lower, high-pressure atmospheres. [Low]

European Bathyscaphe: A high-quality deep-diving submersible, the European bathyscaphe is a rigid craft with full life-support facilities for three transhuman biomorphs and contains a full suite of deep sea sensors; some even

include a remote operating vehicle or specially-adapted deep-sea diving suits. The buoyancy of models is determined by a float filled with a dense, practically incompressible liquid hydrocarbon, and by ballast weights attached by electromagnetic seals. In an emergency if power fails, the bathyscaphe will automatically release its ballast and begin to ascend to the surface (assuming nothing has damaged the float). Without modification, a European bathyscaphe can descend over 10 kilometers deep. [High]

Jupiter Orion: The exploration of Jupiter's lower atmosphere is most easily accomplished by ambient pressure vehicles (i.e. those that do not have to support a transhuman biomorph-friendly atmosphere onboard), which are mainly operated by synthmorphs and informorphs. Once the difficulty of trying to keep a biomorph alive at the insane pressures and high gravities of sub-surface Jupiter are done away with, engineers can focus on trying to make a ship move and navigate through dense gases, with the knowledge that one false slip could send the craft and any egos aboard it crashing down to a surface where the pressure is so great that hydrogen gives up and becomes a metal. However, the Jupiter Orion is designed to operate far above such high-pressure zones, though far below where most spacecraft and aircraft can safely operate, and is designed as a prospector ship making sudden deep dives up to 10 bar in the atmospheres of gas giants like Jupiter and Saturn and come back out again. [Expensive]

Seed

Sky Mountain, a smaller Venusian aerostat is failing, rapidly losing upper atmosphere stability and falling into the upper atmosphere, where it is expected to break apart before impacting the surface. The station was evacuated in haste, and the emergency communications system has failed. The PCs are hired to quickly travel to the failing station and manually trigger its fallback system which will deploy space balloons with much of the irreplaceable data and cultural artifacts of the habitat for later retrieval; the PCs themselves can take a ride on the last remaining escape balloon. It's a race against time, but such are the deeds that reputations are built from.

ENTRY 278: Psiwire

"Psi represents the potential to turn the TITANs' weapons against them. Turned to our use, to the greater benefit of transhumanity."

- Anita Gutenberg, Firewall Researcher

The proposal came in on the heels of the discovery of the Watts-MacLeod strain of the Exsurgent virus, from secret scientist to secret administrator. To their credit, it was initially rejected—but Firewall never throws anything away, and the proposal was modified and resurrected after each discovery, as sleights were cataloged and side effects measured. Until, eventually, the weight of evidence finally gave, under utmost secrecy and discretion, the long-awaited stamp of approval. Resources were directed, labs created, samples and test subjects procured for a project with no name or number.

There followed pain, madness, death, and ego-destruction—but progress enough that the credits and test subjects kept coming. Weeks into months. Incinerators kept busy dealing with the bodies. Now, after a year or more, a field prototype. Stable. Ready for testing.

The secret echelon at Firewall has been told that the aim of the project was to create an augmentation that, in conjunction with infection with the Watts-MacLeod virus, would allow a subject to switch between psi sleights at will—an electrochemical switch of sorts, shifting between nodes in the subject's brain. This was the lie that they bought, and may yet continue paying for, even after they eventually discover the truth.

Mechanics

The developers of the secret Firewall project could not figure out a way to make their "psiwire" system work—so instead, they faked it. Test subjects are multiple forks of the same ego in cloned bodies which are subjected to the Exsurgent virus; those that develop similar or identical sleights are disposed of, and the remaining egos with unique sleights are harvested, subject to psychosurgery to increase suggestibility, and implanted in a single biomorph using a variant of the Multiple Personalities augmentation (Eclipse Phase 301). The disparate egos are conditioned to be unaware of each other, to the point that they believe that they are a single ego switching between using different sleights, when in fact they are separate related egos operating under a shared delusion. The result is far from psychologically stable, and most of the test subject

egos have developed schizophrenia, paranoia, or multiple personality disorders (which, in a morph that already has a version of the Multiple Personalities augmentation is really confusing), with quite a few self-destructing and at least one where an ego became positively exhuman. However, while stable the biomorph appears to be able to switch between 2-8 psi-chi or psigamma sleights more or less at will, determined by which personality is at the fore. Skill ratings and psi level are typically uniform among all egos, though would probably diverge the longer the test subject exists.

Using Psiwire

Aside from the time-honored tradition of dabbling in things probably better left unknown, Firewall test subjects implanted with psiwire systems present unpredictable and adaptable NPCs without being too overpowered. Rather than a single NPC with a dozen sleights, the NPC is actually a bundle of mini-NPCs that appears to have a lot of psi powers. The mystery as much as the challenge this presents to player characters can provide the impetus for some interesting roleplaying, especially if any of the PCs look to gain similar abilities.

ENTRY 279: Blackguard

"She was a killer. She was good at it. It was all she was good at. She was an adequately excellent lover, a poor tri-spouse, an inadequate parental unit. But she could kill, and she did."

- Excerpt from the first obituary of Mariah Beavercreek AKA Blackguard

The search for meaning in transhuman life is perpetual. For many who no longer want for entertainment, food, shelter, or the other basics of survival, and whose higher needs of entertainment, exercise, work, and socialization are likewise catered to through a steady stream of Mesh programming, all that is left for them is either degeneration or selfactualization. Some find a cause, others seek to realize a dream or a project, and the rest vegetate in a lifetime of holovids, virtual sex games, and whatever drugs they can coax out of the cornucopia machines. Mariah Beavercreek found her meaning in life as a bounty hunter, neglecting her two spouses and their carefully-cloned children for the thrill of the hunt, caring nothing about the credits accrued or reputation, living always in the moment.

If the mark that finally got the drop on her hadn't sent a particle beam through her forebrain, she'd have died happy knowing she had been doing what she loved.

The grave has less grip these days, and some of her former employers were not yet done with the Blackguard. They resleeved her to their own purpose, giving her a new arsenal and a new mission: to find asyncs and capture or kill them, only bring their bodies back to them. There was more after that—much more, about her family that still thought her dead, and the debt she owed from the resleeving—but she didn't listen to any of it. She had a new mission now, and that was all that mattered.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	10	16	17	15	20	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	45	9	67

Morph: Ghost

Skills: Academics: Neurology 40, Academics: Military Science 30, Academics: Psychology 25, Art: Scrimshaw 33, Beam Weapons 54, Blades 44, Fray 50, Freerunning (Microgravity) 25, Infiltration 40, Infosec 38, Interests: Exsurgent Virus 35, Interests: Psi 50, Interests: Merc Groups 25, Interfacing 20, Intimidation 38, Investigation

(Legwork) 44, Kinesics 30, Kinetic Weapons 25, Language: Native English 86, Language Welsh 40, Language Arabic 40, Medicine (First Aid) 25, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminal 25, Networking: Firewall 25, Networking: Media 25, Profession: Bounty Hunting 66, Unarmed Combat 66

Implants: Adrenal Boost, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chameleon Skin, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Vision, Grip Pads, embedded Psi-Jammer Traits: Psi Defense (Level 2), Zero G Nausea

Using Blackguard

Obsessive characters need not be one-dimensional or stupid; simply very focused, particularly when in the middle of a mission, able to cheerfully ignore distractions around them. This single-mindedness is very helpful when introducing Blackguard to the player characters—she may be brusque, but it's the cheerful brusqueness of someone busy doing something she enjoys, which is hunting asyncs. As a hunter, she prefers to track her prey, then set up a nest and wait or arrange for the prey to be driven into her crosshairs. To this end, she might hire the PCs to do a bit of the groundwork for her, identifying a good sniper-post or command center, or to act as "beaters" and attack a target to drive them into her killing zone. If any of the PCs are asyncs, they might find themselves on the run, boxed in and driven to where she can take them out—otherwise, they might be hired to stop Blackguard from making her next hit, or to protect a particular async at the behest of Firewall or some other group. Blackguard for her part tries to minimize civilian casualties, but if the PCs come between her and her target, she's more than willing to fire through the PCs if there's a chance at hitting her mark.

ENTRY 280: Data Is Not Forever

"To all things, there is an end. This is not philosophy, this is mathematics. Statistically, there will be errors. Data will be miscopied, garbled, destroyed, lost. All data is subject to this. Your books, media programs, XP recordings, memories...you. Your ego is data, and eventually it too will fail. Perhaps not for a century, perhaps not for ten thousand years, but as time stretches to infinity, the limit of certainty approaches one. Already you have lost things you will never know to miss, either through accident or because there is no one there to save them. Mark my words, there will be a time, perhaps within your lifetime, when no one will be able to tell you how to get where the air is sweet, and or ask 'will you be my neighbor?'"

- Prophetbot of Doom!, Doomsaying #255

All data storage is imperfect, and given sufficient time data loss is inevitable. This is not something most transhumans want to hear; they have already lost old Earth and the vast amounts of cultural and scientific media that was on it. People are supposed to be the mortal ones, not data. It enrages and saddens people when they learn that all copies of a childhood program, or a painting, or a book, are lost and gone forever. There are archivists that have given their entire lives to scrounging in old datastores and servers, digital archaeologists searching for bits of lost data, incomplete peer-to-peer downloads that continue to circulate in the Mesh, hoping against hope that someone with the final bits will log on and complete it. In a society where truth death seems often on the verge of being vanquished, data loss is still a universal experience, accompanied by mourning and depression. Some find solace in kind words and the company of friends, others craft ceremonies to mark its passing and celebrate what once was and now never will be again; some just get drunk and high and break things. Most everyone understands. There is a finality to all things, and the older you get, the more there is to lose.

Seeds

- On Thought and Phobos, a sect known as the Rogerites keeps alive old children's programs based on memory, re-enacting them as live-action morality plays. Recently, rumor suggests that a cache of the original recordings may exist on an old satellite in Earth-orbit, attracting scavengers as well as hypercorp archivists who wish to sell the recordings for a profit. The player characters are

hired to reach the satellite first and reclaim them for the Rogerites...but even should they succeed, they will find the satellite damaged, and the recordings corrupted. It will take years to make anything of the recordings, but the Rogerites are still grateful for what the PCs have done, and give them lifetime tickets to view their plays.

- The Antinationalists out of Olympus are databreakers, seeking to crush down the barriers of old Earth politics that remain to infect post-Earth culture. The PCs are hired and entrusted with an archaically formatted data station on a remote Lunar outpost, to monitor and protect it against the Antinationalist forces as translators convert the media to modern formats. Very soon, the situation devolves into a siege...and the PCs, trapped within, learn that the media they are translating is an archive of ultranationalist recordings, texts, and war propaganda from the mid-20th century. Will the PCs continue to put their lives on the line to protect Mein Kampf and the speeches of Mussolini?
- Much was lost in the flight from Earth—not just media, but knowledge of technology and medicine. As advanced as transhuman technology still is, no one today remembers how to create silly putty, or to recreate the "orphan drugs" for obscure diseases, or the theory and operation of magnetic amplifiers. A high bounty has been put on recovering or rediscovering this information, and one transhuman may have done so—Rodriguez Michaelangelo Cruz-Corella. However, RMCC has himself been missing for eight months after a fight with scumbarge pirates, lost in the Belt. If the PCs track RMCC down, they will discover his ship broken and open to space, the computers erased, and RMCC dead, still strapped into the captain's chair. However, if they try to contact his ego, they will discover that the lost data has been downloaded into his cortical stack—his last act to overwrite his own consciousness with some of the lost data of Earth.

ENTRY 281: European Quarry #1

Things swim in the cold, dark seas of Europa, beneath the crust of planetary ice. They live, they love, and they die, their remains drifting down to lower depths as a gentle organic snow, the prime source of nutrients and energy for the stranger things adapted to the high-pressure deeps. They in turn die, and their remains lay on the sea floor, accumulating into piles and mounds, eventually crushed beneath their own weight, forming the rough sedimentary rock that makes up the bulk of the European sea floor. Over geological time, this raw material undergoes further chemical and physical changes—slight volcanic activity, asteroid impact, etc.—resulting in upheaval and metamorphosis. The result is a rarity in the solar system: a soft, lustrous white marble, sometimes containing the dark grey fossilized remains of ancient European sea life.

Sites of European marble are few, and currently under a monopoly of the European Mining microcorp, which has established three deep water quarry sites. Taking an artisanal approach to mining, vast chunks of marble are blown out using explosives, and then transhuman biomorphs cut and shape the chunk into sheets and blocks using environmentally-friendly watersaws. Most of the material is reserved for construction, being a luxury export, but the smaller material is shaped into goods and artwork by a local feminist artisan community, the Parliament of Mermaids; the detritus from mining and art is powdered and sent to other habitats, where it is mixed with resins to form a cheaper false stone material.

Using European Quarry #1

Rock isn't something that most players are given to think about. However, it bears reminding that most everything we know and hold familiar about geology applies to the planet Earth. Other worlds, where there are no plate tectonics, no liquid water, no little carbon-based lifeforms to die and leave behind layer upon layer, have very different forms of stone, not to mention rock formations. This doesn't necessarily mean you throw out the book when it comes to rock and gemstones, but it does mean that a lot that players and gamemasters often take for granted can actually be presented as novel, rare, valuable, and fascinating. The European Quarry is one such site on which to hang related plot hooks, but European marble by itself is a neat little detail to work into a campaign from time to time. In addition to statuary, cups, and the like, polished European marble may also be considered a kind of gemstone suitable for jewelry, and can show up in other

habitats far away by way of trade, and buildings made or decorated with European marble are a display of wealth which can be worked into the campaign.

Seeds

- Exobiologists are attempting to call a halt to mining operations at European Quarry #1 so that they can examine and classify the fossils within the lustrous white stone (indeed, the artisans carving the stone often carve around the fossils to better show them off for clients). The PCs are hired to physically deliver the work stoppage order and represent the exobiologists' interests as negotiations continue. Work grinds to a halt and tensions aboard the small habitat get tense, with the PCs caught in the middle. Can they help negotiate a way out, or will they accept a bribe from the European Mining Cor to let work continue and hope their rep doesn't take a hit? Or maybe they'll just investigate who is illegally labeling and selling off-grade white rock as marble...
- One of the "mermaids" in the artisan community has achieved notoriety for her small statuettes and cameos of exotic interspecies erotica, often featuring transhumans and one (or more) creatures based on native European lifeforms—including a few science hasn't identified yet. A group of collectors, scientists, and moralists have pooled their credits and hire the PCs to descend into the depths of Europa and find the reclusive artist—so that they can deliver her fanmail, ceaseand-desist orders, special requests and offers, scientific inquiries, etc.
- A mystery is occurring on the player character's habitat: a mysterious disease is causing transhumans to calcify and slowly transform into statues of European marble! Local medtechs haven't been able to determine what exactly is going on, but that hasn't stopped the media from blaming the spread of the "Medusa virus" with an "infected" load of European marble jewelry that recently arrived. A little legwork and maybe a few long-distance calls to European Quarry #1 might put the PCs on a different tack: looking at the main competitor to the local marble importer, a specialist nanofabricator of artificial stone who has been losing business and might have the skill to program a nanoinfection.

ENTRY 282: Macronauts & Micromorphs

"There are minimum physical dimensions for old human-type brains to achieve and sustain transhuman-style intelligence; not just in terms of volume but surface area, which is critical for temperature control. However, we live in an age when technology can exceed these limits. We need no longer be transhuman-size to maintain transhuman intellect. Give up your size, and discover how big the universe really is."

- Rejected Ad Campaign for Micromorphs, c.AF 4

Micromorphs were an early fad which failed to gain wide adoption: classical human-style biomorphs that were approximately 1:12 human scale and proportional to normal flats and splicers, with most examples only 25 centimeters tall. Physical difficulties like brain surface area were overcome by cyberbrains and bioengineering, borrowing extensively from research on similar-sized lab animals. Unfortunately, the small scale of these enhancements drove up the relative cost of micromorphs, and the morph had limited appeal despite the claims of greater size economy. After only 30 months of production, the morph was officially removed from the general market, with a Lunar microcorp ("THE MicroCorp, Inc.") with ties to the micromorph community continuing to service existing micromorphs and operating a micromorph pod service.

That still leaves over ten thousand micromorphs, who working together have founded their own microscale habitats and set about exploring a universe at another scale. These "macronauts" who leave the micromorph habitats approach life as a challenge on a massive scale, and cover surprising ground given their stature, having adapted appropriately-sized small drones as vehicles and labor-saving machinery. Macronauts are often welcome technicians on spacecraft, due to their small mass and ability to access hard-to-reach areas, and have even had some success as gatecrashers. However, life is not all cornucopia machines and lilliputian sex workers for micromorphs; every one of the morphs is sterile, and many suffer cardiovascular and skeletal problems stemming from their small size and long exposure to microgravity. Augmentations that "normal scale" morphs take for granted the micromorph community has to scale down on their own, using a dedicated reverse engineering clique calling themselves Jultomten. Alcoholism and petal abuse are also rampant problems on the outskirts of micromorph communities, due to a cultural sense of doom—as no more micromorphs are being manufactured, and none can be born, some micromorphs feel the weight of obsolescence and eventual extinction weighing down on them.

Mechanics

Micromorphs are biomorphs.

Enhancements: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Nanoscopic Vision

Aptitude Maximum: 25 (5 for Somatics)

Durability: 10

Wound Threshold: 2

Advantages: +5 to two aptitudes of the player's choice; non-personal augmentation equipment made for micromorphs (clothing, drugs, etc.) that can be nanofabricated is one cost category less, as fewer resources are required in their construction.

Disadvantages: Small Size Trait (see Transhuman: The Eclipse Phase Player's Guide)

CP Cost: 10

Credit Cost: High

Seeds

- The PCs win a Mesh contest, an all-expenses-paid pod-vacation at the Lunar micromorph habitat of Gernika II, where they can enjoy the luxury accommodations in micromorph pods (as above, but with puppet sock), and take in sights like the Gernika II bonsai tree, said to have been cultivated from the Gernikako Arbola from old Earth. As they settle in, the PCs are contacted by Firewall: they rigged the contest to get the PCs to Gernika II, for the purpose of making contact with a subset of the Jultomten who may have deciphered a scrap of TITAN-tech, and recruit them into Firewall...or eliminate them. Of course the PCs, as fish out of water, might find Gernika II a strange habitat, where tomato plants are, relative to the micromorphs, the size of trees and domestic rodents take the place of traditional pets...
- The PCs wake up with a hangover, in micromorphs, and in a cage—but still aboard their normal (full-sized) habitat. With few options, the PCs have to figure out what happened to them and escape. After having a bit of fun running around and getting creative to press buttons and climb up stairs and ladders, the PCs discover their full-sized selves—the micro-PCs are forks that their enemy got hold of and stuck in micromorphs so that they could torture them. Now that they've reunited with their full-scale selves, it's up to the players what they want to do with their new forks and micromorphs.

ENTRY 283: Eggman

"I am the Eggman."

- The Eggman

The balding, unassuming middle-aged splicer known as the Eggman has as mysterious a past as any other veterinarian/ornithologist specializing in the study and preservation of both Earth's classical avian species as well as the neo-avians created through uplifting. Some say he carried on an interspecies relationship for years with an uplifted emperor penguin, and originally received his egg pouch implant to help brood their adopted egg. Others claim he received it as a smuggler for the Triads, forced to carry illicit biologicals in de-embryoed ostrich eggs. One drunken professor of neo-ornithology on Titan insists that Eggman got the pouch as a grad student, and used it to successfully hatch the first kiwi off-earth after the death of its natural mother. Whatever the truth, the Eggman is not telling.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	22	18	16	13	15	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Oology 90, Academics: Ornithology 77, Art: Painting (Birds) 43, Art: Makeup 50, Disguise (Bird) 48, Interests: Parenting 44, Interests: Neo-Avians 45, Interests: Uplift Rights 33, Interfacing 25, Language: Native English 85, Language: Maori 70, Language: New Zealand Sign Language 50, Medicine: Veterinary 66, Networking: Criminals (Black Market Animals) 30, Networking: Science 42, Profession: Veterinarian 60, Unarmed Combat (Beak) 28

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Beak (transgenic graft, 1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat Skill), Egg Pouch (modified Skin Pocket) Traits: Expert (Oology)

Using Eggman

Some people are all surface. They hold no illusions about themselves, who they are or what they do. They present no masks to the outside world, and whether they love or hate themselves, they are resigned to be themselves, through fortune and calamity. The Eggman is one such who is exactly what he appears to be: a veterinarian, oologist, and ornithologist. His mission in life is the study and care of eggs, avians, and neo-avians, and he values their well-

being above his own existence. When the PCs meet him, he will almost inevitably be incubating an egg in his egg-pouch, letting his body heat keep the chick warm until it is ready to hatch. This does not necessarily mean that as a PC the Eggman is boring, or even especially honest in what he tells them, but his actions will always show his true nature: he will never do harm to an avian or neo-avian (non-fertilized eggs are fair game, even though he prefers to preserve them as surrogate ova), or by inaction allow one to come to harm. If faced with a failure at this basic task, he may even committ suicide.

Seeds

- The Eggman has heard rumor of a new Enhanced Pheromones implant that allows transhumans greater empathy with avians and neo-avians. Unfortunately, the research has been stolen by the Intelligent Design Crew. The Eggman asks the PCs to retrieve the design schematics from the ID Crew, offering as payment a small ransom in unfertilized eggs—any one of which will fetch a good price as food or research material on the open market.
- Recently, the Eggman accompanied a gatecrashing expedition, and returned with a strange purple-black egg in his egg pouch. Now he has been acting oddly, neglecting his birds and engaging in strange medical research, acting belligerent and burning favors left and right. His friends and neighbors are worried about him, and have passed the hat to hire the PCs to find out what is wrong with him. If pressed, the Eggman claims to have formed a psychic link with the alien egg he found—and that it is sick and dying, and he wished to find a cure. However, if the Eggman is separated from the egg, it quickly hatches and grows into something similar to a small, feathered headhunter (Eclipse Phase 383, but with DUR 10) with psi sleights that only affect avians.

ENTRY 284: Transprimitivism

"There is an ancient and primeval need in transhumanity, to go into the great outdoors, to find or make your own shelter, learn to live off the land, and in other ways enjoy for a brief period the self-sufficiency that comes from surviving on your own, with only your skills and knowledge. One would have thought that the destruction of transhumanity's only natural habitat would have squelched that ancestral urge, but alas old habits resleeve with little difficulty..."

- Deep Red, Ruster trailblazer

One of the oddest survivals among disparate transhuman cultures is the stubborn retention of formal camping or "roughing it" excursions, whether alone or in small groups transhumans set out from their artificial ecosystems with a bare minimum of technology and see or learn what it is to survive on their own for a few days or weeks. Of course, in a system with no fully-terraformed planets as yet "bare minimum" covers quite a large selection of necessary equipment, and these weekend getaways are less the proverbial hike in the woods with a tent and a water bottle and something closer to an extended surface excursion in a vacsuit from a mobile forward observer station. It is particularly notable that this sort of transprimitivist activity is more common on the more developed and hospitable bodies of Mars, Luna, and Titan than anywhere else in the system.

Mars and Luna in particular are home to the Solar Scouts Organization, in the form of the BGNT Scouts of Mars and the Young Transhuman Scouts of Luna, both transprimitivist organizations dedicated to teaching transhumans critical post-Fall survival skills such as Advanced Atmosphere Loss Training, Shipboard Firefighting, Emergency Repairs, Cortical Stack Harvesting, First Aid, Leadership & Administration, Spacewalking, and of course Surface Survival. Solar Scoutmasters train their students thoroughly before going on any planned surface excursions, which are only undertaken when a scout group as a whole has passed the qualifying exams and mock-emergency timed drills in an airlock to see if they are adequately prepared to patch sudden holes, set up mobile shelters, and perform triage and first aid, all while wearing their vacsuits.

While the Solar Scouts trace their skills and organizational heritage to similar traditions on Earth, as with the rest of transhuman society it is still relatively young—the first generation of Solar Scouts is just now entering their period of graduation, when they must personally complete a project for the benefit of their community to achieve the status of Solar Eagles. These young transhumans, having passed so many trials and proven their skills and abilities before their peers and teachers, face the world with solid starting reps and are already receiving offers to join gatecrashing and exploration expeditions.

Aside from the scouts, there are innumerable other transhumans who engage in transprimitivism more directly—Rusters who use laser-cutters to hollow out a cave in the rock, then set up an air-tight seal with a portable airlock to form a crude dwelling; Europeans with aquatic morphs that go out for week-long fishing expeditions with nothing but a submersible and as much alcohol and bait as they can carry; "walkabout" Jovians on Ganymede that can survive for weeks off icemelt and slow-release nutrient implants; and even scumbarge vacation retailers who advertise three-day stays in private tents outside the hull, local radiation levels permitting.

Seed

Jul Breen is a 17-year old Solar Scout, eager to earn their eagle. His proposed project is the rehabilitation of a damaged and abandoned bacteria-stack atmosphere processing station near the Martian north pole, and he asks the PCs to help volunteer their time and efforts. Breen is aware that the PCs might not help out for free, and is willing to offer his expertise and training in survival, tracking, and other skills; of course, nothing is ever simple, and it turns out that not only is fixing the station more difficult than it first appeared, but someone appears to have deliberately sabotaged the station to hide evidence of a murder...that points to another Solar Scout.

ENTRY 285: The Mortal Diamonds

"And when they die, their end shall be as the sparks that fly from the hammer of God as it strikes the anvil of creation, seeds of stars cast off to reflect the divine." - Lynn of Mitchell

There is a treasure that few would have the heart to steal. One million carats or more of high-pressure diamonds, created from the Lucifer's Hammer project on Jupiter, crafted from the cremains of some of those who died during the Fall. They are the honored dead, transfigured to immortal carbon, for that is all that remains of them. One of the great treasures of the Jovian Junta, the Mortal Diamonds are on perpetual display in a memorial-shrine at Liberty on Ganymede.

Seeds

- The Planetary Consortium asks the PCs to take on a daring mission: infiltrate the Junta on Ganymede, and swap out some of the Mortal Diamonds for fakes that contain passive spy bugs.
- Within the Junta, a gauche faction in The Castle is planning on making their own memorial, the Mortal Diamonds II. This seems sacrilegious (as well as extremely poor taste) to some of the more restrained Jovians, and through an intermediary they approach the PCs to disrupt this effort by stealing the diamonds intended for the second memorial—the PCs, as outsiders, are utterly deniable, but the media outrage at their crime could have serious consequences if they are caught.
- Five years ago, transmissions from the Junta reported a failed attempt to steal the Mortal Diamonds, and the pirates had fled to the Court of Zeus. Now, a friend of the PCs approaches them with a carefully pieced-together map, supposedly showing where the thieves landed—and of course, a story about how they must have gotten away with something, or the Junta wouldn't have wasted so much effort for so many years trying to track them down.
- Miracles! is the word of the day on Ganymede...a debate has erupted in the Holy See on accounts of visions that have occurred to pilgrims who have visited the shrine. Scientists are examining the chamber and combing through the case histories, looking for what phenomena may be behind the

rash of hallucinations, while a faction within the populace and the church urge the pope to declare it a true miracle. The PCs are asked to investigate by a minor mediacorp, which is willing to pay their expenses as they pursue the story...up to a certain point, anyway.

- The PCs are hired to assist the Planet Killer (entry 048) in stealing the mortal diamonds—and thanks to his plan they succeed, and get away clean. Only to discover that the Planet Killer intends to use the diamonds as ultrahard shrapnel in an antipersonnel weapon designed to wipe Liberty off the face of Ganymede. Can the PCs stop the Killer in time? Will they?
- Not all the Mortal Diamonds lay in the Junta's hands. The artist-engineer who designed the memorial kept two two-carat diamonds crafted from the cremains of his parents, and took them with him when he later defected to the Planetary Consortium. The Junta is eager to have these final diamonds to complete their memorial, and are willing to go to great lengths to retrieve them...even murder. Corned by the Junta's agents, the engineer passes them on to the PCs. Now they hold some of the most precious stones in the solar system, and everyone will be looking for them.

ENTRY 286: Echo Zelazny

"I had a future. I spent it."

- Echo, drink #5

Life doesn't turn out like people plan. Echo had a family, friends, was a student at a medical school on Luna, with a full hypercorp scholarshi She grew up in a structured environment, with multiple safety nets and safeguards to keep her from stumbling off the path set up for her—drugs, minor legal troubles, surprise pregnancies, these were special cells on the spreadsheet of her life, triggering subroutines that would swoop down from above and sweep her back on track. A better life than 87% of transhumanity, guaranteed.

It took her a shock to see the cage she lived in. The experiences they kept from her, the ways they guided and manipulated her. Parents, corporate sponsors, teachers, her socalled friends. She hated them all, and wanted out, and found a way. It took a lot of blood to leave her old life behind, and some people still want Echo to answer for it. For those that helped her, she's still working down the debt as an illegal medtech, dealing drugs when she has to, harvesting organs when asked to. Anything for a credit, anything to get her out from under. She stepped out of one cage and into another, and Echo wants out of that one too.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
16	18	15	15	12	18	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academic: Biology 60, Academics: Genetics 60, Academics: Nanotechnology 50, Art: Bodysculpting 40, Art: Writing 40, Beam Weapons 40, Deception 25, Fray 35, Free Fall 45, Hardware: Medtech 40, Interests: Black Market Drugs 40, Interests: Genetic Research 40, Interests: Morph Designs 45, Interfacing 30, Kinesics (Pain) 30, Language: Native Czech 87, Language: English 35, Medecine: General Practice 45, Medicine: Gene Therapy 40, Medicine: Nanomedicine 38, Medicine: Trauma Surgery 50, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminal 35, Networking: Scientists (Students) 33, Perception (Visual) 44, Profession: Lab Technician 40, Profession: Medical Care 44, Programming 33, Psychosurgery 50, Research 35, Scrounging (Medtech) 40

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Multitasking

Disadvantages: Blackmark (Luna), Neural Damage (echolalia)

Using Echo Zelazny

Echo is your basic criminal medtech, good to drop into an adventure for all your can't-letthe-authorities-or-insurance-company-know needs. Unlike most, she's basically an indentured servant, working down a massive debt tied into the multiple murders she's still on the hook for back in Luna. So she's professional, but prone to depression and looking for distractions and a way out. If the PCs offer either of those, she'll play along. Of course, if she can pay off her debt by turning them in to her bosses, she might do that too. PCs are going to be in an interesting negotiating position if she brings this up in the middle of stitching them up or selling them drugs, and she's not above using their health as a bargaining chi Echo's plans to make a big score and get out clean are the most likely way for her to be a direct antagonist to the PCs, getting them involved in her machinations.

ENTRY 287: Spigipede

"Once, there was a dearly-beloved processed meat product. Crippled by the Fall and the general lack of animal byproducts that went into producing it, the parent company ceased to exist, but its intellectual property was bought up by a successor hypercorp, who refused to release the secret recipe or the name from copyright. This infuriated the customer base, and there arose from that overfed horde a group of wild-eyed genehackers who vowed they would never again be without their salty meat snack. This begins the chronicle of the noble spigipede."

- Opening lines to Spigipedes for Flatlanders: A How-To Manual

The "noble spigipede" is a segmented series of muscular rings wrapped around a simple integument system with a vaguely porcine maw at one end and an orifice at the other, and moves by contracting its ring muscles to drag itself along the ground, and even to arch up and overcome obstacles. They can grow up to thirty centimeters in diameter and while no one knows their ultimate length, unharvested spigipedes have reached thirty meters. Boneless, sexless, unable to reproduce and capable of regenerating segments so long as the head remains intact, the spigipede is almost entirely edible. You just cut off a segment, wash out the integument, heat and serve. It has no direct earthly counterpart, though many consumers insist that prepared spigipede steak tastes much like their beloved lost meat-product.

Spigipede cultivation and cooking has become its own mini-culture, complete with handbooks on care, preparation, FAQs, health issues, growing your own spigipede (the gene sequences have been open-sourced, but synthesis and incubation has multiple realizations), My Little Spigipede stuffed animals, Spigipede Friends animations and games, spigipede taxidermy, and any number of genetic upgrades (from the infamous "FlavourPak" to the well-received "Spigipede Loops") most of which are still in beta testing—and all generated by fans, mostly as open and shared content. While most of their nervous system consists of a brain stem that keeps them from eating their own feces, some of the spigipede lovers insist that they make compassionate pets. Commercial spigipede owners, which are predominantly on scumbarges, tend to be less flowery, but still often give their spigipedes small smell-toys that the spigipedes like to cuddle and roll around with, and keep in their nests.

While some XP horror media like Spigipede Shaitan attempts to capitalize on the horror of these huge, pink, segmented, worm-like genetic monsters, the original coders actually hardwired safeguards which made human flesh unpalatable to spigipedes, and the soft tooth oinkerwurms cannot even process bone, which passes straight through their digestive system (minus any soft tissues). Of course, some hypercorps decry spigipedes as being a drag on the commercial production of new, more thoroughly-tested processed meat products, but nobody really cares what they think, and many microcorps take advantage of spigipede meat to help create their own food products, like the pepperoni-flavored Spigizza frozen foods popular on Titan among university students.

Seeds

- People are getting sick, and the source is quickly tracked back to a single spigipede. The station docs are quarantining the animal until they can determine what's wrong with it, but a number of flats and splicers on the station are suffering catastrophic diarrhea and have started up their own Mesh-based Spigipede Plague Support Group while strapped into their toilets and raised a bounty on whoever is responsible. The station has started to tear itself apart to see who did it—was the spigipede poisoned? Infected? Was it poor hygiene and living conditions, or a genetic accident that led to cancer-ridden spigipede steaks being given out? If the PCs want the creds, they'll need to find out first.
- SpigLover99 wants to attempt the never been done before: to resleeve into a spigipede. He has everything set up and ready...but once that's done, there's still the hardest part to get where he wants to be in life, as the pet spigipede for his beloved gene hacker Miss Spiggy on Mars. If the PCs accept the commission, they get SpigLover99's entire worldly wealth, but they need to find some way for Miss Spiggy to accept him into her stable...and she is very particular on her spigipedes.

ENTRY 288: Liangamish

The Liangamish Tholus near the Amenthes Fossae on Mars is an artificial hillock carved from local stone and built into the shape of a large phallic dome, ornamented with penisheaded columns, and fantastic, intricately detailed phallic sculptures, carvings, and the accouterments. The architectural style is claimed by experts to be loosely derivative of Asian and Indian fertility temples of old Earth, but experts who have examined the building claim that while the outside architecture is smooth and symbolic or representative of human genitalia, inside the temple the artwork gets progressively more strange, detailed, elaborate, and dark, incorporating fantastical creatures and aliens, skulls and bones, perverse couplings, genital mutilation, and architectural considerations that suggest blood grooves and ritual chambers for self-castration.

Despite, or perhaps because, of the elaborate and strange sexual symbolism and artwork of the site, it retains a steady tourist trade, with the Liangamish Tours microcorp controlling access to the site, giving guided physical and virtual tours, ensuring visitors don't damage the site, and selling souvenirs. Honeymooners in particular are known to visit the site and kiss or rub the Central Phallus, a freestanding iron pillar in the geometric center of the Tholus, which is often given to be good luck and promote fertility. An objective outside investigative agency performed a series of surveys and biomedical scans and found that there is a slight positive correlation between fertility and kissing the Phallus, but argued that this may well be the result of other factors. This has not stopped the microcorp from disseminating the study's finding widely to attract more tourists.

Liangamish Tours has been searching for the original artisan or artisans as part of plan to expand the site, with detailed designs already in place for new tholuses centered around breasts, vaginas, and anuses, but have so far failed to discover much on the origins of the Liangamish site or its creator(s). Initial construction steps toward new or expanded tholus sites have also met unusual delays and faults, which has given birth in the media to the rumor of a curse—ironically, Liangamish employees and officers appear confused as to whether this is an idea they came up with or not, and interviews and Mesh-based digital archaeology gives conflicting evidence as to whether it is a plant and to what degree the Liangamish Tours employees actually believe in the supposed curse.

Using Liangamish

A mystery, wrapped in an enigma, which could be the site of an H. R. Giger-themed pornographic film—and hey, feel free to use it in your game if that appeals to you. Liangamish is an adult-themed location which is taboo enough for the inner twelve-year old in every gamer, and with just enough is-it-or-isn't-it rumors and unresolved origins about it that the gamemaster can do pretty much whatever they want with it. As a scene, it's creepy and yet sort of silly, with carve stone penis-monsters that PCs can momentarily stumble on in the dark and then feel foolish about. Who built it and why are entirely up to the PCs, but as it stands it is a good slightly-out-of-the-way tourist spot (like Stonehenge), a decent scene for a wedding or post-wedding hijinks, the not-so-secret meeting place of an exsurgent cult, the remnant of an old Earth religion, etc. Gamemasters that don't like or aren't comfortable using "phallus" and various related terms every other sentence are entirely welcome to replace the distinctive theme with teddy bears or hippopotami or whatever else they find interesting, though that does mean they'll miss out on the opportunity to use images of Asian fertility temples and H. R. Giger art as props in game.

Seed

The Liangamish Curse doesn't just prevent further destruction—individuals that have damage the site, such as removing materials from it, often face bad fortune or death. So when the superstitious flat Juice Boxer finds a stone penis among his things, he is scared bad. He asks the PCs for their help in returning the object to its rightful place as quickly as possible—made all the more difficult because Liangamish Tours has temporarily closed the site after recent marsquakes may have damaged the stability of the building.

ENTRY 289: Monadarchy

"Groups form from collective experiences. Shared memories that lead to common ground and from the basis of interrelationships. Team-building exercises have always focused on this aspect of transhumanity, forcing individuals to live, suffer, and work together to achieve common goals, hoping that this would develop in hours or days what takes months or years to do under normal circumstances. Of course, today we can literally share memories—and we can do so on a much greater scale..."

- The Monadarchy, sales pitch

Transhumanity values its individuality; each unique ego is precious because it is different, and represents a distinct perception of the universe. Some see in individuality a hedge against extinction, the multitude of viewpoints more likely to perceive a solution than any single ego with a million forks. Others consider it an aspect of the transhuman condition, and an inviolable part of transhumanity—to be separate and individual among others, to possess the instincts for self-preservation, self-realization, and self-promotion that have driven history and development. For without selfishness and individuality, how else could transhumans appreciate self-sacrifice and groupthink?

On the other paw, transhumans are social animals that rely on coming together for common purpose, to specialize and proliferate, to produce more by the sum of their efforts than they could as individuals. In habitats which have experienced tremendous growth with the influx of refugees there has been the desire to form communities and communal identities, to better serve and preserve transhumans in this delicate period of transition from their home planet to the stars. Not an easy task with the billion distractions of the Mesh, where local politics often give way to tribes based around common timeframes and personal preferences, where transhumans can claim membership in groups as diverse as the Militant Neo-Pony Fancier Federation and the Left-Handed League. Community investment is a difficult concept to sell, and group activities intended to foster community spirit often ill-attended.

One competitive technology in the nation-forming field is the Monadarchy. Technically a microcorp operating out of Mitre Station, the Monadarchy is a technological co-op that aims to enhance group experience while preserving the individuality of egos, an effort at team-building on a grand scale without forming any accidental hive-minds. Monadarchists simply download an app into their cortical stacks that backs up their ego to the Mesh as they sleep; the forks are then subject to a trade secret recombinatorial process that distills the group collective experience and applies it as a software patch which is then uploaded to the sleeping transhuman. They awake with a common cultural experience imprinted in their memory—not the individual memories of all the transhumans in their network, but a digest of events major and minor. Monadarchists know, on

a gut level, the feeling of the group majority toward issues and individuals, even if they cannot cite the statistics without tapping into a newsfeed, and they always have common ground with other members of the network based on the shared memories downloaded from the night before.

The Monadarchy proclaims this as the fundamental cultural basis of a new society in transhumanity, although for the most part it remains a purely optional choice in those few habitats that have embraced it, mainly Argonaut strongholds like Mitre Station and Markov. The truth is that many transhumans remain suspicious of the localized Monadarchy networks, afraid of another Synergy incident, or the "rolling emotional trauma" bug caused after a serial rapist joined the monadarchists on Markov, necessitating quite extensive group therapy (not helped when the Monadarchy reps temporarily claimed that the group activities would help bring the survivors even closer together).

Using the Monadarchy

Loss of individuality is a familiar science fiction trope; this plays with that idea while trying to undercut it. The real benefit of the Monadarchy to a game is a sort of assumed cultural background knowledge—PCs wake up already knowing the best places to eat, what the three seashells are for, that the local population doesn't want McAlister to run for reelection as Supreme Overlord/System Administrator (SOSA), etc.—including things that wouldn't make the local Mesh newsfeed, at least not above the fold. How gamemasters play this is up to them, though generally it should be seen as a sort of accelerated acclimation and acceptance to a group, not characters finishing each other's sentences or engaging in flocking behavior. Unless there's a glitch...

Seeds

The PCs are accosted by an Argonaut splicer named Numero 17 (he had to fight over fifty transhumans to keep that name, and would kill fifty more to keep it). No. 17 is an insomniac that has been up for eighty-odd hours, and he swears that the members of his Monadarchy network have forgotten an important event from seventy-eight hours ago—the disappearance of the Tiajing Triplets. All the local news media archives of the event have been wiped, and nobody else remembers it. No. 17 is afraid that when he falls asleep and it updates, he will forget as well. The PCs might question No. 17's sanity (and why he doesn't just uninstall the app), but if they're willing to humor him, they'll have to keep him awake while investigating this collective amnesia.

ENTRY 290: Rocket Rhosa

Every war has its heroes. In the fight against the TITANS, Rocket Rhosa was an armorer and pilot, known for her love of big guns and her innovative and flashy improvised weapons. She was known for having eighteen combat craft damaged or destroyed over the course of the conflict, and never wasted much time in getting another one and equipping it with bigger and ever more dangerous weapons. For the course of the conflict, she was one of the darlings of the Solar system.

After the war, her star fell. Rhosa never found a habitat where she fell at home, and her temper and taste for alcohol and explosives got her into troubles legal and economic. For years she was reduced to the nominal position of pilot on an automated ore-trawler, because the owner was old-fashioned and preferred to have at least one transhuman on board to keep the AGIs honest. That was her low point, where she fell into dissipation from which she might never have recovered.

Then the space pirates attacked, and she found herself again. Now she's sober (mostly) and back to her chipper old self, piloting one rusty tub after another, each equipped with outlandish weapons of her own design—pirate hunters, smuggler outrunners, escort ships, whatever meets the needs of the job. She has friends in every port again, and most of them know to keep her off the sauce when playing with the plutonium.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
21	15	20	15	15	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	40	8	80	35	7	50

Morph: Menton

Skills: Academics: History (Explosives) 55, Academics: Sociology (Propaganda) 55, Beam Weapons 50, Demolitions (Munitions) 48, Free Fall 36, Gunnery 72, Hardware: Electronics 34, Hardware: Spacecraft 48, Hardware: Munitions 56, Interests: Big Guns 33, Interests: Exotic Weapons 30, Interests: Propoganda 35, Interfacing 23, Intimidation 25, Language: Native Greek 95, Language: Russian 90, Language: English 90, Language: French 75, Navigation 23, Networking: Firewall 25, Networking: Scientists 25, Pilot: Spacecraft 49, Profession: Arms Dealer 50, Profession: Demolitions Expert 60

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, HyperLinguist, Math Boost, Multi-tasking, Oracles Traits: Addiction (Alcohol, moderate)

Using Rocket Rhosa

Armorers are wonderful people that make things that hurt other people, and often will modify them to meet your specific needs at a reasonable price. They are often enthusiastic (if not always outgoing) professions with deep interests in their particular areas of expertise. Most players don't give much thought to their weapons past the raw statistics, and for most games this is sufficient—the idea of the rules and presentation being to induce a sense of verisimilitude of combat, since realistic depictions of science fiction battles is both difficult and open to wide interpretation. However, this does not mean that any idea or tweak involving weaponry can't be included in your home games— maybe the PCs see that the opposition has started "hotboxing" their beam weapons by modifying the settings to obtain higher damage at the cost of reduced range, lifetime, and the not-insignificant chance of exploding, and now the PCs want to hotbox their own weapons. Easy enough for somebody with the right skills— enter the armorer.

Rocket Rhosa for her part is a classic example of the out-of-work warrior archetype: enthusiastic when she has a project, and rather drunken and morose when deprived of purpose. Her specific purpose is blowing things up, which can come in handy for the PCs in many ways, but also makes her a deadly foe if she starts gunning for them (say, if the PCs decide to try their hand at space piracy). She's a loyal friend, but sometimes careless, and anyone that knows her for any length of time knows not to trust her when she starts disarming grenades while on her third bottle of whatever the locals distill.

ENTRY 291: Blind Tigers

"They say it is all in our heads. Of course it is. The universe is in our heads, the shadows on the wall of the cave..."

- Dzen Stephanopolous, Sight Beyond Sight

One of the peculiarities that became apparent once resleeving took hold in transhumanity is that for a significant part of the population physical injuries and disabilities coincide with or led to related psychological damage which was carried with the ego to the new morph. These conditions appear to be distinct from forms of neural damage (such as cortical blindness) that become inherent to the ego, but the effects are largely similar—an individual who had some physical limitation in an old morph such as blindness, deafness, limited mobility in a limb, partial paralysis, etc. carries some of their physical handicap or disability forward into the new morph as a mental handicap. Unlike neural damage, psychosurgery and therapy has often proven effective in treating individuals facing these mental disabilities.

Some individuals facing these conditions do not respond well to therapy, or choose not to undergo it. Instead, they embrace their disability in their lifestyle. Popularly called "blind tigers" (or deaf tigers, crippled tigers, etc. as appropriate), these transhumans are the leading edge of the population working to accommodate habitats and services for transhumans with disabilities, by coding alternative sensory input into Mesh sites and channels, working braille translations next to written instructions, designing systems designed for mobility-challenged morphs, giving alternate-sense skill training classes, etc. A large part of their efforts are simply providing a community of like-disabled individuals to provide continued encouragement and opportunity for both the community of disabled transhumans and individuals.

Using the Blind Tigers

If a character in Eclipse Phase suddenly goes blind, one of their first instincts is probably to hack the nearest camera (or even ghost another character's visuals) and so regain their sight that way. If the blindness is a purely physical phenomenon ("Aargh, the laser got my eyes!") this is fine; kudos to the player. For other characters who have blindness as a result of mental derangement or neural damage however, this will not work. This isn't meant to be a way of screwing over the player character and gamemasters shouldn't inflict psychological disabilities willy-nilly, but the basic concept of being an inherent trait of the ego instead of the morph is that the disadvantage is completely removed from physical capability—it is a psychological block on the ego's ability to perceive certain information or utilize certain abilities, not a matter of having defective parts. A character with Mental Disorder (Blindness) just can't process visual information, a character with Mental Disorder (No Left Arm) cannot use their left arm (or equivalent limb), etc.

Again, the point of this is not to screw over PCs ("Ha ha, sucks to be you."), it's an optional limitation for players and gamemasters to consider to promote roleplaying—how would you get around if you were blind and simply swapping out cybereyes wasn't an option? How would you make the universe a better place for other blind characters? In most cases, these disadvantages are not completely unsurmountable by any means—muses can act as go-between translating speech or visual stimulus into a form that the blind tiger character can interpret; sonar, radar, lidar, and other augmented senses can easily make up for vision in many (though not all) instances; the Mesh alone generally has options available to accommodate any number of disabilities, and so on and so forth. Blind tiger characters who work to integrate the solutions of their disabilities into their lifestyles are not working to deny their disadvantages as much as embracing them as key aspects of their character.

A particularly appropriate occasion to pick up a Mental Disorder of this form is when mental stress from resleeving, where a physical limitation or bit of damage from the old morph is carried over as a Mental Disorder of the ego. Again, this isn't intended to be a death sentence for the character, and the disorder can be dealt with via psychosurgery or therapy as normal.

Seed

The player characters arrive on Pallwyn, a "dark habitat" where the primary sense is sonar, not normal transhuman vision. As a consequence, the PCs will have to find their way through a habitat full of "blind" morphs, where all the signs are in a sonar-reflection language and concepts like color are not in general use compared to terms for texture, jitter, delay, echo spread, etc. The habitat is currently suffering a series of murders, but some of the key clues are being left in visual media that the investigators are missing...one of the local blind tigers approach the PCs and ask them to find the killer, whom they are afraid is another one of the blind tigers. Of course, as strangers with full visual faculties, the authorities might grow suspicious of the PCs if they get involved.

ENTRY 292: Oxo Light

Transhumans evolved on the surface of the Earth, and their anatomies developed in with regard to that requirement—gravity, atmospheric pressure, air consistency, and sunlight. The transition to space and other planets and moons sees morphs derived from Earth plains-apes struggling to adjust to a much wider spectrum of environments, and while transhumanity has managed to adapt rather well to some of the difficulties of microgravity, recycled air, etc., the considerable radiation shielding designed to protect biomorphs from the damaging effects of cosmic radiation has had the unintended effect of depriving much of transhumanity of necessary levels of ultraviolet radiation. While UVR is very popularly known to cause burns with long or intense exposure, transhumans evolved in an environment that expected regular low-level UVR exposure, which is important for several physiological processes, most notably the photosynthesis of vitamin D. Some estimates suggest that as many as 76% of transhuman biomorphs currently suffer from vitamin D deficiency, as many as half of those individuals do not receive adequate nutritional supplements of vitamin D to make up the difference.

As recognition of this discrepancy filters through transhuman consciousness, the demand for a solution has led to a new invention: oxo light. Typically taking the form of a cylindrical column, oxo light is a calibrated low-intensity UVR emitter whose output is modulated based on the requirements of the individual user, determined by syncing with the user's medical profile via the Mesh. Several habitats have established rooms specifically for group exposure sessions, using colored rings zones around the oxo light column to help transhumans position themselves at the correct distance to avoid over exposure, which can lead to sunburn and even skin cancer with prolonged use. Individuals using these spaces shed most of their clothes (depending on the norms of the habitat and the individual) and spend up to a couple hours exposing themselves to the light. Most users spend the time in meditation or surfing the Mesh, although many habitats organize social activities such as martial arts lessons, physical exercises, speed dating, etc. Where space is a concern, oxo lights also come in smaller portable egg-shaped devices of various sizes.

Seeds

- One of the surprises of oxo light is its popularity with the Factors, who find the near-Earth-normal light beneficial and stimulating to their upper layers. Unfortunately, the PCs go in to their oxo light time one morning and find a blackened, immobile Factor—the apparent victim of extreme UVR exposure. The Factor is still alive, and contacts the PCs, asking for them to hide it as it believes it has been deliberately attacked, and that the perpetrators will seek to finish the job.
- A genehacker named Black Ned has arranged to meet the PCs at an oxo light room during the time scheduled for nudists—all the better to make sure the characters are unarmed when they meet him, or so he'll say if they ask why. If the PCs do show up, it turns out Ned has something else in mind—an assassination against a rival genehacker here to take the light as well. If the PCs except, Ned will provide them with special sunglasses and then initiate a program that causes the oxo light to fluctuate, equivalent to a basilisk hack and affecting everyone in the room not wearing the special sunglasses (or equivalent flare protection). Making the hit then is dead easy—but what have the PCs gotten themselves into and what will the repercussions be?

ENTRY 293: Voice of One

"My beat is Aspis to Starwell, Nova York to Pallas...I find the news that doesn't make your Mesh feed, the stories below the fold, behind the paywall, and just plain off the grid. Hello, I am the Voice of One. I want your story."

- VoO, column 3866: "The Names and Addresses of that Shitheel Rapist Gang on Legba"

The Main Belt has its share of newsmedia. Bored editors and hyper little wordsmiths spin facts and events into a constant stream of infomush to keep the great crowd Audience fed and sedated. On the flipside are the so-called outlaw reporters—operating without major financial backing, insurance, and much in the way of credentials beyond their willingness to ask questions. Some of them wave guns around, others go "undercover" a little too convincingly for the local authority's tastes; most sell out and get out at some point. Somewhere near the front of the current crop is the vivacious, scar-faced bouncer known as Voice of One.

Specializing in "transhuman interest" stories, Voice of One has a reputation for picking up the small stories that the big media drops quickly, pursuing them relentlessly, and seeing that everything gets uncovered and the people in them get everything that's coming to them. Of course, she gets a piece of everything—from the advertising to the XP-of-the-week drama-documentaries—that comes after, but she has to make a living somehow. She blows through habitats quickly, leaving bleeding bodies, broken lives, and bruised egos in her wake, often seeming unconcerned about the damage she does—like the time she did the expose on the Blue Ring in Legba, a sex trafficking ring that took turns resleeving into a series of underage morphs each week, while the child ego was out in a digital playground oblivious to what their meat bod was getting up to. That led to the expulsion (often by airlock) of all the adults and most of the kids bodies retained as evidence, leaving their egos as orphaned AGIs stuck in the Mesh.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	17	15	13	15	16	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	30	6	60	40	8	60

Morph: Bouncer

Skills: Academics: Physics 30, Academics: Statistics 32, Art: Writing 50, Climbing 34, Free Fall 46, Interests: Rival Networks 45, Interests: Zero-G Sports 60, Interfacing 54,

Intimidation (Blackmail) 45, Kinesics (Lying) 40, Language: Native English 90, Language: French 80, Language: Wu 80, Networking: Autonomists 44, Networking: Criminals 29, Networking: Media 66, Perception (Visual) 48, Profession: Reporter 53, Programming 54, Research 45, Unarmed Combat 30

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet

Traits: Addiction (stimulants, moderate)

Using Voice of One

One of the nice thing about reporters is that they are some of the few individuals whose job is a justification for poking around in other people's business, especially when they're not wanted, and they have little to no requirement to report to or act under any authority. The Voice of One is such an enthusiastic (and occasionally violent) individual, and will happily pursue any lead if there's a credit or a noyo attached to it, and is more than willing to badger, harry, harass, heckle, bindle, blackmail, and extort the player characters for their help, assistance, or just for the fun of it. VoO's investigations are a good place to drop the seed for a new adventure, or she might hire the PCs (i.e. promise a cut of the eventual monies she might one day receive) to help her during an investigation, or she might turn up dead (again) on the PC's doorstep with a scrap of evidence on her and they'll have to figure out what she's gotten them into this time. Alternately, if the gamemaster prefers a more adversarial relationship, local authorities, private citizens, and hypercorps could hire the PCs to derail or halt her investigations—either by beating her to the punch, dropping false clues, causing small personal crises (she will never again discuss her second marriage, the resulting sex recording, or why she has a hallway on Legba named after her), etc.

ENTRY 294: AF Slurs

"Why do I need a Chinese word for 'cunt'? Or a Venusian word, whatever. Why do I have to use a made-up word to say what I really mean? What's wrong with the word 'cunt' that I can't use the one we have in English?"

- John Tecumseh Jones, What A Cunt I Am

Hate, fear, and prejudice always find expression in the syntax of the time. That said, few swearwords, insults, and slurs have real staying power beyond general cultural inertia: the word 'fuck' has been in the English language in some form or another for a thousand years, and will probably continue to exist for as long; the Lunar trend of 'cuntoid' for female-identifying synthmorphs is already dying fast. Still, where there is anger and discrimination there will be words to describe it, and the changing social norms after the Fall provide plenty of raw material for new and injurious expressions. So in addition to all the hundreds or thousands of slurs still in use with regards to an individual's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, intelligence, appearance, odious personal habits, ancestry, etc. there have arisen thousands or tens of thousands of terms discussing new ethnicities, religions, morph types, political and social beliefs and preferences, just to name a few. Few of these really catch the metacultural awareness, and remain tied to specific networks, habitats, and social circles, but a few have spread fairly wide throughout the system.

"Nutes" as a disparitive descriptive for genderless biomorphs is one of the most common, though nowhere near as insulting as some of the more inventive names for them in Vo Nguyen, where bioconservatives have painted neuter biomorphs as sexual deviants and "unnatural." Gender identity still remains a point of contention for nominally sexless synthmorphs (and, less often, informorphs), which spans the spectrum from synthmorphs-that-identify-as-a-given-gender ("Cuntoids," "Princkbots," etc.) to mixedbiomorph-synthmorph-sexual-relationships ("Toyboy," "toyboi," "toygirl," "toygurl," "toyfag," "toyqueer," etc.) Xenoreligions and new religions see rather widespread distain, with any number of insults based on their beliefs, the least contentious of which is the Mesh media labeling them all as cults. Even some specific morphs and factions get their share of nicknames, such as the Ultimates and Remade ("ussholes," on Olympia, "Ulticunts" in Nova York, etc.) This is but a small sampling

of the vast number of new slurs being generated, used, and abandoned every day.

Using AF Slurs

In moderation, where and when you must. The issue with fantasy slurs in a science fiction setting is less an issue of being politically correct as it is sounding like an asshole by spouting a bunch of silly, obviously made-up words designed to be quasi-offensive. I mean, c'mon, "cuntoid" sounds like something a thirteen year old boy would come up with to shock his friends. A number of sci-fi insults often come across the same way, feeling artificial and silly on the tongue—feth, feck, frak, frag, frell, shazbot, bleep, tanj, gorram, smeg, shock, smurf, bastich, Belgium, blotching, slitch, etc. Sci fi slurs are little better, often based on some basic physical characteristic or disparaging resemblance to Earth organisms/objects, like crab, bug, spoonhead, clicker, clanker, suckhead, spacehead, flatlander, socialator, smeghead, etc. These terms aren't offensive to contemporary ears because they aren't culturally ingrained as offensive, and so miss the desired impact (unless you just want to sound slightly silly, which is perfectly acceptable), whereas realworld ethnic slurs are likely to offend people you're playing the game with, which is generally undesired.

So what's the point? Well, sometimes you do want a non-offensive but patently supposed-to-be-a-slur-or-swearword in your campaign. Fair enough, more than one science fiction writer has written pseudo-swears just to get past the censors or for verisimilitude. However, this kind of language is also a strong indication of what characters in your game hate and fear—these are the focal points for social, sexual, gender, and ethnic commentary in the setting, and the new slurs you introduce can be a springboard for highlighting or examining those issues. Given the propensity of new insults to borrow from old insults, it is up to you to determine whether your group is comfortable or mature enough to handle such topics in a game—I would encourage you to talk with your players about it before Marvin d'Mars describes Rusters as "Martian Niggers," for example. That's going to send a shock through the table—and so it should. The 'n-word' is the ethnic slur to end all ethnic slurs in the United States, and busting it out at the table could cause an argument or at least several minutes standing around looking uncomfortable.

ENTRY 295: Candee Apple Island

"They look like...apes?"

- Yeshiva Candee, gatecrasher

Three months ago, a group of gatecrashers stepped through the Pandora Gate, and walked on sweet-smelling green grass under blue skies whose white fluffy clouds promised rain. All initial tests had suggested the statistically improbable—a near-Earthlike planet, with an active biosphere and characteristics tantalizingly close to old Earth. Gravity, sunlight, oxygen content, temperature—it was almost perfect. Of course, it was also already inhabited.

Initial, covert surveys identified that the gate opens on a grassy bald near the top of a mountain on a sizable island in the middle of a salt water sea, with no other landmasses in sight. Rough early estimates give a population of perhaps four thousand six-limbed hominoids on Candee Apple Island, as well as associated flora and fauna suggestive of considerable evolutionary development. The hominoids themselves are lumbering figures somewhere between hairy reptiles and monotreme mammals, with a partial bipedal gait and evidence of some tool use and spoken language, though usage of fire and stored energy (spring traps, bows, etc.) is only incidental. They are omnivorous, with a few natural predators in the form of vicious six-limbed toothless carnivores with a caustic slobber and long, rough tongue, and are divided into three rough tribes based primarily on fur color (pink, blue, and green, though many stippling patterns are evident).

Faced with a thriving population of possible sapient, the gatecrashers quietly finished their survey and withdrew without attempting to make contact, and taking care to conceal signs of their intrusion. This has sparked an ongoing debate about the further development and exploitation of Candee Apple Island—whether it is appropriate to interfere with their cultural and technological evolution, the benefits of exploiting the planet for transhuman colonization and resource development, etc. Currently, the factions that argue for study and observation have won out with the hypercorp that sponsored the expedition to discover the world, a research-oriented venture out of Titan known as Kessler-Tycho AG. Emphasis has been placed on further exploration of the biology and geography of this new world, taking considerable pains to avoid direct contact

with the native "apes," even to the extent of disguising drones as native creatures.

Using Candee Apple Island

CAI is classic Prime Directive bait, but with a couple twists. First, the gatekeeper for this "untouched" country is a profit-minded hypercorp, and while right now they'll listen to the ethists and scientists that want the Island to remain untouched, eventually the data needs to lead to something to justify the expense of discovering and exploring the world. Further, the "apes" of Candee Apple Island may or may not be all that they appear—while there are several indications of sentience, it is difficult at a remove to distinguish these behaviors from the actions of pre-uplift animals like Earth-based gorillas and elephants—and nothing about the level of technology they possess suggests how the "apes" got here from wherever their parent land mass is, and there is no immediate indication that they evolved on the relatively small island. There are mysteries here as well as morality plays, and some of the long-time researchers wonder if they haven't stumbled upon an artificial habitat, not a natural one, and wonder *quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*

Seed

The Prosperity Group is making a bid to buy out Kessler-Tycho AG, and that has xenobiologists and xenosapient watchdog groups going nuts. Different factions approach the player characters to intervene, hoping to dig up the PG's real plans for Candee Apple Island, or at least see if K-T AG is hiding any dark secrets. Surprisingly enough, the PCs do turn up a reference to an early report that was buried, the various gatecrashers involved mysteriously died or disappeared not long afterwards, all pointing toward a possible ruined settlement on the barren north coast of the island. If the PCs follow through, they'll have to pass through the gate to Candee Apple Island, possibly with Prosperity Group counteragents on their tail, and come across a perfect circle of fused, slightly radioactive glass and ruined buildings and monuments that the "apes" are the degenerate, inbred remnants of what was once an advanced culture...possibly the last survivors of their own extermination event.

ENTRY 296: Sweeps Squad

Catharsis is the heart of attracting and keeping a prime audience, and in their quest for higher market shares media producers big and small will plumb the depths of love, heartache, pornography, violence, transgression, blasphemy, awe, devotion, and spectacle, leaving the transhumans that plug into their feed satiated, fucked out, brain numb, emotionally and physically exhausted from the experience, with creds and upvotes trickling into the accounts and profiles of the producers that worked hard to bring them the visceral entertainment they so crave. Yet in the vastness of the transhuman media sphere, with more content produced each second than any single audience member could experience in a lifetime, viewers aren't just spoiled for choice, their feeds are overflowing with content with no way to sort the million-volt-main line entertainment from the grainy, raw space hamster meshcam put out by a six year old with a My First Meshfeed sitekit.

Of course, the Mesh is rarely the perfect anarchist environment it appears, and different groups gather to consolidate shares of the market. In the Jovian Republic access controls subtly channel and limit content, trying to filter out illicit access to state-disapproved media through ever-evolving tag filters, self-contained genetic algorithms that sample metadata and pre-emptively ban incoming content based on what they think the next big fetish or philosophy will be; in the Main Belt anarchists data pirates have made it their mission to liberate the sum totality of adult entertainment on their peer-to-peer networks, undermining any effort by any second party to corner the market in pornography by making it available to all with a pay-what-you-want scheme that ensures creds and favors trickle down to the performers and crews; and in the Planetary Consortium media hypercorps dominate with vividly interlinked, self-referential fictional universes. Facing such dedicated competition, new players in the media need extreme measures to break into the business.

They're called Sweeps Squads. Often violent, always mediagenic, the Sweep Squads are pirate programmers, violating personal and media space to bring the gift of new media to the masses, often against their will. Flash operas erupt in Olympus, surprise audience members get co-opted into team bloodsports in the corridors of Extropia, prospective porn stars converge anonymously on New Varanasi for the Olympic Bang, and on a scumbarge out Mercury-way ten thousand subscribers have their feed

hacked to experience an XP documentary about transhuman body dismorphic disorders. Freelancers are always welcome, and Sweep Squads are always hiring: in a market where viral advertising gets lost in the background noise, sometimes the only way to get noticed is to get in people's face.

Using Sweeps Squad

Smile for the camera and check that your sensory feeds are clean, it's time to get mediagenic. Sweeps Squad is an easy way to embrace all the excesses of media from every era, and the player characters can be hired to be as insane, dedicated, or ultraviolet as you're comfortable with bringing to your game. Sweeps Squads typically go over the edge of legality, and PCs will have to deal with an often confused and/or irate "audience," authorities, and competition as they try to get the people involved with their program. Given Sweeps Squad stunts might be as impromptu or elaborately choreographed as players and gamemasters care to make them. In any event, PCs at least have a clear idea of success: if the media ratings for their particular production go up, they've succeeded.

Seed

The PCs are on another job when they find another team shadowing their every move, recording everything, breaking into their quarters while they're out, interviewing contacts, witnesses, po-po, relatives, sex partners...they've been targeted by a Sweeps Squad that's making a reality/documentary on the PCs, and the brains behind the show try to roll with the PC's style, working in social commentary, psychological analysis, violence if the PCs get confrontational. A smart player might try to crash the ratings by being boring, but that just means the producers will try to spice things up by adding complication's to the PC's lives. The good news is, there's a built-in time limit because no new media fad lasts forever...but can the PCs survive that long?

ENTRY 297: Jane Starware

"You see an orphan. I see an undeveloped personnel resource."

- Nicky Blackstone

Hypercorporate life can be tough on families. Along with the hustle and bustle of work, meetings, training camps, seminars, conferences, and all the other events that fill the business portion of the calendar, hypercorps are also societies with their own holidays, teambuilding events, birthdays, and parties, and have to incorporate transhuman events like weddings, funerals, births, resleeving, augmentation and sick leave, and office sex. Employment in a hypercorp, as opposed to freelancing, is a serious commitment for both the hypercorp and the employee and their families. There are health, financial, and educational benefits to be sorted out, and each employee represents a massive investment in time and resources. So on occasion when an employee dies or chooses to give up their children for whatever reason—or, in some cases, when unauthorized fraternization leads to an unexpected and undesired pregnancy—the hypercorp will adopt and raise the child as its own. (Some hypercorps tried the whole clone-worker approach, but after the debacle with Moletronics Amalgamated Genetics, it's a hard sell.)

Jane Starware is one of the adopted children of Starware hypercorp, born and raised by the Starware community, educated through their Pre-Professional Trainee Program, and slotted to advance into their Advanced Internship (Remunerated) program next semester if she can keep her grades u Individual orphans' relationship to their parent corporations is determined by corporate law and their respective contracts with the hypercorp in question; Jane is currently operating under a "pre-majority contract" which can expire when she reaches legal majority, unless she chooses to transition into a full employment contract.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
11	14	12	9	9	7	10	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
4	1	20	4	40	35	7	50

Morph: Menton

Skills: Academics: History 16, Academics: Physics 16, Art: Singing 14, Deception 13, Free Fall 13, Hardware: Robotics 14, Interests: Hypercorps 15, Interests: Kid Fashion 14, Interests: Starware Lore 16, Interfacing 17, Investigation 16, Kinesics 15, Language: Native German 78, Language: English 70, Language: French 63, Networking: Hypercorps 15, Networking: Scientists 15, Perception 15, Profession: Student 15, Profession: Intern 15, Programming 16, Protocol (Corporate) 15, Research 15, Unarmed Combat 16

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Hyper-Linguist, Math Boost

Using Jane Starware

Being an orphan doesn't always mean being an unloved, unwanted brat. Jane Starware hasn't received a traditional upbringing, but just because she can't identify a specific prime parental figure (she's never met the donors of her genetic material, but for her birthday she was allowed to view their personnel records and noted they both scored very highly on the standard evaluations before their untimely deaths, though those records are still sealed). She's young, and rather optimistic about her future, but curious about the outside world. Her place in the corporate hierarchy isn't confirmed yet, but she already has a rather large indenture hanging over her head (sunk costs from raising her), and Starware aims to recoup those resources one way or another.

Seeds

- Jane has a teenage rebellion stage scheduled, and the hidden sensors in her living facility have picked up evidence of outside communication and a likely runaway attempt. Starware is already aware of this, and plans to let her go for a few weeks or months to experience the outside world. However, Jane's Personal Manager is worried about her safety, and approaches the player characters to keep an eye on her and keep her away from any real threats to her future. If the PCs are up for a little ninja chaperoning, they'll earn a sizable favor from a Starware exec.
- Jane Starware approaches the PCs. She wants them to uncover the sealed files on the death of her parents/genetic donors from the Starware corporate archives, and can provide a limited amount of assistance. All she has to pay is her "piggy bank"—a secret cache of Starware coupons that can get the PCs up to 20% off on any single purchase.
- A group named the Comprachicos approaches the PCs, asking them to help extract Jane from her indentured status so she can be placed with a more traditional transhuman family. After the extraction goes off, the PCs are approached by Starware, and find out that the Comprachicos are a gang of corporate headhunters aiming to sell Jane to a microcorp with less stringent ethical standards toward their juvenile employees and corporate wards.

ENTRY 298: Gold Ballast

"Gold is no longer a store of value."

- Opening invocation to the AF 3, 3rd Annual Mass Economist Suicide Convention

The migration of transhumanity from Earth to space has necessitated a reconsideration of the values of many things. Metals that were scarce or difficult to mine from the surface of the Earth are astoundingly plentiful and easily available from asteroid mining—even a relatively small asteroid a few kilometers long with an average metal content of 3% by volume can contain more gold and platinum than has ever been harvested from the surface of the Earth. Of course, few miners are quite so thorough in their pursuit of mineral resources as to process an entire asteroid, aiming instead to pick out the most profitable metal nodes and agglomerations then moving on, but the simple fact remains: gold is fairly cheap, while hydrocarbon compounds and botanicals that cannot be easily mined or manufactured in abundance are precious. Wood is far more costly and rare than gold, though the latter retains sentimental and aesthetic value for jewelry, dental work, some electrical and electronic applications, and so on—but for most of the solar system, gold is most known as the preferred ballast material.

One of the technical requirements for any good spacecraft, satellite, or habitat is ballast— preferably something dense and inert. While still a commercial good, the relative low cost of gold with relation to its volume makes it an ideal ballast material, and many minecrafter contain simple forge equipment to separate gold from the ore slag and cast standardized weights to adjust the center of gravity on their loads. When they reach their destination, the gold masses that cannot be sold are often left behind to save mass on the return trip, and piles of gold spheres, discs, and slugs (often more than slightly radioactive) form common sights in scrapyards.

Of course, the most famous use of gold ballast is in the Starwell gravity tractor, which uses the gravitational field of a massive series of gold weights to adjust the orbit and approach of nearby asteroids without actually touching them. The gravity tractor—which currently consists of up to eighteen 1 kiloton gold slugs stacked together by carbon fiber rods and pushed by an antimatter drive—maneuvers near the target asteroid, and the gravitational forces between the two masses adjust the course of the asteroid. While a delicate operation, the gravity tractor is considered by many inhabitants of Starwell as a key component of asteroid defense and the continued long life of the habitat, and there has been some interest in licensing the design (particularly the targeting and gravimetric software and sensor package) from habitats on Mars, Titan, and Luna.

Using Gold Ballast

The future is not defined by our expectations. Prices in Eclipse Phase are not denoted in any of our national currencies, and there is little reasonable expectation that commercial brands of the current day will make it into space in a recognized form—so why should the rather primitive notion of gold as a shiny, imperishable metal being a cornerstone of economic thought survive into the future? Hell, most economists will tell you straight up that gold isn't that important today. So if you strip away the currency folklore and look at the basics of it, what is gold good for? Well, it's dense, malleable, and relatively abundant—all good qualifications for ballast, and a nice flavor piece to challenge the preconceptions of players that equate gold with money or wealth. This isn't to say that every story with gold has to be an economic fable, but the potential is there if you want to play with it.

Seeds

- The PCs arrive at a small brinker habitat on Mars known as Randtopia, which uses gold coinage for all internal exchanges, reserving credits and other currencies for trade with outsiders. Of course, the PC's are using a fifty-kilogram gold slug as ballast—which as far as the Randtopians are concerned, is a single coin with a greater mass than all the gold they have in circulation. When they learn of it, the government moves to impound the gold ballast before it destabilizes the local economy, but the Randtopians have already learned of it and the resulting speculation has a devastating effect on local prices and markets, not to mention the groups that wish to steal it. How the PCs deal with the situation is up to them, but even extracting themselves from Randtopia might be harder than it looks.
- The Starwell gravity tractor has been stolen by space pirates. Worse, the pirates have made it into a weapon—accelerating up to speed and then releasing one of gold bricks creates a 1 kiloton missile with a lot of inertia. Starwell has been issued an ultimatum: one billion credits and ten kilotons of water-ice or their habitat vanishes in a cloud of gold dust. The PCs, who are not currently on Starwell, are asked to try and infiltrate the ship and activate the antimatter drive's self-destruct sequence.

ENTRY 299: Corporate Totem

"I am never disarmed."

- Direct Action Totem, before unleashing her attack womb

Hypercorps are more than just hierarchical businesses organized to maximize profit/production and with joint ownership they have grown beyond the easy definitions of a single legal or ethical system, becoming sprawling interlinked matrices of social connections, software, legal and economic obligations, and most importantly people. Transhumans make a hypercorp; without employees and shareholders and customers they are empty concepts. Yet it is difficult after the Fall, when so many transhumans are displaced from their homes and old lives, to hold them together in a single corporate culture. To expand across worlds, to hold its employees against the poaching and honey traps of rivals, to care for their dependents and wellbeing in sickness and in health, hypercorps must have goals beyond the domination of an industry or the maximization of profit. They must have ideals that transhumans can comprehend and follow, a corporate ethos that employees and officers can make their own, a discrete purpose that lifts them about grubbing for credits and exploiting the gullible masses. It is not enough to have texts that define these hypercorp attitudes, or songs and XP media that can serve to propagate their message. Hypercorps needs individuals that exist as examples of their philosophies in action, living embodiments of the hypercorp to steer and inspire outside the set hierarchies of the hypercorp these are known as the corporate totems.

A totem is an AGI, often crafted from the corporate founder or a CEO that best embodied the attributes and attitudes of the hypercorp; the AGI is then pruned and psychosurgically altered into an exemplar of the hypercorp, its individual memories washed out and replaced with the skills and experiences appropriate to their new position. Most corporate totems exist outside the organizational chart, mobile officers with broad authority and special rights that allow them to interact with individuals at every level of the hypercorp and address the issues they are dealing with. For each hypercorp, the totem is different—the Direct Action Totem is a fury that leads from the front, always on the front lines, and her troops come first; while the Experia Totem is a rotating position, a mediagenic overmind that puppets key officers and personalities to literally experience what they go through and make changes by speaking through them.

Using Corporate Totem

Iconic characters stand for more than just themselves: they are the meter by which entire groups, nations, religions, and concepts are judged in ways that go far beyond any formal position or authority. This is useful for gamemasters because it can allow them to distill the essence of a hypercorp into a single personality, to allow one character to front for an entire philosophy and way of life—for good or for ill. This need not make the totem a shill for the company, any more than Captain America is always a mouthpiece for the United States government in comics; the totem is the spirit of the hypercorp, not its brains or balls or conscience, and will work to see that the hypercorp continues to follow the philosophy that the totem lives by. In this way, the totem is almost guaranteed to live a life of conflict, facing internal hypercorp threats almost as much as external ones, and provides a decent "in" for the gamemaster to bring the PCs into the innermost workings of any given hypercorp.

Seeds

- The Gatekeeper Totem believes that the corporation is seeking too much to monetize and exploit the Pandora Gate, and focusing too little on exploration and scientific research. To counteract this balance, it is planning a demonstration—a surprise documentary that will cover ten new exoplanets which Gatekeeper has suppressed knowledge of. The totem has the access to get the crew in, but needs gatecrashers with an adventurous spirit to keep them safe and help explore on the whirlwind gatecrashing tour. Are the PCs game?
- The Go-Nin Totem has been murdered—and the first task of her back-up fork is to figure out who killed her previous incarnation. The PCs are brought in as private investigators, backed up by the authority of the totem—an authority that not everyone in the tradition-bound Go-Nin Group is happy to accept. Rebellion is brewing in the corporate ranks, and the PCs meet with someone who claims to be the emerging totem of a new Go-Nin Group—one which wishes to break from the keiretsu model and experiment with more flexible corporate hierarchies. The totem that hired the PCs believe this "new totem" is a flawed gamma fork—and if the PCs are not very careful, they will quickly end up in a hypercorp civil war.

ENTRY 300: Su Bede

"Su's face today is designed by Alafonzo, and carved from the bones of orphans that died during the Fall. Order yours now and one tenth of every credit will be donated to..."

-Partial marketing spiel

It takes more than the gaunt figure of a heroin addict to be a successful model in today's fashion industry. The proliferation of morphs has changed the standards of beauty from the classical starvation victim to a plethora of transhuman standards, and fashion has adapted to this new environment by trying to capture the elegance, grace, and dead sexiness inherent in every morph. So bouncer models have breasts that are only realistic in microgravity, mentons shave their heads to show off the access jacks, and neotenics aim for an androgynous look that minimizes secondary sexual characteristics. Su Bede has it harder than her biomorph peers—she's a synth.

When an hourglass chassis is something that can be banged out in a shop in an hour, synth models like Su have to work less on their physical appearance than their physical movements; absent the mammalian fascination for cleavage she commands the audience at fashion shows with poise, grace, movement, and stance. One of the first synth models, Su has invented some of the theatrical language of contemporary synth modeling, making use of the extended range of motion of synth morphs and alternating between deceptively simple "natural" movements into complicated rotation routines that would be impossible for biomorphs to imitate. Su Bede has parlayed her modeling success into her own clothing and jewelry lines, but now she has started something more ambitious: cosmetic inlays.

Metal, plastic, even gemstones, anything artificial is ridiculously cheap to manufacture—so Su has begun to model interchangeable cosmetic augmentations for synthmorphs based off of expensive organic materials. Wigs of real hair, fur, feathers, kelp, etc.; faceplates of bone, wood, porcelain; strips of leather that dangle from the shoulders like a cape or gird about the loins like a cannibal's miniskirt; and those are just the initial offerings in her catalog. If these biosource cosmetic inlays take off like Su thinks they will, they might just be her shot into the big time.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	15	15	25	15	20	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: History (Fashion) 40, Academics: Psychology (Fashion) 37, Academics: Sociology (Fashion) 37, Deception (Cosmetics) 40, Disguise (Cosmetic) 44, Free Fall 26, Interests: Fashion 50, Interests: Gossip 40, Interfacing 26, Language: Native French 92, Language: English 80, Language: Italian 78,

Networking: Criminals 25, Networking: Fashion 80, Networking: Media 44, Profession: Fashion Designer 55, Profession: Model 45, Protocol 55

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Modifications (wood, stone, and mother-of-pearl inlays)

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Armor (6/6), Social Stigma (Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

Using Su Bede

Fashion is one of those weird industries that is all appearance; the skill and efforts and logistics that goes into the design and production of the models' glamour is often lost on the casual audience, who see only the peacock-strut of starved men and women parading in gaudy and sometimes silly outfits on the Mesh. Yet make no mistake, this is a multibillion credit industry, and behind the artsy pretension and surface vanity of high fashion lie ruthless, resourceful business people and highly-trained, dedicated models who twist and contort their bodies into specific roles over long periods of time. While it is easier than ever to achieve the physical appearance that you desire in Eclipse Phase just having chiseled abs and butt-cleavage so mathematically perfect that a geometry teacher would weep in joy isn't enough to succeed—especially when you're a synth.

Su Bede is an "in" that the gamemaster can use to introduce the player characters to the fashion industry in Eclipse Phase. She knows practically everybody that is anybody, from the has-beens to the players to the hot young things from the meat markets. As a contact, she is their ticket to meeting the people who do not accept random friend requests or questions from strangers, and has enough pull and dirt to get the PCs what they need, from an invitation to rustling up a good costumer in the middle of the local sleep-cycle. Her modeling activities and new cosmetic inlay line are also solid points to hang an adventure on, from rivalries and business trouble to inconvenient bodies in the dressing room that need to be done away with before the curtain goes u As an antagonist, the PCs are only ever likely to earn Su's wrath if they thwart or threaten her ambitions— something that they could easily do accidentally in the course of other work, like intercepting a load of illicit seasoned cinnamon-wood that was supposed to go into her latest project. However, her influence doesn't generally extend to ordering hits or making the PC's lives hell—but she will see them blackballed from the fashion industry, making everyone refuse to even talk to them, unless they can find out what they did wrong and make amends.

ENTRY 301: Bonus Point Bank

It used to be hard to bank a favor. Reputation networks trade on ephemeral currency, and it's up to the individual transhumans who they owe and how much a given favor is worth. Most transhumans in a network base requests against the individual's rep score, giving up some of their personal judgment in exchange for a like consideration. Still, a rep will only get you so far—especially out toward the brink, where the rep networks haven't all situated themselves yet, and membership is thin. You might have a solid rep back Sol-ward, but out past Jupiter where the network is maybe a half-dozen transhumans with limited resources, even a "small" favor can tax your rep fairly heavily. Given those kind of circumstances, sometimes people need a way to 'cash in' on their rep more directly.

The Bonus Point Bank began as a money laundering tool designed to abuse rep networks, and evolved into a service allowing network users to directly transfer their reputation into assets and vice versa. The 'bank' works as a collection of false identities plugged into the rep networks; users who wish to use their services transfer property or currency to the 'bank' and the group of identities upvotes the user's profile in the network in direct proportion, and later on that user can request a 'favor' from one of the cover identities in the form of the assets or property that they 'deposited.' The original incarnation of the Bonus Point Bank involved fees, but the contemporary version has been re-engineered as a fee-free service designed to extend network access in areas with a low density of network resources and assets.

Still, there remains some ethical qualms about the Bonus Point Bank and related services, as they actively subvert the trust-based nature of the reputation networks with the promulgation and use of false network identities, which are routinely flagged and eliminated—and just as routinely new ones are created and carefully fostered with Mesh blogs, subscription channels, etc. Still, the anti-bankstas have succeeded in making rebanking a moderately disreputable activity, and apt to cause a spate of downvotes to anyone caught using such services.

Using Bonus Point Bank

Rep is a great concept and one of the more terrific ideas in the Eclipse Phase setting. That said, it does depend and require that there be transhumans around in the same network willing to exchange favors with each other, and in some of the extreme locales that player characters find themselves in that's not always a guaranteed situation. That can make for a great additional wrinkle to a scenario as the PC is forced to rely on their own resources (or what they can beg/steal/join another network to get), but sometimes it can be a game killer. The Bonus Point Bank is there to prevent a session from grinding to a sudden halt because the PCs don't have the local currency to keep going—whether it's to buy a vacsuit, rent a vehicle, pay bail, grease the

wheels of bureaucracy, or any of the million and one other problems that money can solve.

Mechanics

The Bonus Point Bank allows a player character to convert rep directly into credits (or other currency) and vice versa. To 'deposit' monies at the Bonus Point Bank, the PC simply exchanges credits (or other currencies and property); for every 1,000 credits or equivalent their appropriate rep score increases by 1. Any amount of credits can be deposited in this fashion, but the maximum rep that can ever be gained this way is 6 points. To 'withdraw' monies from the Bonus Point Bank, the PC burns rep points equal to the equivalent favor (see Favors table, Eclipse Phase 289) plus 1 (so, a trivial favor would be $0 + 1 = 1$, a low favor would be $1 + 1 = 2$, etc.) and receive the appropriate amount of credits (or the equivalent in local currency/property) according to the Acquire Services Table (Eclipse Phase 290). Unlike normal favors, there is no refresh rate on these transactions—a PC can continue to burn favors until they have the currency they need or run out of re

Example

Daisy Six is in jail in Nova York and needs some fast cash to make bail, which has been set at 1,000 noyos. Making the most of her one Mesh transaction, Daisy contacts the Bonus Point Bank and sets up a 'withdrawal.' Marking off 6 @-rep, the funds deposit into Daisy's account...and Daisy Six is a free transhuman once again.

Despite the comparison to a bank, the PC does not have an "account" as such and does not need to have deposited monies to withdraw them. At the gamemaster's discretion, player characters that abuse the Bonus Point Bank system may be Blacklisted from the network.

Seed

Santa-bot has come early this year...an unknown benefactor has deposited funds in the PC's names in the Bonus Point Bank, giving them a healthy 5-point boost in one of their reps. Unfortunately, that turns out to be a bank error in their favor, as a very dangerous-looking gentlerperson from the Nine Lives drops in to explain. Of course, this is all a simple misunderstanding and if they can't pay back the money then the PCs are welcome to the rep bonus—but now the Nine Lives want a little favor in return: there's a shipment of plasma rifles heading off the habitat tomorrow and they want one of the crates to quietly end up on a different shipping platform.

ENTRY 302: Vanth

"The grey dust grew into a tree, tiny glowing advertisements running down its limbs and trunk and the roots that ate into the metal floor. Steam and smoke poured off of it as it vented heat from the transformation, and in moments the tree flowered, blossomed...and gave forth fruit. They were cherries, perfect spheres of glassy red... Maria ate the first one. I remember how she screamed as it ate her from within, saw the pale grey fuzz spread from her lips...and that's when I had the idea."

- Dr. Schloss, explaining the origin of the Vanth Forbidden Zone

Out in the Kuiper Belt are plutinos—small, icy dwarf planets like Eris, Pluto, and the "anti-Pluto" Orcus. Tidally locked with Orcus is a moon, it's only natural satellite: Vanth. While Orcus is the focus of water ice and hydrocarbon mining, Vanth is sealed off by treaty of the major powers in the Solar system, with everyone forbidden access unless approved by the Vanth Commission, a politically independent body that oversees the Vanth Nanotechnological Proving Grounds, informally known as the Forbidden Zone.

Vanth is a live test site for nanotechnological disaster scenarios—the legendary "grey goo" incidents of rogue or poorly-programmed nanotech devices and weapons which could pose a large-scale threat. The media currently estimates as many as 300 nanotech weapons have been unleashed on the surface of Vanth or its subsurface caverns. The exposure to multiple grey goo scenarios has reshaped the surface of Vanth, though regular assaults with EMP bombs, orbital HERF guns, and interplanetary weapons stationed on the side of Orcus facing its moon disrupt and occasionally clear portions of Vanth from infection—although the Commission only does so in order to introduce new nanotech weapons to their ongoing test scenario.

Ammonia-miners on Orcus have taken telescopic images of Vanth, and describe it as a shifting, promethean surface reshaped by warring rogue nanotech, though cold and lack of sunlight appear to diminish the spread of individual swarms. Some portions of Vanth consist of a single metallic hypermembrane covering a hidden ocean rolling with a sargasso of mercury-like puddle-balls; the north polar regions show spindly towers or antenna and face frequent bombardment from Orcus whenever a radio pulse or signal is detected from that region, and the southern "continent"

is an ongoing fractal structure, like a mountain carved by a jeweler into the perfect cut.

Using Vanth

A laboratory on a planetary (well, planetoid) scale, Vanth is ground zero for research into the deployment and counteraction of "grey goo" scenarios and nanotech weapons—critical research for most of the major political and economic powers of the Solar system, but too dangerous to have multiple test sites sitting around. As a setting, Vanth is exotic (and deadly) even by Eclipse Phase standards, with player characters facing near constant risk of infection from multiple hostile nanotech strains the longer they remain on the planet.

That said, if the PCs are willing to make a run past the entrenched (and mostly automated) defenses on Orcus and in orbit around Vanth, they could conceivably make landfall and survive long enough to get a few primo samples, which could be worth millions of creds on the open market. Alternately, the Commission might hire them to test their security, to deliver a new weapon and observe/record the results, or even rescue another group—or, if the goo has gotten hold, eliminate them.

Seed

Rumor has it that the Planetary Consortium has secretly been using Vanth as a prison colony, keeping dangerous and insane mentons locked up in an underground habitat where they only survive by constantly reprogramming incoming nanoswarms. The PCs are hired to find evidence of this prison, and if possible to free the inmates. Unfortunately, a prison break scenario triggers an "Apocalypse Cless" nanowar event followed by a "clean sweep" series of EMP pulses from orbiting satellite weapons. Neither of which are likely to do the player characters any good.

ENTRY 303: Hyperia Light Mining Co.

There are estimated to be over one million asteroids with a diameter of at least 1 kilometer in the Main Belt alone, with a total mass only four percent of Luna—and yet that represents a greater exposed mineral wealth than has been mined in all of transhuman history. Miners tend to focus on the metal-rich M-type asteroids, looking for the easy pickings in the form of close-to-the-surface nodes and exposed veins. Yet even though there is wealth enough out there for generations of bouncers to ply their trade, stories roll in of "played out" mines and being "beaten to the punch" as an indie miner rolls up to a promising specimen and finds that the richest outer takings have already been worked over by a previous miner. Outside of any habitat's legal jurisdiction, claim fights can quickly get vicious.

Hyperia Light Mining Co. aims to solve that problem. Originally a microcorp asteroid miner based out of Ceres, Hyperia specialized in surveying, and quickly found that they did not have the resources to exploit their finds, and that it was more lucrative to sell their findings to other miners than try to capitalize on all of them. So Hyperia has begun the transition to a data services corporation, buying and bartering for astronomical, fiscal, and survey data, building up the biggest archive of the Main Belt currently in existence. Complicating the matter somewhat is that their main "competition" is also their customer base.

FreeMiner is a Mesh-based app where surveyors and miners in the Main Belt (and beyond) can upload their data to a volunteer community database, showcasing asteroids, claims, mineralogical surveys, core samples, distinguishing features, amusing rock formations, graffiti tags, individual profiles, etc. As with other community projects the quality of the data varies, made more difficult because follow-ups and confirmations are expensive undertakings and many miners prefer to keep data to themselves, or even seed FreeMiner with false or misleading data. At least one mining corporation tried to close FreeMiner over use of its proprietary data, but couldn't find a suitable jurisdiction to pursue the case—and when their hackers tried to hit the site, they found themselves facing every miner with an access jack and quickly backed off.

Hyperia deals with FreeMiner by working with the app instead of against it. They pay credits for verified, high-quality survey data; post "bounty lists" of asteroids that they particularly want miners and surveyors to check out; issue surveyor qualification tests and digital certificates; and issue updates to FreeMiner via a 'ransom' model, averaging once a week. The microcorp makes no bones that this is a business as well as a community service, and sometimes attempts new products like "elite memberships" for FreeMiner with access to advanced algorithmic tools that suggest asteroids which are unclaimed and mathematically likely to have good deposits, but such

efforts have had little 'stick' so far, as the data is often pirated and posted onto the normally accessible FreeMiner in short order. Still, individual miners and hypercorps sometimes hire Hyperia for private computations or even early access to their regular updates.

Seeds

- The player characters are hired as security by a Hyperia surveyor out to catalog an unusually small, compact asteroid family which is being picked over by rival miners—one of which is one bad job away from turning into full-blown space pirates. If they can keep the surveyor alive and get the data out safe, they'll find that not only do they get paid, but they've developed a small rep in the Belt community and have several job offers waiting when they get back.
- A malicious hacker is going to obscure corners of FreeMiner and changing key data, costing the community considerable time and effort to clean up their work— enough that a group of sysadmins gets together and offers a bounty if the PCs break their limbs and tell them to knock that shit off. Of course, when they get to the hacker's domicile, it turned out to be a 12-year old menton who was just having a bit of fun...
- Hyperia wants to expand beyond the Main Belt, consolidating data from other Mesh apps into a single pan-Solar Mining Registry. The project is still in its early stages, and dealing with all the different local apps and miners is proving a headache, especially for a microcorp that doesn't have much presence outside the Belt. The PCs are hired to act as Hyperia's representatives on their habitat to negotiate with the local miners, surveyors, app-programmers, etc. However, the locals are suspicious, and to earn their trust the PCs will have to join the local Mining Guild and be certified as surveyors. Hyperia will pay for the classes, but can't prepare them for the initiations, which may venture from the ridiculous ("the hair vacsuit") to the dangerous ("dead man's spacewalk"— a short trip through vacuum without an vacsuit—don't hold your breath!)

ENTRY 304: Lightminute Prisoner

For his crimes, Roger Murderkill was given a sentence of one million lightminutes. His ego is recast between receiver stations roughly 18 million kilometers apart on a continuous circuit that will take almost two years to complete. He experiences approximately one second of time for every sixty seconds of real time that passes; confused glimpses in his brief respites between farcasts. When his sentence is up, the lightminute prisoner will have experienced a little over 11.5 days of subjective time—and re-enter transhuman society after almost two years of real time.

The brief media buzz that surrounded the lightminute prisoner has already died away, except for the hardcore conspiracy theorists. The specifics of his crimes, trial, and even the authority that gave out the sentence are maddeningly vague, with many of the citations in the news feeds lacking or contradictory, and the punishment itself unusual in that there are considerably easier and economic ways to achieve the perceptual time dilation. Most of the conspiracy theorists (except for the Tortured Artist adherents) suggest that the punishment is symbolic, and done to send a message across to someone—although whom that may be is not clear. The only one that might be able to shed any light on the subject is Roger Murderkill.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	14	18	8	13	9	18	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: History 30, Art: Calligraphy 35, Hardware: Electronics 20, Hardware: Robotics 25, Infosec 30, Interests: Experimental Perception 50, Interests: Library Science 40, Interfacing 40, Language: Native English 90, Language: Russian 85, Medicine: Nanosurgery 45, Networking: Criminal 25, Networking: Media 25, Perception 50, Profession: Librarian 60, Programming 35, Research 66 Disadvantages: Social Stigma (AGI, Prisoner)

Using Lightminute Prisoner

Someone wants Roger Murderkill out of the way. They have gone to considerable trouble and expense to see that he is incarcerated in a very specific way, working around the moral, ethical, and legal objections of various habitats and governing bodies who have turned a blind eye to why a transhuman ego is being treated in this fashion. That alone raises red flags for conspiracy theorists and watchdog groups—this could have been done quietly and more efficiently using long speech (see entry 019) or other

time perceptualaltering protocols. To do this and advertise it in the media, even with misleading and planted stories, suggests that someone is monitoring the lightminute prisoner, waiting for someone to make their move to free, kill, capture, or communicate with him...and there are no shortage of groups that want to do all of the above.

The stats given above assume that Roger, whatever his supposed crimes, is predominantly a patsy designed to draw out the real players that his captors wish to identify and intercept. Gamemasters might also make him a political prisoner of a Jovian Republic schism, a dangerous exsurgent criminal that Firewall cannot house for any length of time because of his psi powers, a criminal mastermind faking his own death, the victim of an elaborate revenge that sees his life destroyed slowly, a researcher testing cumulative lightdecay and translation errors on transhuman egos, or the newest inductee into an eingerost (see entry 058) cell trying to free him from his mortal trappings.

Catching up with the lightminute prisoner requires calculating his routing, something any PC's muse could do given a few minutes with the software tools available to them and enough information on his schedule so that they can arrive at one of the receiver/rebroadcast farcasters ahead of him. Once there the PCs can hack the software or hardware to redirect Roger's route or isolate him, or use a time dilation protocol to try and communicate with him in the one second he is cognizant. There are no safeguards preventing Roger from communicating with anyone, though he is typically too disoriented to do so.

ENTRY 305: The Itch

Transhumans get sick. Fact of life. It's ingrained in their bodies and minds, the all the familiar discomforts and signs of the body fighting off an infection or allergen. Sneezing, swelling, soreness, itching...these are part of the transhuman condition. They are so familiar that few transhumans think much of them, the casual aches and pains of life that pass only with time. It is only when they persist and worsen that most transhumans start to worry and seek help...by which time they may be too late.

The Itch is one of the less directly offensive versions of the Exsurgent virus, one that rarely produces monsters or psi powers, and many transhumans suffering from the Itch remains undiagnosed, the core cause of their distress hidden behind secondary infections, surgical addiction, masochistic impulse, suicide attempts, and the like. The slow awareness of the Itch as a distinct infection brings with it the possibility of other subtle Exsurgent viruses, disguised to mimic common transhuman conditions and spread undetected. The Itch is spread primarily by contact with infected bodily fluids. There are limited reports that it may spread through basilisk hacks or have a digital variant that effects synthmorphs, but these are unconfirmed by Firewall at this time.

Mechanics

Stage 1 (initial infection to 1 week):

Upon initial infection, the character begins to gain 1 mental stress per day, gradually manifesting as a psychosomatic itch on some specific part of their body in about six days. At this stage, the itch is minor but persistent and distracting; efforts to scratch it stop short of real self harm but may leave the afflicted area red or sensitive, though a rash never develops. The itch can be ignored with a bit of self-control and gives no penalty at this point. Medications (even placebos) can give some temporary mental relief.

Stage 2 (1 week to 4 weeks):

After one week, the character begins to gain 2 mental stress per day, and their psychosomatic itch grows worse—either doubling in size or increasing in intensity every three days—and many characters develop secondary derangements such as body dismorphia, obsessive compulsive disorders, masochistic sexual behavior, etc. Efforts to relieve the itch intensify, and users might improvise scratching tools or seek further medical treatment, though the character's belief in the medications

(and thus their psychological effect) tends to lessen as the itch returns. Typical victims exhibit wounds at the point of the itch, and breaks in the skin may allow secondary infections to set in and enable the spread of the virus through bodily fluids. The itch is also distracting, applying a -5% modifier to all Skill rolls. Psychotherapy is still effective at this point, provided the exsurgent virus is somehow eradicated from the character's system (typically by resleeving into an uninfected morph). Additional complications may arise depending on how much mental stress the character accumulates while dealing with their issues.

If the location of the itch is surgically removed or replaced, the character temporarily ignores psychological derangements and modifier are temporarily lifted, but mental stress continues to accrue. In week 5, the itch returns, and all the derangements and penalties return.

Stage 3 (5 weeks+):

Characters at this stage are consumed by the Itch, continuing to generate 1 mental stress per week just from the illness—but often generate far more mental stress from efforts to scratch their particular itch, with an increasing penchant for self-harm and surgery to remove the offending body part(s), though this no longer has any effect to relieve the character's discomfort. At this point the Itch is so distracting it applies a permanent -10% modifier to all Skill rolls; the a player character can ignore this for one scene by spending a point of Moxie. In the long term (20+ weeks) characters health will begin to fail, represented by gaining the Frail quality. Roughly (10%) of characters at this stage begin to exhibit physical transformations that correspond with the first stage of infection by another strain of exsurgent virus, as determined by the gamemaster.

ENTRY 306: Shiprot

The majority of space vessels have a planned operational life of ten years—a decade in vacuum exposes a hull to deterioration from microimpacts, cosmic rays, and solar temperature differentials; the inner workings of the spacecraft suffer from oxidation, radiation leaks, accumulated biological detritus (if inhabited), and even infection. Vehicles that kiss atmosphere have even shorter operational lifespans, the added friction and pressures placing greater strain on the hull. Even ships that remain docked at major habitats for years at a time experience unexpected component fatigue from the "wash" of waste gases and chemicals of constant traffic that can accumulate around the space station. This general wear and tear on spacecraft is popularly known as "shiprot."

Ten years on after the Fall, shiprot is becoming a major issue as scumbarges and other older craft exit the window of their original planned use. Starware and other industrial hypercorps are already gearing up bids and facilities for major refitting, while autonomists are addressing the issue with community-driven DIY refit networks, working out where and how spacecraft owners can repair their own vehicles within their own means—not an easy task, and more than one older ship limps along with a poorly fixed hull or that has to make use of older-model toilet harnesses because they can't afford to gut the ship and start over. For those where their spacecraft pretty much is their home, the thought of gutting and rebuilding is a last-ditch resort, and they're willing to suffer a little discomfort to keep their old birds running.

Using Shiprot

The future can be bright and shiny and spotless and grimy and dirty and improbably venting steam at the same time. People think of space as an inconceivably large volume filled with really very little in it, and imagine that satellites and spacecraft can merrily float along for years or even centuries without suffering much of any calamities, and by and large this is true—except that most transhumans insist on taking their spacecraft near moons and planets, to dock with habitats, to apply thrust to move them, leave them out in the sun, and of course live in them. While most of these activities do imperceptible amounts of damage (except biomorphs living in them; nearly every ship has a strain of superbacteria that they can never get rid of), the fact is that over time all the stresses and impacts add up. Spaceships, even shiny and new ones, eventually deteriorate (some quite quickly, if you're making multiple atmospheric launches with them), and while you might be able to float for quite a long time through the void without losing hull integrity, eventually the wires are going to rot and the hull plating will wear away enough to let cosmic rays through, and the superbacteria will mutate and kill you all. Long story short: spacecraft have a finite lifespan, and that is a good thing.

Shiprot is an excuse for something to fail. This can be a moment of tension, when the PCs need to don their vacsuits and go make an emergency repair, or it can be a larger plot point where the PCs are effectively stuck in their current habitat for a little while because essential repairs need to be made before the vehicle is safe for transhumans to go out in it again, and/or they need to raise the funds to refit their craft. Refitting brings with it the possibilities of customization and upgrades, which often appeal to the more detail oriented and technical players (or those that have just always desired a laser hardpoint on the prow, or the ability to reroute ship controls to their ecto). Given the general hostility of space, even small potential failures in spaceworthiness are generally issues of concern (at least to the transhumans riding in them), and can make a decent complication for what would otherwise be a boring journey getting from point A to point B.

Seeds

- Arriving at the latest habitat, the PCs find that their ship is quarantined after a routine biological survey detected the presence of genital crabs, believed to have been extinct on most habitats. The PCs can come out after a thorough decontamination, but eliminating all the insects from the ship will be a major undertaking—and made all the more difficult by local conservationists that want to preserve the insects for future generations.
- The PCs receive a distress signal: an autonomist has decided to try and shield his hull from further microdeterioration by covering it with layers of water ice harvested from an asteroid. Unfortunately, the improvised device they used has malfunctioned, and the crippled ship is now being buried under layers of ice and they are trapped.
- Parts for the Space Phantom II light cruisers are slim—and fetch a good price on the open market now that the ships are no longer in production and are beyond the means of most 3D printers to produce. The PC runs across an urgent ad with a shopping list on the Mesh, and it just so happens there's a space graveyard nearby nearby. Of course, if they try their luck they might have to fend with fellow scrappers looking to cash in.

ENTRY 307: Feather

"You'll pay to see this bird molt."

- HoloAd for "Let's Pluck"

In the darkened room, a scarlet swan with the grace of a ballerina takes the stage, its wings colored in darker patterns that make out the shapes of tribal stylings from old Earth. It moves with unhurried purpose through a display of acrobatics, captivating its audience as it circles the pole mounted on the center of the stage. As it launches itself into the air, catch the pole in one hand and spinning around, the music kicks in—and she flashes her tits to a ragged cheer from the crowd.

There are transhumans that will have sex with almost anything, but relatively few have the inclination to become aroused by uplifts—and uplifts in turn have limited sexual attraction to the hairless apes that surround them, so sexual entertainers are largely relegated by species to specific audiences. The exception is "crossover artists," who have developed particular routines, techniques, and cosmetic augmentations that allow them appeal to a larger portion of the transhuman population.

Feather is one of the most successful crossover artists, a headline dancer who has originated many of the basic techniques used in interspecies erotic dancing today, using their pseudo-human attributes and skill to titillate mixed audiences, combining aspects of mating dances and traditional pole and grind dancing into an eclectic but electric mix that leaves many transhumans speechless. A few tasteful adult XP recordings bring Feather a comfortable income and maintain their reputation, so nowadays they spend more time teaching than dancing, giving master classes on crossover artist techniques, giving tutorials on interspecies erotica, and occasionally being interviewed by zoologists for a unique perspective on non-human mating behaviors.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	15	20	18	12	17	13	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
8	1	26	5	52	20	4	30

Morph: Neo-Avian

Skills: Academics: Anthropology (Dance) 35, Academics: Psychology (Sex) 35, Academics: Sociology (Sex) 35, Art: Dance (Erotic) 60, Art: Writing 50, Climbing 35, Flight 60, Free Fall (Microgravity) 55, Deception (Distraction) 40, Infiltration 35, Interests: Erotica 40, Interests: Neo-Avians 45, Kinesics 50, Language: Native Czech 88, Language: English 60, Medicine: Physical Therapy 24, Networking: Media 25, Perception 25, Persuasion (Seduction) 33, Profession: Dance Instructor 45

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Augmentation (mammal sex traits), Endocrine Control, Enhanced Pheromones, Sex Change

Traits: Striking Appearance (1)

Using Feather

Sex sells, but you don't often see wild life documentaries for sale alongside hardcore pornography. As much as transhumanity has changed, basic anatomies and instincts mean that uplifts and humans tend to favor their own when it comes to traditional forms of adult entertainment like erotic dance. Feather is a liminal character that straddles those two worlds, and can be a good contact to help introduce the PCs with dealing with human-uplift relations. As a neutral character, Feather can fill in the typical role of a dancer/entertainer type, letting the PCs get involved with showbusiness (shady bits optional), or even education (and dreaded university politics) through their teaching; as an antagonist Feather is likely only to embroil the PCs in a plot accidentally, unless they have something Feather needs—and when you're being aggressively courted by a six-foot tall anthromorphic goose, you damn well know it.

Seeds

- Unknown to almost anyone, Feather is a Firewall agent, often used as a courier for delivering information under the guise of the neo-avian's touring schedule. At their habitat, Feather makes contact with the PCs, but before they can get the message someone shoots the neo-avian with a laser. The wound isn't fatal, but Feather's cortical stack interface is damaged; the PCs will need to protect Feather and figure out a way to get the neo-avian healed up or access the cortical stack to get the message out, all while under attack from an unknown assailant.
- Feather has fallen in love—but the bride/groom's family is unsupportive of the union of their sex-switching son/daughter to an erotic neo-avian performer. While Feather arranges the wedding and tries to placate their beloved's family, the neo-avian also hires the PCs to find some dirt on the local matriarchs and patriarchs to blackmail them into silence. Unsurprisingly, the clan heads hire the PCs to do the same thing with Feather. Will the PCs play both sides and profit, or force everyone to come clean? And what happens when the bride/groom decides to resleeve into a neoavian morph?

ENTRY 308: Glowstick Fungus

"Earth still has gifts for us."

-Shaneequa Kilkenny, nano-ecologist

In Viriditas on Mars, nano-ecologists repairing a leaky pipe carrying waste water have discovered a new kind of fungus with pale stalks up to 3 cm high that glow pale blue-white under ultraviolet light. The news caused a stir of interest in the local community, as the species could not be identified, and further intensified when genetic analysis proved that the fungus—nicknamed glowstick fungus—was an Earth-native species, related to matchstick fungus, and showed no overt signs of genetic engineering. While official announcement is pending, the popular theory is that this previously undiscovered species had been carried to Mars as spores from Earth, and could have lain dormant or grown unseen for years. Stranger stories of discovering new species have been known in the annals of ecology, but not by much. Even pending official determination, the colony of glowstick fungus has already been the focus of conservation efforts to protect the fragile ecology around the leaky pipe, and efforts have begun to grow new specimens in captivity.

While most of Viriditas expresses awe and excitement at the discovery of the new species, especially the possible origins on Earth, there is a volatile countercurrent that believes the glowstick fungus is a plant or stunt, an obvious genetically engineered fake cooked up in a lab and deliberately placed to be found. The debate has been heated in parts of the local Mesh, deepening divides in the nano-ecologist faction over the testing and procedures involved, warring points of ecological theory and ideology, and even political divides and personal attacks regarding the teams doing the testing, making the determination, and controlling access to the glowstick fungus and their harvested samples.

Using Glowstick Fungus

A lot of excitement and emotion over a very small, unassuming fungus. Aside from being UV reactive, glowstick fungus is fairly unremarkable; a rare species that found a warm, damp little niche and managed to sprout. It isn't considered likely to be a commercial plant, a cure for cancer, or even a subject for cultivation until its population grows—though in time it might be any or all of these things. It is that potential, the thrill of discovering something that no one even knew they had lost, which is at the heart of the hubbub surrounding glowstick fungus. In their own way, the naysayers mean well, because they knew well the ways that this discovery will boost careers and the reputation of nanoecology as a whole if true, and what a stain it will be should it prove to be false.

Seeds

- While a dedicated scouting of Viriditas has not uncovered any other samples of glowstick fungus, certain nano-ecologists remain unconvinced—and willing to hire others to search out off-limits or difficult to access areas that may harbor additional colonies. If the PCs take this job, they'll be sent into the bowels of the maintenance shafts of the building, to discovered subterranean areas not on any of the official maps, and dust-covered security devices designed to keep some secrets buried. Anything could be under there—hidden vaults of unreported wealth, climate-controlled seed storage, cemeteries for rustlers that died building the station, a grotto with a pool of radioactive waste water, any of which might be a good place for a colony of glowstick fungus...
- Concerns over the testing and determination process have led to some nanoecologist hacking into the lab computers to view the data. The Viriditas administrators are aghast at this interference, which could contaminate their results. The PCs are hired to deliver a message to the rogue nano-ecologists, explaining what their actions could cause and repeating the promise by the Viriditas admins to a completely transparent analysis process and full publishing of the data. Anyone that still makes a noise after that gets something broken.
- A murder has occurred on Viriditas—a gene hacker named Leroy Blackwell walked into an open elevator shaft and fell onto another of explosive bullets, after someone had carefully lasered his head clear off and slagged his cortical stack. More disconcertingly, security forensics forces have identified glowstick fungus spores on Blackwell's clothes—it could be a coincidence, but if published (as Viriditas law requires within 48 hours), it could raise doubts about the origins of glowstick fungus. The PCs are surreptitiously suggested to investigate as private citizens, with security forces members "losing" valuable items nearby to serve as payment. If the PCs break into Blackwell's lab, they find more samples of glowstick fungus, but also signs that the whole scene has been staged, as Blackwell's actual research involved a type of lichen called devil's matchsticks that have nothing to do with glowstick fungus. So who wants people to believe Blackwell created glowstick fungus—and who killed Blackwell?

ENTRY 309: Macroforge

"We built the pyramids with bronze tools and rope. We assembled the Eifel Tower with less than two hundred people. We chiseled Mount Rushmore out of the mountain with dynamite. Now look at us, living in tin cans, cramped where ever we can fit when all the solar system is ours. Why did we ever stop? When did we start thinking so small? Microtech, nanotech. Fuck that noise. Let's build something they'll see from another planet. Dream big."

- Jaq Prime, First Among Engineers

Vast city-habitats float above a half dozen worlds. Spacecraft with a volume measured in cubic kilometers drift silently through the vacuum. Space elevators stretch into orbit, millions of meters of nanotubes linked together. Three-dimensional printing is nearly ubiquitous in the solar system, nanotech makers pumping out all manner of goods, but they are limited in scale and capabilities, and while their products are adequate for most purposes few are suitable to large-scale construction. With their little printers, most designers and techies dream small, playing at lower scales. But there are some transhumans who are not afraid to dream big.

Orbiting Mercury, where solar power is cheap and material from the Belt is plentiful, is the Macroforge, a clunky grey donut with six great spokes, between which hangs a spiderweb of solar cells hanging on nanocarbon cables. The bulk of the industrial cluster habitat is one massive three-dimensional printer, which can assemble entire spacecraft and habitats within its depths. The bulk of this work is automated; each megaconstruction is embodied in a single Grand Design, which is broken down into component parts, which are in turn broken down into generic 3D printer designs—right down to the tiniest screws and linkages. Boundary printers churn out the materials, which are transported to treatment and manufacturing bays to be processed and fitted together, and so on and so forth with larger and larger component sections finally being brought together to form the finished product.

The engineers, technicians, and programmers of the habitat work predominantly to refine the processes and designs, testing and evaluating new materials and methods, and troubleshooting any errors that crop up in the Grand Design. Most of the inhabitants are autonomists, though the habitat eschews politics in favor of a mutual purpose: to dream build, and to build big. The organization is a representative meritocracy, with each engineering

discipline headed by the most knowledgeable and effective of their members, who takes the lead in internal design philosophy, doling out work assignments, and communicating with the other engineering disciplines. First Among Engineers is Jaq Prime, a multi-disciplinary engineer who has been authorized by the other engineering heads to negotiate contracts and represent the Macroforge when dealing with the Planetary Consortium and other reps, though she has no local powers or authority—and likes it that way. Most of the accessory duties (technical writing, technicians, logistics, etc.) is handled by the engineers' family and hired staff, including some services purchased from hypercorps.

Using the Macroforge

Scale is a tricky concept in roleplaying games. Climbing a mountain means nothing when it consists of a single skill check; distances measured in light minutes are transversed by player characters during a potty break. Sometimes players need to feel the size and scope of what they're up against—to stand in awe and soak up the flavor text, when the shadow of a passing habitat being towed into position temporarily blocks out the sun and stars; or they walk and walk for hours on the side of Mons Olympus, only to pause at the edge of space and look back to see the fragile web of lights on the plains and hills laid out below as night comes on. It is so easy in Eclipse Phase to forget how vast the scale is of planets, how terribly far away transhuman habitats are from one another, how tremendously huge that transhuman science and engineering can now build when they choose to dream big. The Macroforge is a setting where PCs can see the guts of titanic ships and the monumental skeletons of habitats as they are being built; to stand in awe for a few moments in the cathedral-spaces and wonder at what transhumans can create.

ENTRY 310: Ishnigarrab

"This is a society of non-negotiable affection. Every transhuman deserves love, company, and companionship; without cost, without condition. We give without asking, because we know how difficult it is to free ourselves of the desire to take, to possess. Ours is not a transaction, there is no haggle or barter. You do not offer more than you wish to give, you do not ask for what is not offered."

- Corrupted Chrysanthemum, the First Lesson

"I saw a bouncer, coming in off the asteroids, step out of the gate from Customs. Covered head to toe in rock dust, straight out of an airlock. I don't think he'd seen another transhuman in the flesh for months, maybe more. He just stopped and stared at the crowd, the noise, all the great mass of people moving around, moving around him. So alone. Then a young splicer came, a pink flower tucked in their hair, and gave him a hug...and he cried, he just cried, tears carving muddy canyons down his cheeks." - Joy of Sparks, Extropia Customs Agent

One of the most exceptional traits of transhumanity is the ability to be...nice. To show affection without expecting reciprocation or reward, to give companionship without obligation or contract, to be kind and warm and caring not because you have to be, but because someone needs you to be. It is an expression of empathy that can cut through economic ideals and social constraints, and for the unprepared it can be confusing when first and unexpectedly encountered. For the Ishnigarrab, non-negotiable affection is a confirmation of their transhumanity, a promotion of positive thought and emotion that is universal in nature.

Considered by many a reaction to the Carnival of the Goat, the Ishnigarrab are an open society on many habitats that offer physical companionship and affection—not explicitly sex, unless both parties desire it, but friendship, company, sometimes hugs and kisses, hand-holding, massage—whatever the Ishnigarrab chooses to freely offer. Some habitats have established forums where the Ishnigarrab gather and welcome visitors, in other habitats they wander freely, bestowing affection at random to whomever seems to need or desire it. Their symbol or costume is a flower tucked behind the right ear (often a plastic one, given the cost), and augmented reality tags flit about them, explaining their philosophy.

The Ishnigarrab are not without controversy, nor has their spread and development been without trouble. Many transhumans fail to grasp the nature of their enterprise, and make rude demands or offer violence. Others mistake them for prostitutes or monastics, both of which are gross misinterpretations that the Ishnigarrab actively work to avoid being associated with, not because they disapprove of sex work or religions, but to better distinguish their own unique policy of free and open affection. This is made all the more complex and difficult because some Ishnigarrab do sidelight as sex workers, nuns, monks, etc., and

have difficulty separating their profession from their volunteer work with the Ishnigarrab. Visitors that become violent, abusive, or obsessively clingy are dealt with by the standard protocols for the station wherever possible, though many Ishnigarrab visitor centers include at least one security officer, and provide effective small, concealable defensive weapons and defensive courses in how to use them.

Using Ishnigarrab

The universal mission and appeal of the Ishnigarrab mean that they are a society that can appear in any habitat, at any social strata, and often carry with them a certain dignity and respect ordinarily reserved for political, religious, or hypercorp representatives, though the Ishnigarrab explicitly avoid being associated with those groups while volunteering. For gamemasters that want a group that can effectively fill roles for nuns, monks, sex workers, etc. without being explicitly tied to a religion or with the stigma of prostitution, the Ishnigarrab are a good alternative. They also work as a handy counterbalance against the Carnival of the Goat, which they disagree with on philosophical grounds as well as on their particular approach. Being compassionate, and having access to some moderate resources, the Ishnigarrab will sometimes hire mercenaries to undertake missions of mercy, rescuing transhumans that are indentured, enslaved, imprisoned, or abused—solid employment for the player characters.

Of course, gamemasters that desire a deep dark secret below the open affection of the

Ishnigarrab are welcome to explore that angle as well. They could be a splinter of the Carnival of the Goat whose visitors centers work as recruiting ground for "fresh meat," particularly vulnerable to exsurgent infection, a deliberate political ploy to undermine a local sex workers guild, or any other underhanded or dangerous scheme. In this case, the Ishnigarrab's surface act effectively disguises their true colors—PCs may be misled by the social distrust some feel toward the Ishnigarrab, feeling that the volunteers are victims of prejudice when maybe the truth is some people know better than to believe the philosophy they profess.

ENTRY 311: Corrupted Chrysanthemum

"I am as I was when they found me. Broken in body, but whole of mind and spirit, flush with purpose. I will not live a life consumed by the pain and hate I experienced; I will be a force for love, a surcease for pain, a lightener of hearts. I ask nothing of anyone, but if you wish to join me, you are welcome."

- Corrupted Chrysanthemum, at her official excommunication

A bride of Frankenstein with flowers woven in her streaked hair and a bright red sari, Corrupted Chrysanthemum is the chairperson of the Ishnigarrab, and acts as general manager of its digital and physical assets. Seductive when she chooses to be, matronly by nature, "C-squared" has a reputation for total honesty and often takes those who meet her for the first time by surprise with her actions. Opponents find her obtrusive, distracting, violating their personal space and privacy with frightening ease; neutral or friendly transhumans find her touchy feely but mother hennish, alternately doting and giving them their space, only to show up when they don't know they need it to supply a warm hug or a caress.

Her physical appearance originates from how she was first found—a victim "saved" by human soldiers only to be subject to a violent nineteen-day imprisonment punctuated by periodic gang rapes and idle mutilations, only to be stapled back together by their medic. In time, they moved on and left their playthings behind. Corrupted Chrysanthemum crawled forth from that hole, but not alone: she carried with her the other three survivors who had suffered with her. That was the start of the Ishnigarrab, and though her body has long healed the physical depredations, C-squared retains the image of her ordeal on her morph as a physical reminder of what she fights against.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	24	26	14	13	16	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
8	1	28	5	56	45	9	67

Morph: Pleasure Pod

Skills: Academics: Psychology (Affection) 44, Art: Acting 45, Deception 45, Free Fall 25, Infosec 22, Interests: Non-Profit Organizations 50, Interests: Sex Industry 44, Interests: Transhuman Displays of Affection 66, Interfacing 25, Language: Native Arabic 86, Language: English 66,

Language: Japanese 55, Medicine: Physical Therapy 45, Networking: Autonomists 22, Networking: Criminals 22, Networking: Media 44, Perception 33, Profession: Therapist 66, Unarmed Combat (Claws) 45

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Augmentation (discolored and mismatched skin connected by large stitches, cosmetic skin, discolored eyes and hair), Cyberbrain, Cyberclaws, Enhanced Pheromones, Mnemonic Augmentation, Puppet Sock, Sex Switch

Traits: Allies (Ishnigarrab), Blacklisted (Jovian Republic, Catholic Church), First Impression, Neural Damage (Dyscalculia), Striking Looks (1)

Using Corrupted Chrysanthemum

Perhaps unusual for most NPCs the player characters meet for the first time, C-squared will always greet them warmly, often with a hug and the offer of a cookie (for biomorphs) or a bit of shell polish (for synthmorphs) and otherwise fuss over their comfort. Even if they appear violent, C-squared will surrender and attempt to talk to them (while sending off directions and possibly an alert to local security through the Mesh; she's warm-hearted, not stupid.) As a contact or ally, Corrupted Chrysanthemum is open and honest with the characters, and will rarely ask for anything in return...but she will also not tolerate the PCs making demands of her, under any circumstances. C-squared's effort to promote her message and volunteer organization has not always gone smoothly; the details of her philosophy (and certain allegations she made against key individuals) have made powerful enemies in the Jovian Republic and the Catholic Church, where she is persona non grata, and innumerable local frictions with sex workers, administrators, moralists, and the occasional hygienist, so there are no end of conflicts in which she might feature as antagonist, victim, or employer.

ENTRY 312: Transcthonc Land Bank

"Do you believe in Earth? Do you believe in transhumanity? One day we will return, and retake our homeworld...and then what? Already, the Planetary Consortium has approved real estate lots, proceeds of the sales of which goes to aid the reclamation effort. For a few credits, you can invest now, and you or your children or fork can inherit the Earth..." - Sophocles Clayton

Speculation is an addiction; transhumans are built for pattern recognition, their instincts geared toward risk/reward scenarios. Add in a dash of nostalgia, a dollop of hope, and some series metafinancing and you get the Transcthonc Land Bank, a special holding corporation established by the Planetary Consortium and entrusted with the full mineral and real estate rights of old Earth, to bundle, parcel, and sell these earthshares to whatever transhumans are gullible or savvy enough to buy them. Most of their customers are reclaimers and scam artists, the latter of which seem to crop up every couple of months working multi-level marketing schemes based around various old identities—like the New France Project, where a group of investors bought up the land and mineral rights to part of old Europe and then parceled it out, selling specific chunks of their geographic early life to post-French survivors and their descendants. "For only 1,000 credits you can own the ancestral orchard your dad was forced to leave behind." and other more subtle pitches still find a market, made all the sillier given that dad's farm is probably a sheet of radioactive glass right about now.

In addition to selling speculative parcels of old Earth, Transcthonc is also responsible for managing the trade in earthshares, and has established official (and, discreetly, underground) markets for the buying, selling, swapping, and tracking of earthshare prices. Here again the speculation market is in full tilt, and certain shares of prime real estate can fluctuate in share price, leading to an entire range of financial instruments that deal with betting on the rise or fall of earthshare prices—London may be high one day on rumors of the reclaimers getting their act together, then dive when the latest radio telemetry comes in to show the Thames as a dry riverbed that's on fire in places. Antarctica is usually regarded as the safest and most secure of investments, as it's seen some of the least damage during and since the Fall, and the large stock of ice-water has value on current markets.

Opponents of the Land Bank are many, and often question the legitimacy of the institution, with the Jovian Republic refusing to acknowledge its claims at all, and the Catholic Church insisting on the rights to what's left of Vatican City. Still, savvy investors point out that while a square kilometer of land currently averages 0.97 credits on the open market, if (or as they like to put it, as) the reclamation of Earth gets closer, the value of earthshares could increase exponentially, meaning that a very modest investment now can lead to substantial returns when the individual

eventually cashes out...and, of course, it provides them with a good reason to further support reclaimer efforts.

Using Transcthonc Land Bank

Paying someone with an investment is a bit of a dick move, because it has limited current cash value. However, they have the advantage of giving the player characters an actual stake in the outcome of a conflict. The Transcthonc Land Bank and its earthshares are specifically designed for player characters working with reclaimers and their efforts to reinhabit the planet Earth, but plenty of microcorps and hypercorps might try to pay the player characters off in stocks and bonds which will be worth more if the corp continues to be successful, thus giving the PCs incentive not to turn around and screw with their former employers. In a larger sense, the same can be said for paying PCs off with credits, noyos, or a rep boost—what are these but investments in the larger economy of a given faction, habitat, or network?

Fun with paying player characters in earthshares aside, the Transcthonc Land Bank as a financial institution and marketplace is a suitable setting for any number of finance-related runs, where conflicting interests on the price of earthshares (and earthshare futures, derivatives, the New France bonds, etc.) can lead to employment or consequences for player characters as they or their habitats/factions/friends/etc. can tangled up in reclaimer schemes, hypermedia special reports, counterfeiting rings, and so on. Any rival Land Bank that seeks to set up shop is likely to face intense (if below the radar) interference from Transcthonc, whose board of directors control rather large amounts of credits and other assets based on the sale of earthshares, and they're no above hiring the PCs to drop a tungsten rod on their competitors from orbit to drive the point home. Of course, their position might change if it ever looks like reclamation will actually occur, because all the credits they've raised are themselves off in a diverse series of investments, and they could face serious difficulties if it ever looks like they have to pay out...

ENTRY 313: The Broken One

In their communications, the Factors have made it clear that they were observing transhumanity for some time before they made first contact. Most of those who make it their business to care about these things assume this consisted primarily of signals intelligence—human civilization has long been sending all manner of transmissions out into the void, and as a form of passive intelligence is more than sufficient to generate a good picture of transhuman civilization. Some of the more ambitious suggest more exotic forms of intelligence gathering, mostly involving unmanned probes and quantum entanglement communication or something more esoteric connected to superliminal transportation. It is nearly universally agreed that physical scouts would have been too dangerous and costly to use.

This is the story that Firewall has carefully promulgated and fostered throughout the intelligence communities, the better to cover up the impact of an unknown craft on Venus in AF 2. A single living occupant was recovered, and quickly hidden away in an impromptu secure facility. It quickly became apparent that while alive and sentient, the extraterrestrial was severely damaged and, as it was later learned, several of its component parts had died off or become diseased, leaving a fractured personality and crippled form. Efforts at communication with the captured extraterrestrial were ineffective until after the introduction of the Factors. Since that time, Firewall has put what they have learned of Factor biology and language to use in caring for and interrogating their captive.

Given its damaged state, the information received from the captive Factor has been limited—some suggestion of a base or forward operating base, a few notes on its culture and technology, and quite a bit of close examination regarding its biology, but not much in the way of actionable intelligence. Currently, the administrators in charge of its health and interrogation are in a tricky situation—their captive is of limited value, but there is no way to release it back to its own people without revealing its long captivity and exposing Firewall's operations, both of which could spawn considerable blowback from the Factors and the sides they deal with. Further, any use of the intelligence that the broken Factor has provided could tip the Factors off that their missing scout was discovered, again prompting a political incident.

Most worryingly, at least to the truly paranoid aware of the Broken One, is that the Factors may well be aware that some faction of transhumanity has had long access to one of its scouts—they are after all an intelligent species, and must have a full accounting of their surviving scouts. What transhuman spymasters cannot guess is how the Factors may be acting on this data. Some speculate that the damaged Factor was deliberately seeded on Venus to prepare transhumanity for first contact (or as a false flag spreading misinformation), while others believe that even now the Factors are attempting to quietly discover who has their lost member and is offering for their return, no questions asked.

Seeds

A xenocult has breached the holding facility on Venus and made off with the Broken One. Firewall has begun an extensive but surreptitious alert, and the player character's local handler approaches them for help locating the cult and recovering the "xenobiological mass," though the handler doesn't know the specific details of what the latter is. Of course, things might get complicated if the PCs ever find out what they're actually trying to recover.

The PCs are hired to break into a remote facility, recover the Broken One, and then allow it to build a communication device to contact its compatriots. The PCs will be told they need to lie low until the Factors come to collect, and may spend some paranoid/boring days in a safe house before the extraterrestrials show up, and the PCs get quietly thanked and paid off. Of course, if any of the PCs get curious, they'll find out that it was a Firewall facility they broke into...and a Firewall handler that hired them. The whole episode was effectively a repatriation, with both Firewall and the Factors working to avoid publicly acknowledging a pre-"official" first contact Factor encounter.

The time has come for Firewall to clean house, and it has begun removing all evidence of its "guest" of the last several years. The PCs, coincidentally, come into possession of a data file from a flat named Jheri Culkin, who claims to have been the first transhuman to make contact with a Factor and has evidence to prove it. When Culkin turns up dead, the PCs are left holding the evidence and in Firewall's sights.

ENTRY 314: Master Chemist

"You see this mottling on the skin? Repeated damage from subcutaneous injections. And from the look of it, his drug of choice has been contaminated by flesh-eating bacteria. Observe how easily I can bruise the muscle...hmm, if the noise bothers you, yes you may gag him, but keep the airway clear. This one will be ripe for processing soon." - Master Chemist instructing the apprentices, Tuesday afternoon

Among the Nine Lives, the venerable Master Chemist holds sway over all technical operations related to chemistry and pharmacology, overseeing the creation and distribution of drugs, purchase and testing of source chemicals, the cleanliness and efficacy of the labs and facilities, and the training and management of subordinate lab technicians, drug dealers, etc. While dealing in chemical narcotics, stimulants, etc. has diminished somewhat due to the greater profit margins of narcoalgorithms and shifting attitudes and legalities that make formerly banned substances available, the Nine Lives still have a considerable market in counterfeit and cheap pharmaceuticals, as well as smuggling in combat drugs, substances that are difficult or expensive to manufacture locally, and various materials (often fake or substitutes) for traditional medicine practices that are still popular in ethnic enclaves.

Master Chemist is an older gentleman, with skin like pale yellow ivory marked by an intricate network of dark blue tattoos, some of which glow at odd times. A practical man, he is almost always dressed in tailored suits of artificial silk which often double as lab clothes, favoring little jewelry or ostentation. A firm believer in better living through chemistry, the hidden pockets of his suit contain a pharmacopoeia of pills, inhalers, small single-dose syringes, and other samples, and he often diagnoses those around them and gives them "prescriptions," couching his language to be mystical or scientific based on what he believes their mindset to be.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
13	18	20	10	12	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Flat

Skills: Academic: Biology 60, Academic: Chemistry 80, Academics: Genetics 40, Art: Cocktails 50, Deception 25, Fray 35, Free Fall 45, Hardware: Chemtech 80, Interests: Black Market Drugs 50, Interests: Chemistry Research 50, Interests: Traditional Chinese Medicine 45, Interfacing 30, Kinesics 30, Language: Native Mandarin 85, Language: English 75, Language: Hindi 66, Medicine: General Practice 45, Medicine: Pharmacology 60, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminal 65, Networking: Scientists (Chemists) 33, Palming 50, Perception (Taste) 44, Profession: Chemist 50, Protocol 40, Research 35

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cosmetic Augmentation (tattoos), Emotional Dampner, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Taste, Multitasking, Oracles

Traits: Aged, Allies (Nine Lives)

Using Master Chemist

"Traditional" drugs are not on the way out in Eclipse Phase though some players might get that impression. While quite a lot in the way of narcotics, hallucinogens, etc. can be emulated using software, there are quite a few biomorphs still running around that need everything from erectile dysfunction and birth control medication to classical tobacco, cocaine, opium, datura, alcohol, etc. The Nine Lives seek to fulfill those needs only where there is a market—most major habitats have hypercorps competing to produce the latest chemical enhancer or drug and market it as a friendly product, while the Nine Lives are mostly content to operate knock-off brands, especially commercially unsuccessful products that are discontinued and leave the remaining addicts fighting over the dwindling supplies. The Master Chemist, then, is technical overseer of a middle-sized operation that spans the range from legitimate to hideously illegal based on which habitat he occupies at the time; his age and contacts within the Nine Lives have secured his position, but he is not an ambitious man looking to expand the boundaries of his domain—which his superiors see as sensible, but his underlings see as a sign of potential weakness.

As a contact, the Master Chemist is at base an excellent supplier and sometimes employer, able to provide any drugs the player characters need and in return needing them to make deliveries, steal precursor chemicals, equipment and recipes; and of course act as a general authority—"There is knowledge in here," he will often say, tapping his head "That has never been committed to a computer." He functions much the same as an antagonist, although he draws a line between professional and personal animosity—if the PCs interfere with a Nine Lives operation, he will see they are afflicted in kind, using Nine Lives resources, and will often allow them a chance to buy their way back into his good graces. If the matter becomes personal, however, the Master Chemist will target their friends and families, working to destroy all they hold dear, offering the player characters only one way out—and many of the Master Chemist's enemies have been found dead by "suicide," having taken quite an overdose.

ENTRY 315: Egotaph

"We were supposed to be forever."

- Egotaph of John Doe #33616

At a time when a large percentage of transhumanity believes in digital immortality, the prospect of final death—no more forks or back-ups, just corrupted data and a slagged cortical stack—remains intimidating, even horrifying. Perhaps that is why so many transhumans create digital memorials to those lost minds, archives popularly known as egotaphs.

An egotaph contains a sum distillation of the ego's data, often as much of what they wrote and produced as can be found. Not just biographical data, but forum posts, reviews, media containing images of them, interviews and remembrances with family and friends, all the details of their life. Some egotaphs have become ongoing projects, the focal points of scholarship on media creators, athletes, politicians, and their works, with different critics and biographers contributing their own original research to the egotaph.

In form, egotaphs are designed to avoid the "editing wars" of public wikis, and are generally limited access so that anyone can upload additional data but no one can edit or erase already-uploaded data. Users can flag certain egotaphs as desecrated if poor or irrelevant material is uploaded, which allows the admins of the egotaph service to rewind the history of the egotaph back to before the bad submission, and even limit upload rights for a time. Certain particularly notorious or divisive figures have been the subject of prolonged campaigns toward desecration, and the admins typically restrict uploaders to those with established academic or media producer credentials.

The vast majority of egotaphs are created by friends, family, and grassroots networks to remember individuals lost during or since the Fall, although several historical figures from long before the exodus from Earth have their own egotaphs, and the egotaphs are made and maintained by volunteers. Nowadays egotaphs are their own cottage industry, with "capture apps" and services available to create and maintain egotaphs for living individuals who suspect they may at some point be no more. A rather disturbing current trend is to install the dead ego's muse as the admin and perpetual curator of their egotaph.

Seeds

- Firewall has been monitoring the egotaphs of several minor Earth writers, particularly H. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, and Clark Ashton Smith. They suspect that an exsurgent cult has been planting secret messages in those egotaphs as public "dead drops," possibly including one or more basilisk hack booby traps for the unwary. The PCs are tasked with monitoring the visitors coming to these egotaphs and find out if there is any connection to known exsurgent groups.
- One of the PCs discovers an egotaph devoted to themselves. If they investigate the mystery, they find an entire alternate life, complete with friends, family, coworkers, and children—a complete "might have been" lifetime, and the individuals involved are confused and hurt at their sudden reappearance. It is up to the gamemaster as to whether this is an early fork (or is the PC the fork?), or an elaborate con game of some sort.

ENTRY 316: Venuvius

Miners in the Main Belt rarely have the facilities to process the ore they harvest, which remains an energy and oxygen-intensive process which is most efficiently and economically handled in large lots. Consequently, while the Belt mining is dominated by small and independent miners and microcorps, extraction is gated through a handful of specialist hypercorps and even a few middlemen who buy small lots direct from miners and combine them into large lots to be sold directly to processing stations (or hypercorps that then send them to processing stations). Balanced against this trend to centralized processing are small individual processing stations, which are independent of hypercorps and often work on a cash-free basis. The largest and most established of these situations is the Venuvius habitat, located in the Vesta asteroid family.

Venuvius contracts with individual miners or groups, even microcorps, and specializes in the extraction of hydrocarbons and metals. The entire exchange is explicitly creditless; the workers of Venuvius receive a share of the processed material as payment for their labor, typically on the order of 10%, although particularly poor ores or difficult extractions and/or more involved processing can make their share up to 25%. For this service, the Venuvians handle the entire extraction process, including waste disposal and statistical quality sampling, though the other parties they deal with are welcome to participate in (or at least observe) any part of the process. The Venuvians then use or trade their share for needed materials and foodstuffs; given that they have the expertise and technical capabilities, most of their materials see further processing before they are shipped out, which further increases their value.

Inhabitants of Venuvius are predominantly German-speaking, with a heavy Vietnamese linguistic minority that makes for an interesting ethnic blend. The population does not have a distinct identity, but as a group shares certain values such as efficiency, independence, industriousness, and a dislike of waste which form the core cultural concepts of the habitat, and put most of the transhumans that live there firmly into the Autonomist camp. For example, the oxygen required for several of the furnace operations is generated via electrolysis from the asteroid's native water ice; the hydrogen gas would normally be considered a waste product, but the Venuvians use it as a coolant and in some other light industrial applications. Recycling, when

economic to do so, is very big on the habitat, and any non-hazardous product without an industrial use is typically made available for art installations.

Seeds

- The great secret of Venuvius, if there is one, is that the current group of residents did not build the station, they only inherited it—and even now are discovering aspects of its design and construction. Case in point, the current group of administrators have accidentally triggered the transformation sequence, and the whole station is in the process of reconfiguring itself into some kind of giant spiderrobot. The PCs receive a distress call to help reverse the station transformation, which requires them to infiltrate its "head" and overcome the security measures there.
- The Venuvian holographic process-mark is one of the standards by which raw metals are measured by in the Belt, and marked ore ingots are typically used in place of currency on many smaller habitats. So when the Venuvians catch wind of a counterfeiting operation, they ask the PCs to find the counterfeiters, destroy their apparatus, and seize as much of the fraudulent material as they can, so that it can be re-graded properly before Venuvius' rep takes a dive.
- A contractual quibble has grown into a full-blown legal row on Vesuvius, as a bouncer named O'Qeefe claims the station has taken more than its fair percentage. The parties involved have settled on a resolution method to everyone's satisfaction: nonlethal trial by combat. O'Qeefe and a few of his biggest miners will represent his side, and the Vesuvians offer to hire the PCs to act for them. If the PCs win, they'll get 0.5% of the total processed material—which works out to about 500kg of palladium.

ENTRY 317: Programmers Without Borders

"I don't care about your imaginary lines. I am here to save lives. Get the fuck out of my way." - Doc Trollman

A need is recognized, a call goes out, and across the Solar system comes the response. Hackers from Mercury to Uranus work to isolate infected systems, forcibly closing connections if necessary to contain the infection, while closer response teams deal with the source malware and work to rehabilitate the living victims; non-active participants work on distributed programming to create the software tools that the response teams use in their fight to save lives. Brushing past official firewalls and security measures, the Programmers Without Borders go where they are needed, and do what must be done.

Transhumanity runs on software. A bad patch or update can cripple a morph. Basilisk hacks can disable and infect entire networks. Poorly programmed nanotech can consume a habitat. These are just some of the software threats that can target anyone, anywhere, at any time. Threats that ignore the ephemeral borders of politics, spreading anywhere there is a network to carry them—which, in the contemporary era, is almost everywhere. No single habitat, hypercorp, or consortium has the skill and power to respond to these threats as they arise, and especially not the ability to overcome the legal, economic, and political barriers erected between habitats and fashions.

The Programmers Without Borders are a network of fast-response hackers, nanoprogrammers, neuroprogrammers, communication specialists, etc. who work together to monitor and respond to outbreaks of digital viruses, malware, rogue AIs, aggressive nanoswarms, bad patches, and outdated or overwhelmed computer systems whose failure threatens the lives of transhumans. While they mostly get the press for their bold actions quarantining stations and the on-site response teams that risk life and sanity to deal with exsurgent digital threats, the majority of the PWB's work is done quietly and behind the scenes—releasing corrected patches, updating firewall definitions to deal with malware, promoting cybersecurity awareness and free firewall programs, and upgrading overburdened legacy systems in scumbarges to ensure that the systems controlling critical environmental systems don't collapse.

The response teams are put together on an ad hoc basis depending on skill, location, and availability; network members located near an outbreak are typically contacted and asked to change their status to "active," which unlocks a number of special resources—long lists of exploits supplied by network members, donated software and equipment, special access rights, etc.—whatever the network thinks they need to get the job done. Active members are coordinated through a controller or operator, who helps direct them to the source of the threat,

access points into the infected network, shortcuts around security, and so on. The pressure is immense, but the temporary teams understand that lives are on the line, and give their best. Sometimes, it's enough.

Using Programmers Without Borders

PWB is a transhumanitarian aid organization with a clear remit and enough grit that they don't take shit off anybody—they will blow through a Jovian Republic embargo to get to an afflicted station if they think lives will be saved, and will ignore the niceties of hypercorp suzerainty or habitat safety and security protocols if it gets the job done. They are explicitly hackers and crackers who utilize exploits to undermine and bypass firewalls and security programs and make no bones about it: they aren't tech support, they're triage squads that seek to save as many lives as they can, and if that means sealing a station off and letting the exsurgent virus burn itself out by eating the brains of everyone on board, then that is what they will do.

Player characters might be members of Programmers Without Borders, and there are worse beginnings to a campaign than have a random group of PCs brought together as a PWB response team while an omniscient operator gives them clearly-defined goals and limited assistance as needed. Unlike Firewall, PWB deals with a wider variety of threats, from rather mundane (if sneaky) stuff like stealth upgrades of hardware and software to being stuck in an orphanage habitat with a decaying orbit and a nanoswarm that's eating everything. Of course, if the PCs end up releasing a digital virus or make a habit of flashing a basilisk hack to solve problems, they might get flagged by the PWB and end up in the unenviable position of fighting the "good guys" of the setting. Likewise, many political and corporate parties take a dim view of the PWB's cavalier attitude toward legal spaces, and while few would risk the bad PR of crippling the network might hire thirdparties to dissuade, block, and disrupt PWB efforts—particularly if the PWB's actions to contain and/or eradicate a threat run conflict to their own interests.

Seed

A rogue PWB group have released a "helper worm" that infects systems and forces them to update their firewall settings—unfortunately, this infection was flagged as malicious by hypercorporate firewall programmers and a PWB response team (the PCs) has been called in to contain the "threat." The result is a confusing situation where the PCs are getting conflicted orders and information as parts of the PWB network actively work against each other, the "helper worm" virus apparently mutating to whatever response the PCs use to try and remove it. How the PCs resolve the situation is up to them, but as the transhumans with the boots on the ground in this scenario, they're more likely to twig to what's really going on first and perhaps discover that this is all a smokescreen to keep the PWB too busy to see the real threat.

ENTRY 318: Greysmith

"So I said to the guy, 'You want an old-fashioned katana made out of carbonized iron? I mean, yeah, I can make it, but I've got...no, look, really they're doing some great stuff with nanomaterials these days...no, it can't cut railgun pellets out of the air that would be stupid.' I ended up putting an edge on a hunk of rebar. Stupid flat was happy as a spigepede in shit."

- Greysmith, unwinding with Therapist-by-the-Hour, session #366

Greysmith spent his early adolescence on Luna as Aditya Gupta, under the thumb of his traditionalist parents. Born a girl, they wanted a boy to carry on the family name, and raised him up as one while they saved up credits for the sex reassignment. He spent his days learning material science and working part time at the ore refinery, and his nights learning about his cultural heritage and staging mock battles with his schoolmates. A poor investment by his father reduced the family savings meant that Aditya's puberty was spent in a binder and with no hope for higher education, and by the time they could afford the sex reassignment he no longer wanted it—he identified male, but was rather attached to his female body. The argument turned into a terminal familial clash regarding life choices and life debts, and ended with a twenty-year old Aditya cashing in all his favors for an one way trip to Mars. Aditya Gupta was dead; Greysmith was born.

Two meters tall, androgynous, and lanky, Greysmith has visible muscles on his arms and shoulders and all manner of small scars around his eyes, making him look a bit like a raccoon when he has his goggles off. Greysmith's specialization is the creation of traditional low-tech items, preferably with high-tech materials that can improve their performance or take less time and energy to create. Most people know him as "Katanaman" because of his penchant for traditional pattern welding, but he resents being boxed into a niche and does a lot of experiments with nanomaterials, allotropic alloys, and whatever else he can get his hands on. Unfortunately for him, even six years after leaving home he still hasn't managed to cut all ties with his old life—his parents have entered a lawsuit for filial abandonment at New Varanasi, and he keeps having to dodge random cousins enlisted to bring him back, change his sex, marry a nice girl and pump out a bunch of grandkids while supporting his parents financially and emotionally.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	14	20	15	10	28	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Engineering (Combat) 50, Academics: History (Weapons) 35,

Academics: Metallurgy 50, Art: Metalworking 36, Blades 24, Clubs 24, Fray (Parry) 25, Free Fall 35, Hardware: Armorer 66, Interests: LARP 30, Interests: Martial Arts 24, Interests: Mock Combat (Re-Enactment) 27, Interests: Weapon Design 25, Language: Native Hindi 85, Language: Urdu 80, Language: English 70, Language: Japanese 70, Language: Mandarin 55, Networking: Autonomists 24, Networking: Firewall 25, Profession: Smith 40, Unarmed Combat 24

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Smell, Nanoscopic vision, Radar

Sense, Temperature Tolerance Traits: Blacklisted (Luna), Neural Damage (Migraines)

Using Greysmith

As a practical craftsman, Greysmith can easily be brought into the game as the NPC that fills the role of building, repairing, or selling equipment, particularly any sort of armor or melee weapon, and in a pinch can be the go-to person when researching a particular weapon, martial art style, bit of combat-related history, etc. or if the gamemaster wants to introduce a new weapon or piece of related equipment into the game. He does accept commissions, and his work is reasonably popular, which lets him spend far too much time with Therapist-by-the-Hour, basically subsidizing her lifestyle at the expense of his own. Greysmith himself has some ready-made seeds in his ongoing family drama, and would be more than happy to crank out some customized weapons for player characters willing to run interference with a particularly persistent cousin or go back to Luna to resolve his parents' madness (or at least bribe someone into making the lawsuit go away). As an antagonist, Greysmith would have to see the player characters as a threat of some sort—perhaps if they were taking up too much of Therapist-by-the-Hour's time while undergoing psychosurgery, for example—in which case he might be possessive enough to call in a few favors and try to make life tough for them, maybe even threaten them a bit.

Seed

Greysmith is in love with Therapist-by-the-Hour, and he finally confessed it. She responded by cutting their session short and saying she can no longer see him professionally, and he's spent the last three days getting high at a hookah bar that specializes in narcotic vapors. Unfortunately, the PCs need him for some reason—maybe he's the only person on the habitat with the materials to make the part they need to make their space ship go, or their cyberclaw malfunctions and now every time they pop the claws they uncontrollably urinate themselves and he's the only one that can fix it—and he won't be functional again until he's sorted things out with TbtH. The exact nature of the situation and the PC's fix to it can be flexible—TbtH might reciprocate his feelings, but want a marriage contract; or else they may have to play Cyrano de Bergerac and guide Greysmith through wooing her back; or maybe they can just bribe her to accept him back as a client, or at least convince her to unlock the sex therapy option on her menu in the hopes that a good tumble will satisfy him temporarily. Whatever the PCs come up with, it should be fun.

ENTRY 319: Dragoons

"We need boots on the ground."

- Brig. General D. Patscha, Last Martian Cavalry Regiment "The Red Boots"

In the past, some people thought that wars of the future would largely be fought remotely. Drones firing on drones, teleoperated vehicles and automated defense systems, planes and spacecraft raining death from above, fighter craft and battleships exchanging fire with enemies over the horizon, ballistic missiles fired between continents, mass drivers hurling rocks to crush targets on nearby moons, invisible lasers and masers flash-boiling enemies that never saw their death coming. It didn't turn out that way, though. The larger apparatus of war have their place, but the wars they were designed for were too terrible of conflicts, even before the Fall. Most of the battles in transhumanity's recent history have been meaner affairs, fought by those without uniforms, invisible forces maneuvering around each other, surfacing briefly only to instill terror with organized strikes. As once before, mobility was key, and transhuman judgment and intuition essential. Wars fought by soldiers, not just smart weapons and AIs. It only remained to find a way to get them there.

Dragoon forces developed during the Fall, pushing back against the TITAN forces on Mars and Venus. Developed out of necessity when there were no resources for proper drop ships, they took their inspiration from high altitude high opening (HAHO) military parachuting. The first drop suits were designed for emergencies on orbital stations, and slightly better ones for thrill-seekers; vacuum-sealed, built to take the heat of re-entry without cooking the occupant, with muse-guided smart parachutes to slow the fall down to something survivable. They say half of the first regiment broke their legs on their first jump Martian, flesh-and-blood knees unable to take the impact; the survivors got cyberlegs and were sent out again, dropped from orbit and falling behind enemy weapon emplacements, taking a position from an unexpected angle, too small for radar to detect. After the war, most of the dragoon groups broke up, with only a few small organizations remaining throughout the solar system, passing down their skills and refining their equipment. In these days, dragoon training is an unusual but valued skillset for mercenaries and security forces, as well as thrillseekers and extreme sport enthusiasts.

For practical purposes, dragoon operations are mainly restricted to Mars, Venus, and Mercury, because they have enough gravity to care about and enough atmosphere to work with. The other planets, minor planets, and major moons and asteroids either have no atmosphere—which means no terminal velocity, which means you will continue to accelerate all the way down—or are gas giants where you will continue to fall toward the solidified core until you are crushed by the increasing pressure. Mars and

Mercury with their low atmosphere have higher terminal velocities, and the drop suits expand their parachutes' surface area to try and keep the dragoon's joints from popping when they hit the ground. Venus, of course, has a caustic atmosphere, and the trick there is to hit the ground slow enough to walk away but before it eats right through the parachute.

Mechanics

A low-orbital jump ("dragoon jumps") requires a success on a difficult (-10) Freefall Test; characters may take the "Parachute" specialty to improve their odds. Success means the character survives and only takes 1d10 damage on impact; failure means that something went wrong, and the character is both off-course for where they hoped to land and takes 2d10 damage. A critical failure indicates that the character's drop suit or parachute failed, and they take 10d10 damage. Drop suits are mechanically equivalent to a light vacsuit (Eclipse Phase 333) but the cost is Moderate due to the inclusion of a smartfabric programable parachute and additional thermal protection. Drop suits designed for operation on Venus are equivalent to hard suits (Eclipse Phase 334) but lack plasma thrusters.

Using Dragoons

Low-orbital jumps are a fun and cool scene to describe, with the PCs being fed pure oxygen from their suits and the altimeter ticking off in their ecto, the fall itself can last several minutes depending on how fast they're coming in and from how many kilometers out they're falling. That said, the physics majors are probably going to piss themselves at the raw numbers if they think about it too hard, so concentrate on the aesthetics rather than why the PCs haven't burst into flame and buried themselves in the ground yet. Dragoon jumps are there for when the PCs need to get to some place in an unexpected fashion, excellent for infiltration or if they lack a vehicle, or even as a kind of low-budget escape pod for the habitat or spaceship doing things on the chea As a regular mode of transportation, however, they leave something to be desired—even with the typical armor on a drop suit, they're probably going to take some damage.

Seed

Some of the first dragoons on Venus never landed; their chutes got caught up by a storm and carried on near-perpetual wind currents, the owners slowly starving to death. These "angels" are honored for their sacrifice, and it's been traditional for some of the dragoon veterans of the Venus campaign during the Fall to follow suit with a "sky burial." However, one veteran's association has discovered that some punks have caught one of the "angels" and are selling the bones and gear on Mesh auction sites—they hire the PCs to kidnap the offenders and take them on a dragoon jump, to see what it is they suffered through.

ENTRY 320: Ego Keys

"You are the key."

- Message from an Alpha Fork (Aswald Catallus, Bellagio Park Publishing, Luna, AF 9)

The security of any system is only as good as the security of its keys; all the lasers and sentient landmines and biometric-scanning urinal stations in the world are useless if the CEO chooses "GOD" as their personal password. While public key encryption is reasonably safe and secure for the majority of encryption purposes, some transhumans prefer a greater level of personal security and control, which led to the development of ego keys.

An ego key is a handful of specific memories that make up part of an ego and are used to encrypt data reserved for a single user. While still vulnerable to quantum codebreaking, no hacker can steal or copy the password to an ego key-encrypted file, since they are unique to a given ego and those of its forks which share the specific memories—or so they are advertised. Still, since each ego key is customized to a single user they retain a certain appeal to the paranoid and eccentric, and are often used for private archives, brain boxes, and secret accounts intended to be accessed only by forks if anything happens to the original ego.

Culturally, ego keys have a reputation as last year's fad in spy/thriller/amnesia media, inspired mainly by Message from an Alpha Fork and its tens of thousands of derivative works. In that story, a beta fork named Prophos awakens to itself after the alpha fork it was created from succumbs to a digital weapon, and finds that it is being sought out both by the Jovian Secret Police and the Counterintelligence Hypercorp Alliance Committee (CHAC) of the Planetary Consortium. Both groups believe that Prophos unknowingly possesses the ego key to a file, and Prophos (along with competing lovers Xia and Giles) must follow a series of clues left by their former self to find the program first. Message and its imitators are considered cliché now, but the fad caused a spike in the usage of ego keys that has not yet died off.

Using Ego Keys

Ego keys are a storytelling tool to throw a slight wrench into the traditional story of a locked box/encrypted file. As a twist, it has the innate advantage in being a password that you can't beat out of someone, so there is less incentive to beat them. While it is occasionally fun to bypass a retinal

scan by ripping out the security guard's eyeball, it is also interesting to have a game where killing, torturing, or mutilating a character is not in the best interests of the individuals involved since they need actual cooperation to get what they want. So ego keys are designed both to protect NPCs whom the PCs need to open a file, and vice versa. As an added twist, ego keys are another onion-skin layer onto Eclipse Phase's material on forking and brain hacking. Whether or not a fork of an ego has the right memories to match the ego key depends on which memories were picked and how complete the fork is.

Seed

Particularly secretive or paranoid egos back themselves up, create an ego key, and then delete themselves so that the backup continues on unaware of their status—until some preprogrammed condition causes the muse to alert them to the fact. This process is known as "hedging" and is generally more trouble than it is worth. So what does it say about the PCs when their muses pop up with a preprogrammed alert alerting them to the existence of a file encrypted by all of their ego keys...but getting to it requires following a series of clues that the character left for themselves. What did the PCs stash away together, and why are they being alerted to it now?

ENTRY 321: Squire Maize

"Water is mass, boy. Mass costs delta v. Mass costs money. You remember money, boy? Now that's why you want dehydrated food. Well lookie here what I got! An' if you want something to wash it down with..."

- Squire Maize, ramping up a pitch

"Dry" habitats have no local source of water, and so are required to carefully watch their local water economy and import new water at cost. Regulations for water conservation on such stations can range from the reasonable, like re-using grey water in hydroponics and limiting showers, to the laughable and terrible rules regarding rationing, mandatory water reclamation from corpses, a "water tax" for visiting morphs, etc. Perhaps most painful for the transhumans on the latter joyless stations are restrictions on the use of "water for entertainment purposes," which is usually understood to mean the creation of alcohol.

Squire Maize is an independent trader who works a circuit of mostly "dry" habitats, buying space on larger ships with his goods and then farcasting ahead to start dealing with the "natives." A good trip for him involves a profit, and he has a reputation among his customers for both thrift and skirting local regulations. In habitats with restrictions against distillation and wet making, for example, he tends to sell denatured alcohol as an industrial solvent—as well as a carbon wool "scrubber" which can act as a filter to remove the additive and provide drinkable alcohol. Well, most of the additive. Beggars can't be choosers.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	13	16	13	10	9	13	-

Morph: Infomorph

Skills: Academics: Chemistry 23, Academics: Economics 30, Art: Writing (Ad Copy) 25, Deception (Selling) 35, Infosec 26, Interests: Currency 24, Interests: Distilling 33, Interests: Great Merchants of History 45, Interfacing 27, Language: Native English 85, Language: German 75, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminal 25, Networking: Hyperorps 23, Persuasion 28, Profession: Smuggler (Bootlegger) 25, Profession: Merchant 33 Traits: Social Stigma (AGI)

Using Squire Maize

While Eclipse Phase doesn't particularly focus on commerce, greed and desire are two of the main drives of

transhumanity, and the people that feed those drives are often important. Squire Maize is a stock character: the traveling merchant who is always slightly shady and working on a new deal, with a rather straightforward motivation (profit). As a contact or occasional reoccurring NPC, Maize is the guy that can get what you need...or at least try to point you in the direction of the people that can get you what you need, as long as there's something in it for him. The Squire is refreshingly aware of his selfcenteredness, and doesn't feel the need or desire to philosophize about it. Exactly what constitutes "a profit" varies, and clever PCs can convince Maize to uncommon deals or actions if they can explain it to his personal benefit.

Seeds

- Squire Maize has come to the habitat, and the authorities are watching him very closely. Fortunate, then, that Maize has hired the PCs to secretly act as his agents—while the authorities watch Maize and his perfectly above-board transactions, the PCs will take charge of the illicit cargo and carry out the transactions for a cut of the profit. It's the perfect scheme...as long as nobody gets too greedy.
- After selling some bad booze, Maize is in hiding from the irate customers he's poisoned. The PCs are asked to find him and exact restitution—and once the Squire realizes this is a negotiation, he's willing to make amends, as long as the PCs help him out on a side deal...
- Squire Maize rings up the PCs and offers a piece of equipment they've been wanting at a steep discount. However, there is a catch which the Squire doesn't disclose until after they've agreed to the deal: the goods are currently in impound with the rest of Maize's goods that customs seized for mandatory quarantine after he was found moving some questionable biologicals. It'll take a few weeks to iron things out, but Maize was hoping to be gone before then—if the PCs could just help him cut through the red tape (and a few locks), then they can have their goods and Maize will be moving on.

ENTRY 322: Soulless

"What am I now?"

- Harold Meson, after resleeving

Every transhuman believes in something that they can't see. Atoms, distant stars, the shadows on the cave, there is always something that they accept as existing, even if they haven't personally experienced it, or if they have seen it than not able to trust their senses. Even people who believe in scientific research and evidence have limited educations and perspectives; even the most critical have to accept some things, if not on faith, than as a matter of convenience. The true test of a transhuman's adherence to their beliefs is how they react when those beliefs are challenged. Some slip into denial, others try to rationalize it away, a few re-examine their beliefs and may even change them. Yet it is an individual process for every transhuman, something that everyone has to deal with on their own, in their own way.

Millions of transhumans still believe in the soul. Some attribute this to the core teachings and dogmas of religions old and new, others have a vaguer notion of a spiritual self. The "invisible you" has gotten complicated in a time of resleeving, forking, and AGIs, and viewpoints on what these developments mean with regards to the concept of the soul have been multifarious and often divisive. Pseudoscience-cultists claim that the self is a form of meta-data, carried and copied and split between forks; most Catholics claim that the soul is tied to the physical body, and disapprove of resleeving and ego-manipulation; some Hindus and Buddhists claim resleeving is a form of realized reincarnation, though opinions are divided on the effects of this on karma. Yet it is one thing to espouse or study these beliefs and something else again to internalize and live them, to act on their certainty. So what happens when you resleeve a devout Catholic who believes the soul does not continue on past the death of their physical body?

The soulless are those transhumans who held—or sometimes, still hold—belief in the existence of the soul, and that it does not continue when an ego resleeves or forks. They are faced then with an intimate test of self and faith: what are they that continues to think and feel and exist? Some adapt their beliefs to their new situation, and there are no shortage of sects of those in like situations willing to accept them. Others reject their old beliefs, and become rather lost in themselves and what to do as they explore outside their old paradigms. Some accept their status in stranger ways; the Jovian Republic is said to have a hospital with an entire ward of "living corpses"—transhumans that believe so firmly that they are dead, that they do not move or talk in any way. Most transhumans are unlikely to encounter those comatose victims of their own beliefs, but are likely to encounter the "walking corpses"—those individuals that think of themselves as just digital echoes, unnatural soulless things that continue to move and think and influence the world. Some rage

at their status, the heaven or reincarnation they believe was denied to them; others accept that this is the only world they will know, and work to make of it a heaven. A few commit suicide, erasing themselves, unwilling to face existence without a soul.

Socially, soulless must deal with the relations with their old communities, families, and friends, many of whom probably held the same beliefs that they did before resleeving or forking. Some find acceptance, most face rejection, especially in habitats and legal systems that do not recognize them as the same person—in an instance, the soulless lose their property, family, and social support network. New soulless often fall into the outskirts of their societies, where there exist predators designed for them—agents, career managers, and headhunters eager to guide them into indentured contract employment; communal property sects that seek to see to their emotional needs, but are little better in terms of not exploiting the talents of their members. A few manage to access enough old accounts to sustain themselves, or find their feet and build new lives for themselves.

Using Soulless

Science fiction is not about technology; sci fi is about the questions that arise from science, how new developments impact the human story. Eclipse Phase as a science fiction setting where these questions can be played out—and maybe your table finds the answers that work for them, or maybe they do not. The Soulless are a concept for players and gamemasters to employ if they want to explore elements of belief and transhuman ego technology. There is no right or correct way to play a Soulless, whether as a PC or NPC; the details of any character's beliefs regarding the ego and the soul are often unique to them. Most transhumans get along fine without asking those questions; materialists think the concept of the immaterial soul is ridiculous, or at least unprovable. Whatever the players or gamemasters personal beliefs, Soulless characters can be a great way to introduce these philosophical concepts to their game—although in both cases, GMs and players should beware of preaching their personal beliefs at the table. Remember, the point is to have fun, not to convert anybody.

ENTRY 323: Uno

"Oh fuck, I think I stepped on something."

- Fuckup; 34:256:11:29 remaining on on their sentence

A step through the Pandora Gate brought the 'crashers to an alien paradise garden. The air smelled like cinammon, with patches of bitter almond that turned out to be clouds of cyanide gas. The whole place moved; the carpet-critter scoured the ground for feces left by the undulating gasbag plant, leaving bioluminescent slime trails eagerly slobbered up by the five-tongued starfish-snail. Nothing attacked the transhuman trespassers; nothing seemed carnivorous. It was a weird ecosystem, and deserved a lifetime of study.

Until one of the gatecrashers accidentally stepped on a finger-crawler. Damage done, the team scraped it into a sample bag and took it back home, initial survey complete. Analysis of the finger-crawler showed signs of an engineered organism—immortal cell-lines, no recognizable reproductive capabilities, ridiculously specific digestive system, something that looked like a serial number encoded in base 13 under one gill-fla. Reviewing the recordings of the survey further reinforced this hypothesis; none of the analysts could see two of anything. Each creature appeared to be unique, with its own niche.

The subsequent team came back to a devastated ecosystem. Things were starving, dropped dead in their tracks. A whole section of the garden's food chain had broken down, critters starved or suffering from micronutrient deprivation, others overburdened and poisoned by waste products that they couldn't rid themselves of naturally. Emergency rescue measures met up against an ecological prime directive, but a last-ditch 24-hour Mesh campaign raised enough funds to overcome the eco-conservatives and at least make an effort to save as much of Uno's ecosystem as could be done.

As for the gatecrasher who killed the finger-crawler, their punishment was set for bid during the fund-raising campaign, and the winning vote was that their name be officially changed to "Fuckup" for a period of 35 years, with all traces of their former name being erased retroactively. Fuckup wasn't exactly contrite or cooperative with the sentence, but eventually submitted to psychosurgery under duress, and henceforth until time is up will be known as Fuckup.

Using Uno

Transhumanity has a nasty habit of unbalancing ecosystems; it's just rarely as blatant as what happened with Uno. That said, even with its dying ecosystem, Uno needs to be explored—there is every indication that this group of alien lifeforms was built, not naturally evolved, and there may still be evidence of the extraterrestrial sentients that created them around there somewhere. Likewise, gatecrashers are needed to help in the recovery efforts, bringing sick and starving critters back for treatment and study, then re-introducing healthy specimens along with feeders that approximate the functions of some of the lost critters. It's a weird world, and the xenoecologists want to keep it that way.

Seed

Fuckup approaches the PCs, trying to hire them to recover their original name. The PCs will have to do some serious digging if they accept the job, and face a number of reasonable-sounding transhumans that will non-violently hinder them, as they believe in the justice of Fuckup's sentence.

ENTRY 324: Nuit Academy

Personal augmentation started with a relatively low acceptance rate, but once the commercial products hit reasonable levels of safety, conformity, and cost then development of new augmentations quickly outpaced the abilities of society to accommodate individual technologies. So, outside of some specialized habitats, few habitats are built, designed, or adapted with any specific personal augmentation in mind—catering to the special needs of those transhumans that preferred echolocation to visual sight, for example, took a back seat around the time of the Fall, when survival of the majority of transhumans took precedence over the wants and needs of the few. Some of the victims in this rush of technology and societal changes were the burgeoning secondary markets that tried to grow up around augmentation technology, only to fail when they couldn't keep up—or else adapt into something else.

The Nuit Academy is a survivor of those harsh market forces. Originally a school for the blind on Earth, Nuit specialized in fitting its students with echolocation prostheses and teaching them how to navigate by sound. The advent of reliable, cost-efficient cybereyes severely reduced their body of potential students, and the Nuit Academy reinvented itself and transitioned its curricula to train transhumans in the use of new sonar implants. However, "sensory acclimation schools" fell out of favor relatively quickly, as most transhumans could easily access equivalent courses on the Mesh and proper calibration of sonar augmentations during implantation rendered them more user-friendly. Faced once again with a shift in its core audience, the Nuit Academy abandoned its failing business and reorganized as a microskillware studio.

Subskills are extremely specific abilities which are too minor and incidental to merit full skillware; they are typically little more than collections of instinctive reactions and physical familiarization that few transhumans think twice about—and because of their seeming unimportance, subskills represent an untapped market that the majority of skillware producers have failed to develop, and the Nuit Academy has moved into the gap. Using a pay-as-you-go model with occasional ransomware projects, the neuroprogrammers of the Nuit Academy are the masterminds behind several popular subskill products such as *Navigating by Sound*, *Chopsticks*, *Zero-Gravity Toilet Training*, *Whistling*, and *Tying Neckties*. The genius of subskills is that while most of these activities have online tutorials and training that users can easily follow, downloading and installing microskills grants immediate mastery with none of the time, hesitation, or potential for embarrassment that comes from trial-and-error or missing a step in the directions.

Mechanics

Subskills are an option for characters with skillware implants. As noted, they cover a range of perfectly mundane minor skills that your character may never have needed and which are normally not the subject of a test (unless your gamemaster is particularly cruel). For example, a PC that has never been off the surface of Mars probably would not know how to use a zero-gravity toilet, and instead of trying to figure out the instructions while their guts are boiling simply downloads the subskill and gets to work. Anything that can be covered by an actual skill test, like playing a musical instrument or firing a pistol, is beyond the range of a subskill. Assume that all subskills are available for download and are free, and each takes up only 1 skill point in the skillware implant.

The only downside of subskills is that the character cannot familiarize themselves effectively with the actual task while the subskill is installed. So if a character installed a subskill to handle using chopsticks, they would cease to be able to handle chopsticks once it is uninstalled and would have to learn how to handle them the old-fashioned way. For this reason, many transhumans become somewhat dependent on certain subskills, although Mesh legends of parents that installed toilet training subskills in their pets or children and then never bothered to uninstall them are (probably) false...

Using Nuit Academy

The Nuit Academy are business people and programmers that try to understand the transhuman condition and make little programs that make life easier. To do this requires a fundamental understanding of the transhuman condition which is a difficult thing at a time when the bulk of society devotes its resources to the statistically average transhuman abilities. Originally developed to assist those with disabilities and then those with personal augmentations, the Nuit Academy has transitioned to more generic fare to pay the bills, but as a group they still devote considerable resources to subskills aimed at help disenfranchised characters who because of their combinations of morph/augmentations and/or disabilities require some help at basic tasks, or those whose upbringing has left them deficient in some basic areas of transhuman knowledge, such as the brinker synthmorph that doesn't know how to apply a band aid to a biomorph or the over-nannied flat who never learned to brush their own teeth because they had a nanomouthwash for that. Most PCs probably won't be direct recipients of their skills except possibly from a flavortext angle, but NPCs might be very reliant on them.

Seed

Many uplifts have basic difficulty adapting to transhuman body language, especially smiling—which many see as a form of threat display. The Nuit Academy markets a *Smile Adaptor* subskill specifically to address this, but there's been a bit of difficulty with it—three neohominids using the subskillware have died recently, and the Nuit Academy asks the PCs to investigate. The answer turns out to be rather straightforward, in that the software worked too well—the neohominids using it became so inured to smiling that they ignored threat displays from other hominids while smiling too much themselves, which ended up with them getting into fights they couldn't win.

ENTRY 325: Marin Buskovic

"I went to sleep on Earth, I awoke to see the stars. Yet I knew I was in prison still. Only the cage had changed. Very well. I know prisons. They are not the end."

- Buskovic, post-hibernation interview

The first hibernoids were designed for sleeper-ships to the Outer Rim and beyond; explorers sleeping away the decades as they inched along at sub-light speeds. Exploration, however, could not account for the full cost of their development, and soon after other uses were looked at for these morphs—and found. "Sleeper prisons" enjoyed a brief vogue before the Fall as relatively cost-effective in terms of operating expenses and in some countries were considered relatively humane. Regrettably, the bulk of the sleeper prison populations are believed to have perished in the Fall, or in the months and years since as the automated systems failed and the hibernating prisoners starved or succumbed to infection in their sleep

Yet not all the sleeper prisons were on Earth. Luna had one, as well as a few experimental orbital facilities and certain "hibernation brigs" on the oldest orbital habitats. With the fall of Earth and its political bodies, debate arose as to what to do with these prisoners. Most were woken up and released on their own cognizance or issued new trials; others were assessed as posing a danger and retained in their state, perhaps indefinitely; the Jovian Republic is said to have simply unplugged theirs and harvested the organs, though most experts consider that simple xenophobic libel.

Marin Buskovic was serving two life sentences in the Luna sleeper prison for a pair of murders he had committed, and opted for hibernation over regular prison. The authorities at the time of his trial had been unsympathetic—Buskovic had been a police officer, who had successfully solved the case of the marital kidnapping of a young woman and returned her to her true husband and family. Regrettably, the woman had been raped by her kidnapper, and her family considered her to have dishonored them with her "adultery" and killed her. Buskovic tracked down the men responsible and killed them in cold blood. In AF 6, as the debate about the sleeper prisons was the talk of Luna, the circumstances of Buskovic's case became a cause célèbre. An online petition for his release hit 1 million votes, and the Lunar authorities agreed to release him.

Now, Buskovic is a man out of time, still sometimes struggling with the world he finds himself in—his post-hibernation assessment shows that he still believes he is in prison, resulting in the retention of certain prisoner behaviors like stashing homemade weapons about and paranoia about inspectors. Unwilling to trade on his temporary moment of fame, he supports himself as a freelance investigator and part-time law enforcement agent, with a reputation for "old school" solutions to problems.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	13	18	18	18	25	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	42	8	84	35	7	53

Morph: Hibernoid

Skills: Academics: Anthropology 25, Academics: Philosophy (Law) 40, Art: Graffiti 24, Art: Harmonica 20, Blades 36, Clubs 36, Deception 25, Fray 36, Free Fall 30, Gunnery 19, Impersonation 25, Infiltration 36, Infosec 25, Interests: Pre-Fall Earth 66, Interests: Neo-Slavic Culture 24, Interfacing 20, Kinetic Weapons 60, Language: Native Ukrainian 80, Language: English 75, Language: German 44, Language: Russian 60, Negotiation 35, Networking: Autonomists 15, Networking: Criminals 25, Profession: Bodyguard 37, Profession: Lawman 36, Spray Weapons 55, Unarmed Combat (Subdual) 40 Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave (Light), Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Hibernation, Medichines, Neurachem (Level 1), Toxin Filters

Traits: Mental Disorder (Delusion—Still in Prison, Paranoia)

Using Buskovic

Buskovic is a freelancer, but his sense of justice is stronger than his attachment to a particular employer or code of law. He particularly dislikes violence against women and children, but his somewhat archaic understanding of sex, gender, relationships, and technology mean he can sometimes misunderstand a situation—he still hasn't quite grasped the implications of Neotenic morphs and the Sex Change augmentation for example, and has taken to calling them "hermaphrodites," even when people correct him. Most of those who know him overlook this, as he means well and will break some noses for "hermaphrodites" that are being harassed. Player characters may run up against Buskovic in many contexts, but most probably when they're doing something illegal or in the pay of a criminal figure (even if the job itself is legal), or else he's extra muscle for a job provided by their employer. Buskovic is also a good moral ruler to illustrate the difference between contemporary understanding of social issues versus the acceptance or nullification of those issues in Eclipse Phase—a Neotenic morph out on a date with a Splicer and getting a little touchy-feely will have Buskovic reaching for his gun, for example.

ENTRY 326: Soma Fruit

The genetic codes for opium, tobacco, coca, coffee, and marijuana have been in the public domain for a long time, and the basic mechanisms for the production of caffeine, nicotine, morphine, codeine, cocaine, and cannabinoids are so well known that genescript kiddies have pre-written programs to help them hack together chimera plants that produce the drugs they want in the quantity they want. Hypercorp genetic engineers and drug artists tend to focus on more obscure plant and animal species, and instead of crude scriptkiddy software splicing coca genes into space tomatoes they focus on taste, texture, consistent dosage, and aesthetic appeal.

At the consumer level, these drug-infused genetic chimera plants are known as soma fruit, covering everything from the bland "speedball cherries" (cherry tomatoes which codeine and cocaine) popular on Luna to the Superdark Chocolate (mildly hallucinogenic daturacocoa beans) popular among hypercorp executives on Phobos and Extropia's trademark Munchies (cannabis-potato chips that stimulate appetite and cause mild euphoria). Given that there are no controls on genehacking beyond the technical difficulty involved, both independent and corporate genehackers are in a constant game of one-upmanship to produce the latest and greatest soma fruit, with occasional collateral damage in the form of overdosing customers.

Mechanics

Soma fruit are generally recreational drugs (Eclipse Phase 320), most of which are based primarily on classical drugs (opiates, stimulants, and cannabinoids), just in combination and different forms—small fruit, chilies, edible tubers, flowers, etc. On the low end, these are functionally the same as Buzz, Mono No Aware, or Orbital Hash. Many soma fruit combine different drugs in their genetic makeup, or higher concentrations, and vary from toxic to the equivalent of speedballing to Grin and Kick at the same time and hoping your morph's heart doesn't explode. Since a full description of effects is impossible, gamemasters are suggested to use the drugs and effects in Eclipse Phase as a guideline—soma fruit tend to be cheaper, but more unpredictable. Players that want to make their own soma fruit can find starter software packages and open-source/public domain gene sequences available for free on the Mesh, they'll just need access to an appropriate kit or lab and a successful Skill Test

(probably Interest: Gene Hacking) to design and produce a handful of seeds—actually growing the plants will take time.

Using Soma Fruit

There are good reasons why certain drug-producing plants have been perennial favorites throughout transhuman history: access, abundance, and effectiveness. However, the advent of genehacking and the trans-Solar Mesh has made the production of classical drugs ridiculously simple and ubiquitous—at the point when anybody can do it (local laws and resources permitting), transhumans in search of a new and better drug experience will turn to effervescent chimeras that promise them novelty. Soma fruit are popular among DIY autonomists and hypercorp wageslaves alike, from the junkie that will consume anything to the drug gourmand that demands only the finest chemical high. For all practical purposes, soma fruit are a way of showing off the difference and occasional casual decadence of the Eclipse Phase future, where re-engineering food to contain drugs is cheap and easy, but doing it well is a technical and artistic challenge.

ENTRY 327: The Maas Gate

"The Pandora Gates are a universe in and of themselves; each is obviously based on the same technology, but each is also unique, yet there are no indications that one was made before the other, with no indications of refinement or development. Even the basic materials they are made of could have been made a million years ago or yesterday. Each is also complete into itself, a whole unit...except for the Maas Gate."

- Prof. Brainbug, impromptu lecture at Titan Autonomous University

The Maas Gate was discovered and claimed late in AF 9 by Kalen Maas on Tethys, buried in centuries-old ice. It was recognized early on as technology of a piece with the Pandora Gates, but with crucial differences—smaller, with a simpler interface, and partially damaged as evidenced by a sixteen centimeter burn mark on the edge of the outer torus. Kalen quickly incorporated as Maas Laboratories, and has begun construction of a new laboratory facility to study it; meanwhile the Maas Gate is kept and studied in a highsecurity laboratory leased from Godwinhead and originally designed for dealing with radioactive samples.

By design or damage, experimentation with the Maas Gate has shown it does not operate identically to existing gates. The gate torus is small, only twenty-eight centimeters inner diameter. There is a wormhole effect, but no means to input an address. The effect itself only remains stable for 2.4 seconds, and puts out so much electromagnetic noise that telemetry from probes is often lost or corrupted. What came as a real surprise is that 11.2 seconds after the gate effect collapses, it spontaneously activates again and ejects an object with near-identical mass to any that passed through the prior gate episode at a velocity of 4.6 m/s, often accompanied by an "exhalation" of gases. These "exchange masses" are always alien objects which are of sufficient dimensions to fit through the torus and within 3 grams of the mass of the initial mass, none of which have ever been recovered.

So far "exchange objects" have included micrometeorites, metal fragments, partially fossilized extraterrestrial gastropod-analogue shells and exoskeletons, a single goldcoated alnico magnet with considerable intermetallic buildup, a lightly radioactive saline/heavy water solution, and a glass tube filled with neutral gasses and inscribed with a series of lines of different thicknesses and depths. The nature of this quid-pro-quo exchange and the

complete randomness of the "exchange mass" has led to both considerable theorizing about the purpose of the Maas Gate and, almost inevitably, gambling. The "lottery" method of testing with the Maas Gate has proven popular with researchers, who simply drop input masses through and receive the exchange mass for study—and many of the results are posted directly to the Mesh, where bookmakers like Maas Roulette can bet on the nature of the outcome.

The current popular theory, supported by the little sensor data relayed from probes sent through the gate-device, is that the Maas Gate hooks in to a storage and exchange system set up by the gatebuilders to facilitate communication. The only slightly-lesspopular theory is that the Maas Gate is an intelligence test, and that the more crap transhumans drop through the gate the greater the likelihood that whatever comes out is going to be dangerous enough to destroy everything. Maas Labs has already limited the mass of input objects to no more than 1 kilogram, ostensibly to minimize the possibility of receiving highly unstable heavy elements in quantity, and the countermeasures have been set up to hopefully contain any alive xenobiological material or active nanoinfections that might pass through.

Using the Maas Gate

Using the Maas Gate in a game directly is tricky; although PCs could gear themselves up as micromorphs (entry 282) and maybe go exploring with no guarantee of return. Instead, the Maas Gate will primarily be used in the form of the exchange objects that it outputs, which are perfect macguffins for most games and at 1 kg +/- 3 g are eminently transportable and valuable. Concerns about the nature and purpose of the gate are real, and the internal politics at Maas Labs regarding the cavalier "lottery" approach can get quite heated, and may cause some parties to involve the PCs in one fashion or another— staging a break in to underline the need for greater security, etc.

Alternately, the gamemaster may decide that the Maas Gate is a fake, a clever prop whose properties are replicated with stage illusion and carefully planned demonstrations in front of scientists. The electromagnetic noise, the light show, the puff of smoke or gas that just happens to hide the object the moment it emerges, the inability to get good sensor data—all possible elements of an elaborate hoax. If this is the case, then Kalen Maas will laugh all the way to the bank, provided they can find someplace far enough to run when the scheme is exposed.

ENTRY 328: Heracles

"There is no place for gods anymore."

- Heracles, catchphrase

In a time when a transhuman can change their bodies and minds, when Earth and all its nations are lost, when the old religions and ethnicities begin to fade against the new cultures forming, many egos become lost in themselves; lost in the transience of life and frozen by the endless possibilities open to them even as some of the building blocks of their identities disappear they seize on whatever they can—and if they cannot be themselves, then sometimes they become someone else. These are emotional victims of the Fall, unable to cope with their own pasts they redefine themselves into personas that can.

One of the fixtures of Olympus habitat on Mars is Heracles; a hulking biomorph who claims to be the immortal demigod from Greek and Roman myth. Nobody really believes him, but he is entertaining, never breaks character, and always puts on a good show for the tourists. For the price of a few drinks he will gladly show anyone around the habitat, to all the good bars and places of secret beauty and forgotten history, some of which might actually be real.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
10	12	14	15	20	50	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
5	1	30	6	60	20	3	40

Morph: Unique Biomorph

Skills: Academics: History (Greek) 75, Academics: Mythology (Greek) 85, Academics:

Linguistics 15, Academics: Philosophy 15, Art: Sculpture 15, Art: Singing 15, Climbing 25, Clubs 50, Fray 40, Free Fall (Microgravity) 25, Interests: Alcohol 35, Interests: Olympus 50, Interests: New Religions 35, Interests: Wrestling 35, Interests: Xenocults 35, Language: Native Greek 99, Language: Latin 75, Language: English 65, Networking: Media 15, Profession: Tour Guide 25, Protocol 15, Scrounging 16, Unarmed Combat (Wrestling) 67

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts

Disadvantages: Mental Disability (Delusion—Hercules)

Using Heracles

The exhuman ego that thinks it is Heracles has gone to considerable trouble to embrace its persona, and its body

reflects that: a muscle-bound biomorph with the proportions of a Classical Grecian statue. Dedicated to his role, Heracles will seek to prove his status by telling stories and performing feats of tremendous strength. Continued efforts to undercut these displays or prove him wrong will make him angry, and then morose, at which point he will drink until he blacks out, then wake up and continue on as if nothing has happened. As an NPC, Heracles is probably best used as a quirky local to add color to Olympus and provide some comedy or pathos as appropriate to the scene, and as a contact with their finger on the pulse of the habitat. Heracles is too mentally broken to hold grudges, and stupid enough for PCs to trick him into doing their dirty work by playing along to his delusions (say, by pretending to be mythological figures themselves), so will likely only be an ally or enemy for brief periods of time.

Seeds

- A woman named Megara Milogiannis approaches the PCs. She claims that Heracles is her husband—estranged and lost in his delusion after the Fall, when a TITAN strike destroyed their home and family. Megara claims their children's egos were preserved as archives, but she needs her husband's access code to access them. Can the PCs work through Heracles' delusion? Should they? Is Megara even telling the truth, or does she want Heracles' cooperation for some other purpose?
- An industrial accident caused part of Olympus' internal structure to collapse. Heracles was drinking nearby and raced to the scene and helped rescue morphs trapped in the rubble, but was caught in a slip and now is paralyzed from the waist down. The despondent self-proclaimed demigod, who lacks the resources to get the damage healed, calls on the player characters to put him out of his misery, so that his spirit can go to the Elysian Fields. What do the PCs do?
- One of the peculiarities of Heracles is that he wears only a strange furry hide for clothing, along with sandals and, on special occasions, boxer shorts. A visiting archaeobiologist from Titan has recognized the hide as belonging to a supposedly long-extinct lion species, and asks the PCs for a sample. Heracles refuses—unless the PCs can best him in a wrestling contest. If they win, they get the hide; if they fail, they have to fulfill a trial of Heracles' choice...starting with his community service to clean out the sanitation ducts on Olympus' lower level.

ENTRY 329: Shiftmorph

"Haven't you always wanted to be a car? And have sex with another car?"

- Laughably Bad, stand-up comedian and shiftmorph spokesperson

Transhumanity has tried to create working robots that emulate the classical transhuman form for centuries, and for centuries it failed, because of lack of knowledge of transhuman biophysics and insufficiently advanced technology. So for decades the state of the art in robotics were wheeled constructs, many-legged shamblers based on more stable spider and quadruped designs, even rollers, swimmers, and an endless assortment of flying drones. By the time transhumans did perfect humanoid robots they had a vast array of robots, thousands of designs with every means of mobility imaginable, and transhumans gladly piloted all of them remotely. Yet when the leap was finally made to resleeving into early synthmorphs, relatively few transhumans expressed any interest inhabiting a six-wheeled all-terrain low-gravity vehicle, preferring the more familiar case and synth morphs. So non-humanoid synthmorphs remain a minority.

Yet, there is a middle way—shiftmorphs, which are designed to change both their function and appearance between specific modes. The most common shiftmorph version transforms between a humanoid mode similar to a synth and a six-wheeled all-terrain vehicle mode. Each mode has its inherent advantages and disadvantages—humanoid mode has hands and can climb, all-terrain wheeled vehicle is faster, etc. Other shiftmorphs are designed with different or additional modes, such as quadrupeds (often sculpted to mimic a specific animal), arachnoids, jellybots, flight-capable drones, and even mundane equipment—very later in the conflict with the TITANS some hypercorps experiments with synthmorphs that transformed into static artillery emplacements, though relatively few were fielded in actual combat.

Shiftmorph Stats

Shiftmorphs are synthmorphs. The most common shiftmorph has two modes: a humanoid form almost identical to a typical Synth, and a vehicular form that resembles and functions as a small, one-occupant all-terrain wheeled vehicle.

Enhancements: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Shiftdesign (2 mode)

Mobility System: Typically Bipedal Walker (4/16) or All-Terrain Wheeled (8/32)

Aptitude Maximum: 30

Durability: 30

Wound Threshold: 6

CP Cost: 30

Credit Cost: Expensive

Shiftdesign: This robotic enhancement allows the morph to transition to a different mode, such as humanoid, quadruped (cat), quadruped (horse), flying drone, motorcycle, etc.

Each mode uses the same attributes, though mobility mode may change; players should work with the gamemaster to determine exactly what the characteristics of the new mode are, keeping in mind that the morph never gains or loses mass with the transformation—so a 60kg humanoid morph that shifts into a cat mode will still mass 60kg, and will be larger than a housecat. A character can have two different modes which are functionally identical but cosmetically different—some synthmorphs enjoy the ability to transform into something resembling a case or another shiftmorph to confuse others about their identity. This robotic enhancement is typically a design mod, but is also available as an aftermarket modification, though it requires extensive design (or redesign) of the synthmorph to transition between different modes. Each new mode requires a separate shiftdesign mod. Shiftdesign is incompatible with the Swarm Composition enhancement. Changing modes requires a Complex Action. [Expensive]

ENTRY 330: Mundihof

"We are not a confederation, or a corporation. We are a community. Now git off my rock." - Mama Yulia, Holder of the Nuke

An extensive beehive habitat with a population somewhere north of 10,000 transhumans, the Mundihof Collective are burrowed in to 48 Doris, one of the largest asteroids in the Main Belt. Most visitors mistake Mundihof for an anarchist enclave, but the truth is something stranger: 1,013 politically autonomous entities, each with a distinct geographical territory defined by their artificial cavern or caverns, mined out of the native rock and connected by a spiderweb of interlocking tunnels and politically neutral community areas subject to collaborative upkeep. Each "hof" currently consists of no more than 13 members, and engages each of its neighbors in complex political and economic agreements concerning trade, rights of way, tariffs and tolls, mutual cooperation, etc. Most of the Mundihof residents are stringent Autonomists, with a few being isolationists that are virtually brinkers, and the point of the habitat is to foster cooperation between small groups, while retaining their particular customs, art, and language, thus avoiding the dilution of cultures.

Of course, given the stringent self-centeredness that characterizes each hof, mutual cooperation with regards to the outside world and keeping the peace is a difficult balance. The former is handled by the Stadtholder, a perpetually interim political body/secret police that deals with outside threats on a case-by-case basis; the latter is handled by the Covenant of Mutually Assured Destruction—each of the hofs is possessed of a nuclear weapon of some kind, and violence between hofs is forbidden under penalty of their use—which in turn would lead to further reprisals, further uses of weapons, etc. Current estimates suggest that in the event of a nuclear exchange, the entire Mundihof habitat would be destroyed within thirty seconds. Even so, the various citizens of the hofs like to bicker and bargain and try to gain advantage over each other; it's pretty much the local pasttime.

Mundihof is mostly self-sufficient, with no individual hof having the resources or population to dominate any of the others to a considerable extent, and community resources like waste management, power generation, and air quality are generally handled by committees of the nearest hofs. Large-scale industry and agriculture is out, but among the thousand-plus hofs are hundreds of small specialist workshops that specialize in various individual crafts and crops. Tourism is quite popular on Mundihof, with several Mesh-based travelogues remarking on the ability to travel through three or four culturally and politically distinct mini-habitats in an hour (depending on local border travel agreements), and likening the experience to parts of Europe on old Earth. A transhuman could dine on reconstituted kelp wraps in Nizima, get a hand-carved cicatrix in

Algeb, and finish off the night in a swing-hostel on Bryn Mawr, listening to the chorister-miners chink away at the rock. A few of the hofs are experimenting with their own currencies, but at the moment they accept credit as the universal currency, and when that isn't available simply resort to @-rep.

Using Mundihof

It remains to be seen if the great experiment of Mundihof will work out, end in a blaze of nuclear fire, or eventually consolidate into a single habitat or confederation. Only time will tell. In the meantime, player characters can have the run of the vast network of caverns and all of the strange, idiosyncratic mini-countries that inhabit them. Given the laughably small size of each hof, the player characters will probably present a considerable influence block in their own right just by showing up, and their actions can have a serious impact on local politics and economics. Some PCs might even get it in their head to start their own hof, which if the gamemaster is willing is perfectly fine with the Mundihof—all they need is to carve out a cavern, obtain a nuke, and start dealing with their neighbors. Empirebuilding isn't for every game though, and whether they set up shop on Mundihof or not the Stadtholder might have a use for the player characters to see to external threats—aggressive hypercorps, Planetary Consortium and Jovian Republic reps, and scumbarge pirates are just some of the problems that need to be dealt with, and trying to herd the hofs into acting together is more difficult than herding cats in zero gravity without a mass driver.

Seed

A terrible event: the hof of Niven has discovered that someone has stolen the radioactive material from their nuclear weapon! Now defenseless before their neighbor/enemies, the Nivenites quietly feel out the PCs to steal the material from another hof's weapon. The PCs can set out their plans, and if they succeed they find out that the target hof's nuke also lacks nuclear material! At this point, one of the Stadtholder shows up to explain that both weapons were disarmed to prevent their use—since only the threat of nuclear weapons is necessary to keep the peace. If the PCs agree to continue the illusion, the Stadtholder will pay for their silence and give them fake nuclear materials with which to satisfy the Nivenites.

ENTRY 331: Revaunchists

"The memories are dim for some of you. To move under an open sky, without a breather. The scents and sounds of millions of people, living and working together. The certain knowledge that you could walk forever, without checking your power or oxygen levels. To swim in warm oceans and cold rivers. This is not the world we left behind. When we left Earth to its new masters, it was a world of poisoned skies and burning waters. What I ask of you today is to reach back before the Fall, to hold onto the memories of Earth as it was—and will be again. We fight today not for the Earth we left behind, but the Earth we will build again. Before that happens, we will have to wade through oceans of blood, but I promise you—it is worth it. Navigator, set the course. Home."

- General Kalpa, Commencement of the Antarctic Campaign

Reclamationists want to return to Earth. The Revaunchists are actively trying to reconquer it. Considering the Planetary Consortium as having abandoned the struggle and Reclaimers as being too passive in their efforts to return, the Revaunchists are a small guerilla army actively engaged in planning the return to transhumanity's home planet, gathering intelligence and undertaking scouting missions and occasional raids. To most in the Planetary Consortium, they are dangerous outlaws antagonizing with enemies that transhumanity is still unable to defeat, and extremists that value immediate action over long-term, considered strategies that might give better results. If anyone outside the organization had any clue as to their real intentions and capabilities, the Revaunchists would probably be seen as madmen and put down before their plans could be put into effect.

The Revaunchists are organized in a cell structure, and their history fades hazily into the paramilitary groups that were in responsible for the rampant global insurrections prior to the Fall. Their most notable leader and spokesperson is General Jules Kalpa, formerly a major Reclamationist on Vo Nguyen who proved too extreme. A skilled military strategist Kalpa is developing a coordinated, comprehensive military strategy to reconquer Earth— and to lead by example, her cell has participated in multiple bloody "test strikes," including the disastrous but inspiring Antarctic Campaign of AF 8, where her platoon managed to maintain a position on Antarctica for 93 days before local opposition caused her to order an organized bug-out, covering their retreat with a low-orbital bombardment. Total casualties were reported as 103 morphs lost out of an initial strength of 120 and 52 egos lost, but restored from forks held in orbit; survivors of the campaign claim as many as 17 of those "egos lost" were missing in action or left behind during the retreat. Rumors suggest that Kalpa and the Revaunchists may be in contact with—and even supplying—ongoing guerilla groups still extant on Earth, though the Planetary Consortium denies the existence of these groups, and

claims little evidence on the continued existence of transhumanity on the surface of the planet.

Objective outside observers note that the Revaunchists and their supporters believe in a number of questionable theories regarding the surviving exsurgent and TITANs forces that occupy Earth, with the most prominent being that belief that an intact Pandora Gate exists on the planet. Most intelligence services that have any knowledge of the group believe that the long-term Revaunchist strategy lies in either driving the enemy forces back through the Gate with a sustained assault, or else locating it and cutting them off from it. Without resupply and reinforcement, Kalpa believes that the remaining forces will be vulnerable and eventually succumb.

Using Revaunchists

The call of Earth is a powerful theme for an adventure or a campaign, but it is not exactly a common one in Eclipse Phase. Earth is inhospitable to life, poisoned, damaged, and still crawling with monsters. It could be the work of decades of warfare to clear out the remaining TITANs and their creations, and centuries to undo the damage—and even then, there is a good case that Earth as it was will never be the same, too much of its biodiversity lost, its cycles too broken. Against this difficulty, exploring the Pandora Gates and the prospect of colonizing Mars and Titan and Venus seem much more enticing. So, having abandoned Earth, many transhumans are content to leave it—but not all. The Revaunchists are a group actively at work to retake the Earth, the most extreme branch of the Reclamationists and willing to put morph and ego on the line to gather the critical data and perform the suicidal missions—all good fodder for player character backgrounds or adventures.

Seed

Alamein Al-Hussein abandoned the Revaunchists after the Antarctica Campaign, dismayed at the sacrifices that Gen. Kalpa was willing to endure just to gather data or prove a point. Yet his brother Khem is still under Kalpa's spell, and is preparing for a "reconnaissance in force" on a fortified site outside the ruins of Mecca. Alamein asks the PCs to rescue his brother before his efforts at heroics see him captured, dead, or worse.

ENTRY 332: Jimbot

"Love? Does not compute. Same time next week?"

-Jimbot and the Regular

The psychological transition of resleeving from a biomorph to a synthmorph isn't always smooth. Most transhumans have an imperfect understanding of the process to begin with, and early resleeving in particular tended to be jarring, with no perceived time lapse between one sleeve and the next. Faced with trying to reconcile self-image against current circumstances, some egos develop delusions to deal with the new reality of their situation.

Jimbotron "Jimbot" Mandroid is a transhuman synth that believes he is a robot, such as populated classical science fiction in the early post-industrial era on Earth. The delusion is durable, but otherwise seems fairly harmless—most of Jimbot's friends, coworkers, and lovers consider it a quirk or eccentricity. A few authorities have insisted on psychological evaluation and counseling, but most analysts and therapists agree that Jimbot is generally no more likely to cause harm than any other transhuman, and perhaps less since he believes he has built in moral and ethical programming he must follow.

Before resleeving, Jimbot was a union leader, working with local workers as a negotiator with management, and particularly noted for his strong belief in "worker buy-ins," where the employees were part-owners of the operating capital of the company. After becoming a "robot," Jimbot shifted his focus to AGI advocacy, standing up for artificial intelligences and their rights, representing them before employers and worker counsels, serving as a parole officer, and other such support rolls.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
8	8	8	15	12	20	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
4	1	40	8	80	40	8	60

Morph: Synth

Skills: Academics: History (Robotics) 20, Academics: Law 14, Academics: Psychology (Group) 17, Art: Singing 9, Deception (Pokerface) 15, Interests: AGIs 25, Interests: Gambling 20, Interfacing 16, Intimidation 16, Language: Native English 75, Language: Polish 46, Networking: Criminals 15, Networking: Hypercorps 10, Networking: Union 18, Persuasion (Negotiation) 25, Profession: Advocate 25, Protocol 25, Unarmed Combat 13

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Modification (multiple little hidden compartments and doo-dads with cigarette lighters, screwdriver finger tips, small concealed speakers, buttons that activate "sleep mode," etc.)

Mobility System: Walker (4/20)

Traits: Armor (6/6), Mental Derangement (Delusion—Is A Robot), Social Stigma ("AGI," Clanking Masses), Uncanny Valley

Using Jimbot

Classical science fiction was never meant to be an actual prognostication of the future, and yet for centuries transhumanity has lingered over the image of phallic-shaped spacecraft of spun steel, intelligent humanoid robot slaves, and solar empires of crystal cities inhabited by toga-wearing Aryans flying about with rocket packs and washing down their food pills with bourbon. Some of that has actually come to pass, though not as anyone might have imagined it at the time they were writing, but the dream lives on—and continues to do some considerable damage to vulnerable transhuman psyches. Jimbot is one such victim, playing out the quirky robotic humanoid. Beneath the jovial, blue-collar surface though, Jimbot is prone to long periods of despondency, fits of rage, and sometimes gets confused about what he as a robot can or should do. The episodes always pass, but can be quite shocking when someone sees Jimbot lose shit.

Gamemasters can choose to use Jimbot as anything from a quirky extra from *Futurama* to a thought-provoking look at what it means for someone trying and failing to grasp what it means to be transhuman. As a contact, Jimbot has inroads in both the unions and AGI rights groups, and could be an ally or an enemy of the player characters depending on how they side in a dispute with either group.

ENTRY 333: Private Mode

"How much do you trust your muse? How much do you trust yourself?" - Jovian dissident

Transhumanity is long past the age where thought-police are mere allegory and hyperbole. In many habitats, the Panopticon is here, where every biomorph can breathe in a nanosensory every six seconds, where every online search is traced and recorded, and all the hypercorp-manufactured augmentations and morphs dutifully send back regular feedback that can be used to model and identify consumers and their habits, to be repackaged and sold to any bidder. In the Jovian Republic, some of the more repressive habitats have even taken to extreme step of assigning government-crafted muses to citizens, as part of a standardization service to assure that everyone can take part in government and receive their due benefits...and, of course, to report on any concerning behavior to the proper authorities.

It is in such an atmosphere that Jovian dissidents created the Private Mode app—a quick add-on popular with more than just the paranoid few in the Jovian Republic. When activated, the app temporarily deactivates the user's muse and buffers the ego's short term memory through their cortical stack, sending the memories to a new fork instead of allowing them to pass into long-term memory or story. When the app is deactivated, the user is left unable to remember anything that occurred while Private Mode was activated, as the memories are stored on the fork instead—and often encrypted for greater safety. This does not offer full protection to the user (and thus remains nominally legal under Jovian Republic laws), since authorities can still hypothetically track any of their Mesh activity, it does create a legal loophole where the ego that performed any actions during the use of Private Mode is the fork—the main ego has no idea what they did. This allows many egos to pass lie detectors quite easily, as well as dispense with critical evidence at the expense of their own memories.

Using Private Mode

Retrograde amnesia and blackouts with lost time are bullshit plot devices that gets far too much love and affection. However, the ability to selectively induce such states is more interesting—and a good way to bring these old tropes into play in your Eclipse Phase game without any other handwaving. While this is a fun tool for gamemasters—including the old carrot of "You wake up

with no memory of the last 10 hours but there's a bracelet on your wrist with a digital timer that seems to be counting down."—it should also be seen as an interesting item for player characters to muck about with. Private Mode could be a key part in a planned robbery, for example, or they might be trying to infiltrate an Exsurgent cult and need to get past the telepath, where their thoughts really would betray them. One of the key things to remember about Private Mode is that it only functions for a set period—so if, for example, Firewall had wanted the PCs to infiltrate the exsurgent cult, they would have needed to find a non-obtrusive way to get them to turn on Private Mode without leaving any memory clues that the telepaths would pick up, then give them the briefing and set things up from there. It's a trope that gives a tricky, confusing plot—but then, that's the whole point.

Seed

Someone is attacking one of the PCs—clearing out their credit accounts, torching all their safe houses, alienating friends, giving their ex's their new number—generally making their life a living hell. It seems like the PC's new enemy knows all their secrets—but it might just be that they know secrets even the PCs don't know. It turns out that one of their Private Mode forks has been captured by a hacker—the character's own cortical stack is now their own worst enemy, and they'll have to find a way to deal with an enemy that has a captive ego that thinks just like they do.

ENTRY 334: Filtermouth

When you get enough transhumans in a confined space, air quality quickly becomes an issue. Yet transhumanity has had to deal with issues of air recycling and filtering for hundreds of years, and nearly every habitat designed to host biomorphs has considerable systems in place to ensure proper air quality—oxygen levels, gas mixture, particulate levels, humidity, temperature, everything worked out ahead of time. Maintenance schedules were built around regular cleaning, filter changes, and repair to ensure continuous use for decades of regular use. However, many habitats—particularly scum barges—have never seen anything like "regular use." Overpopulated, understaffed, and ill-equipped with replacement and repair parts; faced with unexpected strain from industrial gas emissions and delayed maintenance, many smaller habitats are a kludge of "temporary" repairs and 3D-printed parts on seriously over-worked stations. Many scum barges in particular have poorly-ventilated zones and regular "bad air days" when part of the system is taken offline to conduct emergency maintenance, forcing resident transhumans to make do with filtermasks or portable air supplies, and many habitats in the Main Belt are noted for their low air quality and pollution.

Filtermouth bioware implants were designed as affordable, limited-action toxin filters in response to low air quality; unlike mechanical air filters which eventually need replacing or recharging, the filtermouth uses a unique self-flushing mechanism to cleanse itself of particulates. While not a complete solution—the manufacturers suggest coupling the augmentation with an oxygen reserve or respirocytes for low-oxygen areas—the filtermouth can effectively block toxins and bioparticulates (particularly mold spores, fecal matter, and airborne bacteria and viruses), considerably improving the user's quality of life.

Feedback on the filtermouth has been mixed, however. The changes to the structure of the nose, mouth, and throat make some basic transhuman activities like speaking, kissing, and oral sex almost impossible, though some transhumans have replaced their tongue with smaller, longer tongues that partially alleviate these issues. The European Choir in particular has slightly modified filtermouths that accommodate the different gas mixture used at their depth, and uses a modified throat-singing technique to astounding effect. Other habitats that have gone over to filtermouths out of necessity are strangely

quiet, with most vocal communication having been replaced by Mesh-based communication and messaging.

Mechanics

Filtermouths are a bioware implant that modify and partially replace the user's mouth, nose, and throat, adding in a series of biological filters that trap and drain off the majority of particulates and potentially hazardous materials. They function identically to toxin filters (Eclipse Phase 305-6), but only for airborne pollutants. The filtermouth augmentation blocks use of the tongue unless the user opts for a cosmetic augmentation (Trivial cost) for a narrower, longer tongue. The cost of the filtermouth implant is Trivial.

Seed

Filtermouths have been mandatory on the Manitou scum barge for six years after a partial failure of the air filtration system. All new biomorphs on the station have to have them installed, with the station authorities underwriting the cost of the implant and surgery. However, a crusading blogger believes that air quality in the station has actually been breathable for the last two years, and that hypercorp interests have kept the filtermouth installations in place as part of a long-term, subsidized social experiment in what a society without speech would develop as. Unfortunately, the blogger died (not so mysteriously—a robotic elephant stepped on him during the middle of a sex vacation) and their research data has been deaddropped in the PC's laps. Will the PCs uncover the truth, or use it as blackmail material?

ENTRY 335: Emilia Bickerdyke

"The struggle continues."

- This Is Not Porn (AF 3)

At a time when transhumanity has the technical capability to overcome the limitations of traditional biology, much of it remains crippled and hidebound by old-fashioned sexual mores, ideologies, and laws. Fighting against prejudice, misinformation, and sexism are social workers like Emilia Bickerdyke (of the clan that later became the Titan Bickerdykes). Embeek was one of the first splicers with the sex change augmentation, cut her teeth teaching sex and gender education to the Lost Generation, spent a term undercover with the Carnival of the Goat while earning a limited degree in Transhuman Law at the Open University, and unionized the sex workers at the ruster camps on Mars. Her manifesto *This Is Not Porn* chronicled her pioneering work in the Jovian Republic against gender-selective abortion in favor of in vitro sex change and selective gender screening in a strongly bioconservative sect, the years-long battle on the definition of obscenity that freed fifteen hundred sexual-political prisoners that had been guilty of intraspecies erotica, a highly publicized series tracking down the perpetrators of a series of hate-crimes aimed at inheritable sexual augmentations, and the revelation that the Jovian Republic had been funding a mutating STD built with material derived from the exsurgent virus—which revelation brought down one hypercorp, thirteen government officials, and sent her packing back to the Planetary Consortium.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	15	17	13	13	10	14	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	28	5	80	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Anatomy (Sex) 33, Academics: Biology 30, Academics: Sociology 30, Art: Writing 36, Blades 25, Fray 25, Free Fall 27, Infiltration 36, Interfacing 25, Interests: Sex/Gender Augmentations 65, Interests: Transhuman Sexuality 35, Intimidation 33, Kinesics 33, Language: Native English 84, Language: Dutch 55, Networking: Criminals 25, Networking: Scientists 28, Palming 25, Perception (Taste) 33, Persuasion 46, Profession: Journalist 34, Profession: Social Worker 60, Scrounging 20

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Enhanced Pheromones, Enhanced Taste, Medicines, Sex Change

Using Emilia Bickerdyke

Transhuman sexuality is a complicated thing, especially with the levels of technology available to the average transhuman. Some things that would be crimes by contemporary laws and standards are acceptable to the bulk of transhumans, and other sexual possibilities are beyond current philosophy—though not current imagination. As a catalyst, Embeek can be the character to drive any adventure dealing with some aspect of transhuman sexuality, and unlike some other NPCs is likely to speak plainly and frankly about any technical detail. PCs hung up on old concepts of sexuality will not earn her enmity unless they act to deny the rights, orientation, or identity of others—she respects their beliefs even if she does not share them, so long as those beliefs do not infringe on others.

Seed

A dispute has arisen between the Jovian Republic and the Planetary Consortium on fuckboxes; custom engineered and built cybernetic devices that essentially consist of lovingly-crafted alien genitalia. The Jovian Republic wish to interdict the fuckboxes because of concerns about perversion and lowered birth rates, but Embeek is arguing cogently against them because of the artistic and technical innovation that goes into fuckboxes. The crux of the argument falls on the 3rd Annual Fuckbox Competition, and the PCs are asked by Embeek to attend and protect the Jovian delegation from the more militant attendees as she attempts to change the Jovians' minds.

ENTRY 336: The Seeds

"We will not make the same mistakes. We will be prepared for all contingencies. Next time...and we feel there will be a next time...we will be ready. If not for the enemy we must face, than for what comes after."

- The August XXX, Firewall Council Meeting Notes

Since the Fall, Firewall has worked to protect transhumanity from exsurgent threats—both those that arise within and without. Yet its actions are not limited simply to foreseeing or defeating those agencies that wish to cause extermination to transhumanity, but the preservation of transhumanity itself in some form in the event of a similar catastrophic event on the order of the Fall. While most transhumans cannot bring themselves to even consider such scenarios, Firewall is determined that if—when—the next Fall occurs, something of transhumanity will survive, and will have the means to continue.

The Seeds are one of Firewall's long-term projects. Each Seed is a singular artifact designed and produced with the latest nanotechnology and containing a precis of transhumanity's accumulated scientific and technical knowledge, compiled and constructed without regard to who owns or claims the intellectual property involved. Firewall has designed the Seeds as providing everything needed to rebuild a transhuman technical base, literally from scratch. Once complete, the Seed is hidden away in a transhuman population calculated as statistically likely to survive a major extinction event—often small, but long-lived habitats away from major population centers like Mars, Titan, or Luna. Currently there are five Seeds scattered throughout the transhuman dominion, with the Sixth Seed in planning and production stages.

Using the Seeds

The Seeds may be the future of transhumanity, and if the gamemaster wants to treat them as mere MacGuffins to be fought over and won or sold or lost, that's fine. However, the PCs associated with Firewall may also be brought in to assist with the production of the Seeds, or hiding/protecting them, or seeding clues to their location so that survivors of the next extinction event can find them. Player characters may also desire the Seeds for themselves—each represents a pinnacle of nanotechnology, and once activated could do almost anything. Rather than be a meaningless MacGuffin, it

might be interesting for the gamemaster to set specific capabilities for each of the Seeds. Some possible forms and capabilities might include:

- A "nano-bomb" designed to disassemble an entire asteroid and re-assemble it into a full-sized, functional space habitat.
- A "living Seed" in the form of a synthmorph with AGI that acts as a living repository for technical knowledge.
- A nanophage that bonds with the nearest transhuman(s) and establishes a miniMesh between their minds, directing them to build.
- A sizable hidden cloning facility capable of regenerating a sustainable transhuman biomorph population when activated.

If a gamemaster is interested in a campaign, the different Seeds might actually be designed to integrate with one another, to make a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts—a machine that could terraform an exoplanet, at least in theory.

Seed

Not everyone approves of Firewall's attempts to save transhumanity—or at least, doesn't agree with their philosophy of willing to write off the bulk of transhumanity so some fragment of it can survive. The Aggies are a former Firewall action cell that has determined to hunt down and expose or destroy the Seeds, in an effort to force Firewall to stick to its mission of protecting all transhumans, not just a chosen statistically-likely few. Firewall contacts the PCs to hinder and reason with them, but when the talking is done and the guns come out, which side will the PCs choose?

ENTRY 337: EarthCon

"We gather here to remember Earth-that-was, and Earth-that-shall-be-again.

Transhumans, charge your glasses and raise them high. In toast to the fallen, in memory still bright."

- J-Bird, EarthCon Opening Convocation

Every Earth year, transhumans from across the solar system converge on the Muir habitat on Luna for EarthCon. The population often increases in size by an order of magnitude during the 240 hour event, requiring temporary domes and tin cans to be established to house both the visitors and the exhibits. Parents and guardians bring their children to the greenhouses and micro-farms to smell the scents of Earth-life, take physical tours through reconstructions of Earth city streets, wade in the synthetic oceans of painfully rebuilt beaches, hear recitations of poetry in nearly-dead languages, old recipes followed with strict authenticity to produce foods unknown to most transhumans, experience Earthgravity in spin chambers, see the artifacts and remnants brought up from Earth, all physical reminders of what transhumanity has left behind. There are remembrances and lessons on who and what was lost, the struggle that culminated in the abandonment of Earth. Visitors wear native costumes long discarded as impractical living in space, some going so far as to resleeve into simulacra of historical characters. Memorials are raised for the dead, oaths renewed, reclamationist plans discussed, scholarship shared. It is EarthCon, one of the greatest events of the year.

EarthCon Corp. is a non-profit organization that stages EarthCon every year, in cooperation with the Muir Habitat Authority and Lunar-Lagrange Alliance. Admission is explicitly free to all attendees, and necessary materials are often volunteered by participating hypercorps in exchange for the rights to limited advertising, with many hypercorps competing for the most sensational, realistic, or poignant display. During the period of EarthCon, the ECC assumes special legislative control of the Muir habitat and temporary extensions, dedicated to allowing access to any transhuman, and permitting the full participation of all transhumans—no matter their morph, orientation, or affiliation. Troublemakers quickly find themselves shadowed by ushers—cockroach-headed security synthmorphs designed to evoke disgust in most transhumans; and if their crimes are heinous enough (rape, murder, or fire-production not arranged ahead of time

with the ECC as a part of the festivities) they are escorted—forcibly if necessary—to the nearest airlock.

Other habitats throughout the system have their own, smaller EarthCons; most of these are licensed from the ECC for a nominal fee and agreement to follow the spirit of EarthCon ("Open access for all transhumans."), and some of the largest and best-organized are staged at Olympus on Mars and at Liberty Station on Ganymede in the Jovian Republic.

Using EarthCon

The future is a study in contrasts, and while many Eclipse Phase campaigns will focus on what transhumanity has gained—resleevings, personal augmentations, space habitats, gatecrashing, etc.—it is also important to remember what has been lost. Not just the planet Earth, it's breathable air and natural wildlife, but the vast cultures that disappeared almost overnight, and the few remaining quickly dying out or becoming isolated. There are transhumans in AF 10 who only know Earth through second-hand memories, if at all, and their trips to EarthCon hold the same emotional resonance for them as a child visiting an elaborate movie set or theme park or museum. Emotions run high and deep, and as the setting for a scenario EarthCon can range from comedy over the reaction of morphs who have never been to the beach before to pathos as still-scarred veterans and survivors of the Fall weep at the memorial to their fallen comrades or leave floating candles to remember the family members that died on Earth. In addition to the bug-headed ushers, the ECC always contracts private shadow security forces to identify and shut down any disruptions to the planned events—and the ECC is willing to defy anyone, even the Planetary Consortium or Jovian Republic or a major hypercorp, who tries to keep anyone out or in other ways disrupt the freedom that characterizes the event. Even if the PCs don't care to participate directly, a minor Earthcon is one of their best chances to show up somewhere they're normally persona non grata.

ENTRY 338: Immix

"Jovians must not pander to a culture of fear and stagnation, nor surrender what is most precious to us for the yoke of security. Freedom is our calling—freedom to believe as we would, to practice those beliefs, to decide for ourselves how to govern our bodies and minds. We wish, in no uncertain terms, to defend our right to choose—to die as men or live as artificial intelligences, to resleeve according to our needs and means, to utilize according to our own conscience the technologies we have so painfully uncovered." - Johann Zimmer, suspected Immix cell leader

"The Immix say: we do not hate you! We do not wish you to fear us! We are not your enemies but would be your friends! To cut ourselves off from the universe is to stagnate and die."

- Kylie Aragones, underground journalist

"Let it be known: we are not all as you see us. There are good Jovians. There are Immix."

- Prisoner 1999-09, final words

Outsiders call it the Jovian Junta. Millions of transhumans simply call it home. The media of the Planetary Consortium makes it the butt of jokes and the concern of military-political channels—a dangerous remnant of Earth oldthink, blind to the possibilities of transhumanity, a society of oppression ruled by fear and a small elite, the poison spawn who trace their lineages back to ancient oil barons and monopolists and papists. A place where individual choice is curtailed, intellectual thought stymied by superstition, old economies kept churning through military production, and the whole house of cards repeating the same damned mistakes that led to the Fall. That is the caricature; the truth is more complicated.

The Jovian Republic rules by the general approval of the populace. By and large, the people there are content—they do not want to resleeve, they hold value in their religions and secular institutions, they honor and praise those who put their life on the line in the defense of others. To be a Jovian is not necessarily to be stupid or superstitious; they are as intelligent and hardworking as any other sample of transhumanity. There is a government which seeks to mold and constrain them, but by and large the options that they restrict are options that the majority of Jovians do not wish to exercise. Outsiders rarely grasp the fundamental truth that Jovians know very well how to rebel—and do.

The mechanisms of the Jovian Republic—the military-industrial conspiracy of private and public interests, the agencies that monitor every message and transmission, the secret police that come during the night-cycle under a mask of terror—they are effective, but they are old. The Jovian Republic was born long after transhumanity had mastered the arts of domestic insurgency, and there are very few so ignorant or naive that do not understand the balance of power in the Jovian state rests, always, in its transhuman population. Every Jovian is a potential traitor or rebel. If pushed too far in a direction they will not go, the Jovian Republic faces the possibility of its civilian support evaporating, its military arbitrarily choosing not to pursue an immoral or unethical course of action. There are far more rational transhumans amid the Jovians than fanatics, and more than one cruel and unethical political

officer has found their orders disobeyed, or suffer a nasty accident. When such things happen, if they are investigated, they are blamed on the Immix.

The Immix are the conceptual revolution of the Jovian Republic. Certainly, the government has uncovered any number of plots and incidents of sabotage and anti-government action it has blamed on the Immix. Equally certainly, there are those groups and individuals who have taken the name for their own, who prowl the unmonitored hallways and storerooms of habitats to discuss the atrocities of the Junta, or to rail against the particular corruption and failed policies of individual parts of it. Some even go so far as to take action, spreading viruses that replace political broadcasts with outside newsfeeds, corrupting school texts with uncensored histories and philosophies, or forging licenses and permits for forbidden tech. Yet there has never been a single central ethos or structure to Immix, and many Jovian politicians and military commanders are kept awake at night by the thought that they fight a ghost—that the Immix is simply the idea of rebellion, a convenient title by which any Jovian, at any time, can decide to follow what they know and feel is right instead of the lawful orders of their superiors...and they fear that more than the TITANS.

Using the Immix

As presented in Eclipse Phase Jovians are conservative and old-fashioned—politically, socially, and technologically. The bulk of them are not in favor of resleeving or AGI or any of the cooler technology in the book; the population is overtly fascist and religious; and the leaders rule an enforced regime birthed in a coup and based on a monopoly on military and political power. However, conservative does not automatically mean bad, nor are the Jovians automatically villains. Even as given in Eclipse Phase the Jovians are not a monolithic group of rabid Roman Catholics or United States Republicans looking to outlaw all space abortions because God told them to. There is room for intelligent Jovians who just happen to not want to resleeve, or who despite the relatively recent technical advances of transhumanity still hold spiritual and philosophical beliefs, and there are plenty of nonJovians in the system that might agree with them—and plenty that Jovians might disagree about among themselves.

The crux of the Immix is that idea that the Jovians are not stupid, and will not follow orders blindly. Some citizens will question the direction of their society, some soldiers will refuse to launch a missile or gas an orphanage, some teachers will disobey and teach transhuman sex ed to their students. Most Jovians have some line they will not cross, and if pushed against their beliefs they will rebel. Sometimes they will join together as an Immix cell; others will simply try to do the right thing and blame it on the Immix bogeyman. For player characters Jovians, the Immix is a handy label for still holding to some Jovian ideas and identity without being associated with the Junta; for gamemasters the Immix are a ready-made (if diffuse) rebellion that they can use to help stage adventures involving the Jovian Republic, and to show that not all Jovians are goose-stepping primitive screwheads with too many boomsticks.

ENTRY 339: Mater

"Children are too precious to entrust their care and development to amateurs. Being an educator takes training; it is a highly skilled activity. To say nothing of being a personal trainer, an activities coordinator, a nurse, and a bodyguard. It takes a team to raise a child, but more than that it requires a dedicated parent. Ask yourself: at what age would you teach your child about resleeving? Personal augmentation. Pornography on the Mesh. The context and subtleties of an inappropriate relationship. To know when they are being lied to. Why they are being lied to. How and when to lie themselves. These are hard questions to you, because you learned them on your own—because your parents, and their parents, and so on were amateurs. Just the few children, disparate decades of experience, already out of date by the next generation if it was passed on at all. This is why you need me—because you want the best for your child, and I am a professional." - Mater, salespitch

Professional parenting traces its routes to organized education—the idea, almost as old as transhumanity, that teaching children was a specialized task and that biological parents were not uniquely qualified for the job just because they'd managed to insert tab a into slot b and win the prize forty or so weeks later. Mandatory public schooling has been an arsenal in civilized upbringing of young transhumans for centuries, but it is only since the Fall that cultural inertia and the breakdown of education infrastructure, and the failure of the Lost Generation that has allowed transhumans to get more ambitious and realistic when it comes to raising their young. While the transhuman family unit is far from dead, particularly among conservatives, those habitats and individuals that can afford to prefer to hire professional parents who work to develop young egos to achieve greater potential and prepare them for the rigors of contemporary transhuman society.

Mater was a pro-parent in the Jovian Republic who saw too many of her kids exposed to a toxic society, torn between stagnant cultural values, ultraconservative parents, and her push for critical and independent thinking. After a decade of raising young rebels who escaped or self-destructed, Mater vanished herself. As a freelancer at loose ends, Mater has been recruited by Firewall as an independent operator, gathering her own talent to undertake missions—often ops against other Firewall elements that are suspected to have been corrupted or gone rogue.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
19	18	20	13	13	15	16	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	32	6	64	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Art 23, Academics: Biology 23, Academics: Chemistry 23, Academics: History 23, Academics: Physics 23, Academics: Philosophy 23, Academics: Politics 23, Academics: Sociology 23, Art: Drums 25, Art: Painting 25, Art: Singing 25, Art: Tattoos (DIY) 25, Beam Weapons 18, Blades 20, Clubs 20, Deception 26, Fray (Dodge) 23, Hardware: Electronics 20, Infiltration 33, Interests: DIY Tech 33, Interests: Education 40, Interests: Teaching Methods 40, Kinesics (Lying) 25, Kinetic Weapons 18, Language: Native Spanish 83, Language: English 80, Language: Latin 80, Networking: Autonomists 20, Networking: Criminals 10, Networking: Firewall 15, Palming 25, Perception 25, Profession: Parent 60, Protocol 30, Scrounging 23, Unarmed Combat 25

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Eidetic Memory, Oracles, Skillwires

Using Mater

As an ally and contact, Mater is the voice at the end of the line. Stern, humorous, compassionate, pedantic, professional, and supporting as she needs to be, the player characters are her "kids" and she will coach and guide them to the mission objective, providing support when she can and trust in their abilities when she cannot. In a neutral antagonist role, Mater might be on assignment, either running an opposing team or acting as pro-parent to one or more children—teacher-cum-bodyguard, teaching and protecting them. Mater is only likely to be a violent antagonist if she believes that the player characters (or the people they are working for) have or will directly harmed any of the children under her care.

Seed

Mater has been kidnapped, and is being held hostage somewhere on the player character's habitat. As the only agents available, Firewall taps the player characters to find her—and time is running out. The culprits could be an exurgent cult, or a former "student" of Mater's from the Jovian Republic gone wrong and out for revenge—or perhaps this is all a test that Mater has set up to prove the PC's abilities, so that Firewall will trust them with the real assignment...

ENTRY 340: AF Torture

"Everybody talks under hard interrogation. That's the problem: hurt someone long enough, intensive enough, and they will say anything to make it stop. Worse, torture distorts the process of recollection so that the key information you want is lost. The brain physically rewires itself! Memory associations in the ego shift and are destroyed! Lies and truth melt together until the subject cannot tell what really happened. You don't know what it's like until you've been in that chair. Your mind keeps working as they question you, it catches everything the interrogators say, rolls it around in its mind, and regurgitates it as the fantasy it thinks the interrogator wants to hear. The signal to noise ratio of hard interrogation is simply too high to be dependable. Fortunately, we currently have technology that makes it unnecessary. I want you to understand that, because there's nothing you can say right now that will make me stop I'm not doing this because I want something from you. I'm doing this for fun."

- Ignacio Carcesa, voice journal

Most transhumans still register pain. All transhumans that are still sentient are subject to psychological manipulation and duress—lack of sleep, phobia exacerbation, traumatic roleplay scenarios. Torture is generally seen as a primitive and wasteful tactic whose hard limitations have long been recognized by professional military, security, police, and intelligence organizations, but as a toxic meme continues to permeate transhuman media and culture. Criminals, particularly amateur ones, still think that pain can get at the truth. Some even use pseudoscientific methods to inflict pain or debilitating circumstances virtually, torturing the ego rather than the body, or attempting to "prove" a subject is lying by measuring and analyzing non-voluntary physiological responses and behaviors. Their victims make good work for the psychosurgeons and therapists, but any success they see is incidental. Even the hardest and iron-willed transhuman will say something if pushed, and the more stress that is applied, the more distorted the subject's memories will become—after prolonged interrogation, nothing the subject says can be trusted, and that's without the distorting effect of drugs and personal augmentations brought into play. No pharmaceutical or narcoalgorithm is guaranteed to make a subject tell the truth, and when combined with pain or stress is likely to distort the subject's memories and perceptions even more. Even the threat of death and dismemberment isn't the stressor it used to be for many transhumans, where backups, vat grown organs, and resleeving are a way of life.

Fortunately for interrogators, transhuman forking technology presents much more reliable alternatives. While programmers cannot yet dissect forks apart to find specific memories, they can treat an ego backup as a ROM construct—a snapshot of the target at a specific time, from which infinite copies can be made, each a separate entity with no information being passed between them. At that point, the problem of interrogation begins to borrow techniques from hacking and decryption. A common technique is word association—set up an automated virtual scenario with ten thousand copies of the same ego and you can perform a frequency analysis on the results, and use that to refine your technique. After a few thousand repetitions of the procedure and the forks will have revealed considerable information—all without the original ego even being aware that it has spilled any secrets at all. Some intelligence operations even go for repetitive roleplay scenarios generated by genetic algorithms—each failure or rejected scenario causes the next scenario to be refined and retried on a new fork from the original backu

With time dilation protocols, the perceived time in each of these scenarios can run into months or years on the part of the subject, while minutes or hours pass in real time—a good interrogation programmer can just set a scenario to run automatically and go home for the night. Military field interrogations are less subtle; hasty and aggressive pruning is performed on the forks in an effort to eliminate traits like loyalty or dishonesty, and the result is subject to a direct and straightforward series of questions.

Using Torture

There are only five basic scenarios where player characters will encounter torture and interrogation in a roleplaying game: threatened with torture, being interrogated, interrogating someone else, witnessing an act of torture, and viewing the outcome of an act of torture (the victim, the recordings, etc.) None of these scenarios are generally considered fun, nor should they be. Interrogation is, at the best of times, the equivalent of an extremely stressful job interview; torture is simply sadism dressed up as necessity, and sometimes not even that. Torture is more than just physical or mental pain—it can be cumulative mental stress from lack of sleep, forced humiliation, extreme temperatures, prolonged exposure to stressors (an annoying song, spiders, darkness, small confined space, etc.),—and that's just the traditional tools in the arsenal of interrogation. In Eclipse Phase torturers and interrogators are limited only by their means and imagination, sending egos to virtual hells for artificial eternities. The bottom line is that none of that stuff is nice, and none of it is guaranteed to work. While threats of violence may have use in your game and interview-type interrogations may be roleplayed, it is advised not to hype the validity or efficacy of these methods, or go into visceral detail about actual torture—if players and gamemaster get into a contest of who can squick the others out, no one really wins.

Fork interrogation is a different ballgame; no less cruel in many ways, but more reliable and with fewer visible victims, as the forks are typically deleted after interrogation. The focus of fork interrogation is not to cause pain, but something closer to an extended hacking attempt against the target ego, and should be played as such. Again, the question is not if the subject will reveal some crucial bit of information, but when the interrogators feel they have sufficient statistical likelihood that the data is valid (or at least that the subject believes it is). Fork interrogation adds another wrinkle to the already complex issue of ego backups, forking, and resleeving—because if the antagonists can get a copy of the subject's ego, then it is essentially only a matter of time before they have virtually all of the character's secrets and information, and the actual character will never know about their "betrayal."

No mechanics are provided for torture and interrogation because this is not a skill contest at which any character can conceivably "win." A successful Intimidation Test can make someone talk, but it won't make them tell the truth. Fork interrogation, likewise, only deals in statistical probabilities—there is no absolute guarantee that the information derived is going to be completely true and accurate, only a likelihood brought on by analysis of a large set of raw data—the math can be crunched by an app, the software and processing is rarely anything special; a successful Programming or Psychosurgery Test might speed up the process, but it cannot improve the results. Characters subject to interrogation or torture should receive mental stress commensurate to their experiences.

ENTRY 341: Technomysticism

"No one knows everything. An' anything you don't know, that's magic. Unseen forces. The dark programs. The things I've seen in the subcurrents of the Mesh...an inheritance of a thousand generations of shamanic pharmaceutical knowledge...the telluric currents of

Mars and Luna...mine to cajole, conjure, and command." - Big L'il Zee, Circuit Freak & Psychosorcerer (AF 8)

"Ignorance breeds superstition, as true for a synthmorph on the surface of Luna staring up at the ruined eyesore of Earth today as it was a hundred centuries ago with the sun-baked farmer standing in awe and incomprehension as the river rose to his knees, leaving behind a layer of rich silt on his drowned fields. Too much of the Mesh is awash with bad research, general education too broad and patchy, wikis and online courses filled with pseudoscience, paid advertisements, pet theories without supporting evidence, and a seemingly endless supply of kooks willing to tie it all together, forming networks that feed on passing the same bad information back and forth until it becomes accepted as fact. Long gone are the days when peer review could weed out the papers that were not even wrong, and in the collapse or corruption of academic and professional journals there is nothing to stop anyone from publishing whatever they want. In such an environment all transhumans become skeptics out of self-defense."

- Professor Brainbug, guest lecture

The hardest part of answering any question is wading through the crap that pops up in the search results. While the vast majority of transhuman knowledge is available online, much of it for free, most of the hits are garbage—bad information, pet theories, ads, cypasted repeats recombined to look like a new article, porn, and other forms of junk. Even the most secure and vouched-for wiki and database is sure to have some questionable crap sneak in via a well-mannered and convincing bot or a lack of judgment in citing a source. For most transhumans this is just an annoyance—something that they learn to identify and deal with as naturally as breathing—but the ongoing corruption has detrimentally impacted the technical skills of more than one generation. Most transhumans, if pressed, could not give an accurate account of Newtonian physics, and their ideas of quantum mechanics are derived mostly from big-budget XP productions and Meshcomics involving stick figures. In such an atmosphere of readily available knowledge and widespread ignorance has come the spread of technomysticism—not necessarily the belief in paranormal activity, but a flawed understanding of contemporary technology, its limitations and how it works. This environment breeds pseudoscience, weird beliefs and superstitions, and promulgates many fallacies and misunderstandings.

Technomysticism tends to follow pseudoscientific principles, or applies fallacious theories to explain the working of existing technologies. On Mars and Luna, for example, mistaken beliefs about geomagnetically induced currents abound, with even quite respected and intelligent transhumans choosing to follow popular superstition with additional ground straps and other remedies to keep from getting "fried." In Extropia, variations of the gambler's fallacy are especially prominent, with shares in gatecrashing corps sometimes increasing after a failed expedition on the expectation that the next one "must" be a winner to balance out the probabilities. Programmers in particular swap procedure manuals dealing with "black magic" code—programs that underlie the existing Mesh, but which are so old, patched, and

undocumented that no transhuman knows exactly how they work—only that if they fiddle with this value in this screen, they can fix the problem. The spread of exonatural materials and other bioproducts as cure-alls or miracle substances, despite or because of lack of documented testing, is another example of technomysticism in action.

Using Technomysticism

First and foremost, technomysticism is an ass-covering mechanism for players and gamemasters. Not everyone has the time or inclination to become read-up in space exploration, physics, chemistry, anatomy, biology, electrical and mechanical engineering, business theory, philosophy, computer science, and psychology before a game, nor should they be expected to. Eclipse Phase is set in the far future in a science fiction world of high technology—a rather hard sci fi world as these things go, but still fiction. It's a setting you want to live and play in, but you don't need to build every little thing in your head, even if you could. So when you do run up against the wall, don't be afraid to say something silly or admit the character doesn't know the answer. Chalk it up to legitimate character error and ignorance, even if the PC or NPC should know better based on their skills. Anything to keep the game moving, rather than get bogged down into a technical argument over the details of how some hypothetical technology may or may not work. If it really bugs a player character, ask them to research it on their own and if they come up with a satisfactory answer at the next session, give 'em a bit of rez or a no-prize.

Secondly, technomysticism permits players and characters to conceptualize some technology in terms of magical thinking—"Where do AGIs go when they die?," "Organically Grown Augmentations are better for you," "This plasma rifle has the Green seal of approval, I want my violence to be environment-friendly," and so on. This can be played as anything from a source of cheap laughs to a segue into a "shaman," "technomancer" or other type who assumes the mantle of hidden supernatural and technical knowledge to gain influence and extract gifts and credits from the community. Some of these characters mean well, and as particularly knowledgeable about certain "black magic" exploits and the like, but the worst are little more than swindlers, thieves, and back-alley surgeons offering highly questionable augmentations or other services. Such characters tend to be charismatic (or else very poor), but in the right circumstances be influential through their friends and followers. In rare cases, they may even have some genuine paranormal psi ability, but such individuals are touched by the exsurgent virus and much more dangerous than scam artists selling "blessed" firewall programs.

ENTRY 342: Smile, Akira

Industry is, for the most part, automated. Intellectual labor is reduced by the omnipresence of computing power, and in no short supply thanks the ease of resleeving— a single intelligent, skilled ego can theoretically be forked to fill as many positions as necessary, and even where this is not feasible skillwires can make up a large part of the difference in terms of filling the need for skilled and semi-skilled labor. The bulk of the transhuman workforce is thus relegated to non-autonomous, non-skilled service— emotional labor. These are the transhumans who are the face of the hypercorps, not just the big media personalities but all the minor actors, service reps, wait staff, call staff, and others that essentially exist to interact between the hypercorp and the transhuman customer, and it is their actions and appearance that influence the customer and give them their impression of the hypercorp as a whole. Customer service metrics clearly show the correlation between happy, helpful, empathetic service employees and customer evaluations; follow-up deep studies of buying habits and spyware track-backs of reviews confirm the causative relationship. So when the customer comes calling, the hypercorp representative will always meet them with a smile.

Akira once did a calculation, and determined that he had spent six years of his life smiling. Three days later the habitat authorities found the mutilated body of a fifteen-year-old splicer; the ego in the cortical stack was heavily deranged and could only repeat the word "Smile"—her parents opted to restore their daughter from a four-day-old backup. Akira, a trusted low-level hypercorp employee, was never even questioned or implicated in the crime. Every day, all day, he would sit and flash customers his smile, sometimes for sixteen hours on a shift. Even that was sometimes not enough; his manager came to talk to him one day and said that kinesics programs showed his smile didn't look real enough, that secondary behavioral characteristics suggested tiredness and insincerity. Fortunately, the corporation had a program—a mild prescription he could take while he was at work, and a minor cosmetic augmentation to help his face shape and hold his smile more comfortably. It was important, Akira's manager emphasized, that he do his best to be the face of the company.

That was when Akira started thinking about his next victim.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
18	13	18	13	10	18	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Art (Manga) 25, Academics: Psychology (Sociopaths) 20, Art: Drawing 20, Blades 35, Deception (Smile) 70, Free Fall (Microgravity) 20, Interests: Comix & Cartoons 30, Interests: Serial Killers 40, Interfacing 23, Language: Native Japanese 85, Language: English 80, Language: Korean 75, Networking: Autonomists 5, Networking: Hypercorps 5, Profession: Customer Service 50, Protocol: 45

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Augmentation (Smile augmentation), Emotional Dampers

Traits: Addiction (Antidepressants, Major), Mental Derangement (Smile Mask Syndrome)

Using Akira

Akira spends the bulk of his waking life pretending to be happy. This depresses the everliving shit out of him. Every day, for hours on end, talking to people that don't know or like him with a smile plastered on his face—his face altered to let it assume and hold that smile longer, going through the motions of having one emotion while he feels dead inside. But he doesn't have the rep or the skills to do much else, and his ever-rotating series of bosses continue to put pressure on him to do his best, micromanaging him closer and closer to a smiling nervous breakdown. The player characters might even start feeling bad for him until they find out his hobby is killing people. As a minor hypercorporate wageslave, Akira might be a useful contact—which makes it all the more interesting when, after being mildly helpful in several sessions without asking anything in return, Akira suddenly calls in a favor and asks for the PCs to dispose of something for him—like a necklace of teeth. As a straight-out antagonist, the player characters might be hired to track down the sadistic serial kidnapper that always horribly mutilates his victims, few of whom can do more than describe his omnipresent smile.

ENTRY 343: Space Lightning Strikes

"Initial probe shows that the atmosphere has a high-oxygen content and no toxic gases, but we'll send you through with full breathing gear just in case. We also think that the other side of the gate opens into an artificial construct—there's no sign of life, but we want you to be careful anyway. This could be a first contact scenario."

- Mission Briefing

The latest gatecrashing expedition is to an exoplanet that doesn't even have a name yet; the scientists are still arguing whether it should be Perdurabo or Voltron. Atmosphere is breathable, gravity is a little heavier than Earth-normal but not grossly so, temperature is a very reasonable 78 C, radiation levels are well within acceptable limits, and the first probe shows that the gate is semi-enclosed by what appears to be an artificial structure. While it's not clear yet whether or not this is another Echo V, that's what everyone appears to be hoping for.

The most worrying thing so far is the complete lack of any signs of life—even microbial or plant life. The initial probe sent through came back as clean as when it had been sent. The current hypothesis among the scientists is that the world did once have carbon-based life, but some extinction event killed everything on the planet, leaving only an oxygen-rich atmosphere that would someday perhaps deplete itself.

As the gatecrashers make their last prep and step through, the gentle patter of rain strikes their helmets. There's a hole in the ceiling, and through it they can see streaming grey clouds and flashes of lightning. If they take off their helmets, the air tastes of ozone. Around them, all is dust—scattered bits of rust-encrusted machinery, faded images on the wall, bits of something that almost looks like paper. A little exploration outside the room shows them that they're in a building, part of a larger complex—clearly artificial, or at least artificially expanded from some natural feature like a hill or cliff.

They're also not alone. The noise of their coming attracts a graying, bedraggled member of the Factors. The surprising contact is set off against a bolt of lightning suddenly coming down and hitting their gate, knocking it out of operation.

Alone on a dead world, cut off from home, with no chance of rescue and only a single extraterrestrial to keep them company. Game on.

Using Space Lightning Strikes

A basic set-up for a rather high-concept scenario, no different in many ways from an episode of *Stargate* or *Sliders*—but hey, call it an homage. The PCs are hired for a bit of gatecrashing, are given plenty of time to prepare and get whatever equipment they need, step through into a dead world, meet a lonely shipwrecked Factor who has apparently been living off of freeze-dried local food for years, and then! Lightning strikes. The rules of the game change. What was supposed to be a bit of exploration has turned into a desperate struggle for survival, and their only chance of going home might be to get the gate fixed. A lot of the scenario depends on the player character's own ingenuity and approach—if they are hostile to the Factor (whom they might well not be able to talk to right away), getting out of here is going to be very difficult. Don't be afraid to let the player characters envisage (even plan out) staying on Perdurabo/Voltron for possibly months or years as the PCs and the Factor work out a means of communication and then apply their joint technical skills to repairing the gate. The gamemaster's saving throw is that even if the PCs and Factor fail—which they might well—the gate is still operable, and in a couple months the corporation that hired them will try to send another team through, and the PCs (and Factor) can escape then. But give them the chance to get out on their own merits first.

ENTRY 344: Third Run

"Can it be synthesized?"

- Mo Kohen, Chief Technology Officer of the Tharsis League

There are still monopolies. Chemistry is the science of processes, and while most transhumans think of chemistry in terms of the end products, chemists and chemical engineers know that the real difficulty in any synthesis are determining the processes involved, and the more complicated or obscure the molecules involved, the more difficult it can be to reverse-engineer how to make a given substance. When it comes to biological substances like flavinoids or aromatic compounds, which are typically synthesized using genetically-engineered organisms, reverse-synthesis can be difficult or almost impossible. So it is that a few hypercorps, habitats, and even individuals can have a virtual monopoly on certain substances, simply by keeping their processes and raw material trade secret. While eventually competitors will be able to create comparable products, by refusing to patent their processes or copyright the genetic codes involved, the monopolists require chemists and genehackers to work from scratch, trusting entirely in secrecy rather than legality for protection of their intellectual property.

On Mars, the most important monopolist is the small incorporated habitat of Third Run, a predominantly ethnic Indonesian enclave independent of the Tharsis League. Third Run is the only producer of nutmeg, mace, and related essential oils in the solar system, and the export of these materials is the basis of their wealth. While it is assumed that the Third Run community has access to the original genetic material of *Myristica fragrans*, and possibly other species, the habitat is too small to contain whole nutmeg trees, suggesting that they use some other method to produce and harvest the spices. Many hypercorps maintain a sizable bounty for any industrial spy that can crack the secret of Third Run's production processes and/or return with a sample of nutmeg genetic material, but so far the paranoid, security-conscious community of Third Run has prevented any leaks, spending a considerable portion of their nutmeg export earnings to keep their security state-of-the-art.

Generally isolationist, Third Run has accepted a few hypercorp visitors over the years. All of them report that beyond the airlocks the atmosphere is kept near-tropical, and the scent of spices and human occupation are omnipresent and nearly overpowering at first. Reportedly,

the culture of the habitat places severe emphasis on personal responsibility and celebration of individual effort, but also a closeness to community, lack of personal space and property, and near-xenophobia towards outsiders, along with a graded security/taboo concept where access to certain areas/substances/individuals was restricted based on practical and social necessity. Outsiders were warned that they were not permitted into any region marked with yellow indicator lines - which corresponded with sealed portions of the habitat believed to lead to medical and lab areas - and were not allowed to enter until they signed a contract agreeing to abide by these restrictions. The few individuals who have violated the yellow line never returned from the habitat.

Using Third Run

A tough nut to crack, Third Run is primarily presented as a challenge for player characters looking to practice their breaking & entering skills, and in many respects represents a classical dungeon scenario for Eclipse Phase. However, this is a carefully-set-up ruse - an elaborate headfake or honey trap designed to discourage and mislead thieves. Security increases the farther the PCs get into Third Run, but the secret of the habitat doesn't lie in its mythical, heavily-guarded "production" facilities, but in its inhabitants. The genetic material for nutmeg was coded into a pair of diseases (nutmeg is viral, mace is bacterial) that forms a chronic infection in the population of Third Run, and the nutmeg, mace, and related substances are carefully harvested by individuals and processed discretely under the guise of waste management. The Third Run inhabitants carefully monitor and track the expression, spread, and treatment of their disease, as prolonged episodes can lead to hallucination, illness, and death.

Seed

A disaster in Third Run: the mace bacteria has mutated to become resistant to typical antibacterial treatments, then an outbreak of "mace pox" threatens to get out of control. Third Run microbiologist Peya is sent out to obtain the technology necessary to contain the disease, and the player characters are hired as her bodyguards and helpers, as Peya has never been outside Third Run before. While her yellow tattoos mark her as taboo to the inhabitants of Third Run, in the crowded habitats which do not recognize her society's customs the prospect of personal contact is disturbing and horrific to her. Unfortunately for Peya and the PCs, some bounty-hunting chemists think this is an ideal chance to grill Peya for some answers to the secrets of Third Run.

ENTRY 345: Kinaara

"Some said we would be the last generation. From now on, there would be no aging out. Endless immortals, moving body to Mesh, Mesh to body, down through the centuries. No more funerals, no more retirement. We would never outlive our parents and grandparents, never have that closure, never fill their place, never set down our own rules or figure things out through our own struggle. Where would it go from there? How far would parental rights and privileges extend, how great are our responsibilities to care for the ageless? Fuck all of that."

- Elie Kham Sangabat

"In the Planetary Consortium, 83% of CEOs are over a century old. 93% of those are sleeved into bodies in their biological prime-of-life. Over 60% have children, and 43% grandchildren or more distant descendants. None of whom need ever die in the traditional or legal sense. Polls show that the bulk of these centurions do not see any reason to retire from their positions while still able - and with resleeving, can retain their careers almost indefinitely. Adolescents have to compete for opening positions and internships with freshfaced octogenarians who have lifetimes of experience over them, sending unemployment for the under-30 demographic to more than 89% in some habitats. The youth have been effectively marginalized, and their only options are an extended, possibly eternal adolescence or a complete break from the institutions that have disenfranchised them."

- Kinaara: A Preliminary Investigation (AF 9, Planetary Consortium Press)

Death is an opportunity space in transhuman society. Wealth is passed on, previously occupied positions are opened, roles and responsibilities reshuffled. Extended lifespan brings with it stabilization, but also stagnation - political, economic, and often moral power is invested in the emerging gerontocracy. With the advent of advanced ageretardation technologies, forking, and resleeving, the problems involved have been exacerbated; with any transhuman able, at least theoretically, to look and feel as young as they want, there is no need for actual young people. Why bring a shy virgin to your bed when you can hire a 120-year-old whore in the body of a 19-year-old Olympian? Why hire the kid who has never held a job, when you can hire the octogenarian with 60 years of programming experience? The transition from old economies to rep networks was led in part by the

disenfranchised class of middle-aged transhumans looking to develop an alternative to the ageless fiscal authority of their parents; now their children are stuck in the same position, unable to generate the credits or the rep to come into their own.

The first kinaara arose on Luna, among the disaffected youth of Indian and Asian families, tired of the emotional blackmail and suzerainty of their older relatives. Legally emancipating themselves from their biological families, the youth joined together into kinaara cliques to pool their resources and gain rep as a group. Small, poor, and inexperienced, the kinaara act for mutual support to get by, and tend to live out on the edges of habitats where space is cheap, taking the nastiest and least desirable jobs - but away from the domination of their parents' and grandparents' rep and money, they can at least start to earn a living on their own.

Mechanics

At the gamemaster's discretion a group which has established a formal and distinctive identity, like a kinaara or a team of player characters, may establish a Group Rep with one or more networks. This works much the same as other forms of rep, save that any group member may contribute Rez Points toward buying up the Group Rep (the usual limit of 1 RP/+10 per network per month remains in effect), and any group member may also request favors or burn Group Rep - even without consulting the other members.

Using Kinaara

The kinaara cliques are small groups of youth that have no feasible chance of rising according to their own merits in a society which has no place for the poor and inexperienced. Some accept living under the financial and social control of their parents and grandparents for their entire lives; many don't even understand that they have a choice in the matter. Others self-destruct, sometimes only to find that suicide isn't an easy option. The kinaara preferred a clean break: emancipation from family, including the legal, social, and economic ties, and the opportunity to sink or swim on their own with their new affection-group of like-minded, like-age compatriots. Some groups fall apart, but most are having a good time at least trying to make a go of it. The kinaara represent both the hope and desperation of transhumanity as it transitions into a society of digital immortality, and PCs might approach them as friends, enemies, or role-models. The PCs may even start out as a kinaara, which is as good a reason as any for them to get together for a campaign and go on adventures.

ENTRY 346: Mr. Attercop

"You wouldn't believe how much he enjoys being a giant spider." - Sheena Brideswell, "Mrs. Attercop (I)"

An ancient Earth philosopher once wrote on the hierarchy of needs - a construct to help try to understand and express how transhumans prioritized their internal and external lives. At the base were physical needs - food, water, shelter - and progressed upwards in extraction to more intangible mental, spiritual, and emotional fulfillment. At the apex was self-actualization - which definition depended slightly on whom was talking about it, but was considered the goal of realizing one's own potential to its greatest extent. It was a goal that was not possible when mere physical needs were a concern, or even when the needs of friends, employees, and dependents.

Synthmorphs, makers, and the post-scarcity economy rather shot a hole in the old hierarchy of needs. Most transhumans don't have to worry about things like breathable air, potable water, and basic nutrition or electricity. The Mesh provides near-infinite entertainment, all the games, porn, viral images of juvenile animals, and transhuman interaction that most people ever need. Most of transhumanity may not exactly be happy, but with their physical needs taken care of and plentiful of mental stimulation, all that is left - all that remains for the majority to seek and solve - is the fulfillment of their emotional needs, and self-actualization. Some find purpose in the defense of transhumanity, the pursuit of political power, or the creation of art. For Mr. Attercop, the first step was resleeving into an arachnoid morph.

Mr. Attercop has no greater purpose to his life than to be a giant spider. It is his bliss, his goal, and though his wives and children don't always understand it, they are supportive of him and love him. He doesn't consider resleeving to have even been a choice - simply a realization of who and what he always was.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
12	12	15	20	15	25	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	40	8	60

Morph: Arachnoid

Skills: Academics: Arachnology 40, Academics: Mythology (Spiders) 40, Art: Storytelling 25, Fray 20, Free Fall 26, Infiltration 44, Interests: Arachnoid Morphs 50, Interests: Cooking 24, Interests: Web Design 23, Interfacing 26,

Language: Native French 90, Language: English 80, Networking: Firewall 10, Networking: Media 20, Perception (Lidar) 36, Profession: Teacher 30, Profession: Tour Guide 30, Protocol 25, Unarmed Combat 40

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Enhanced Vision, Extra Limbs (6 Arms/Legs), Lidar, Mnemonic Augmentation, Pneumatic Limbs, Radar Mobility System: Walker (4/24), Thrust Vector (8/40) Traits: Armor (8/8)

Using Mr. Attercop

Few transhumans are as comfortable in their own skin as Mr. Attercop. He has embraced being an arachnoid morph to a degree beyond most; there is a bubbly undercurrent to everything he does that shows he's having a great damn time, and it's almost infectious. Player characters will probably meet him as a colorful extra and/or a local Firewall contact; while he normally gets by as a tour guide, teacher, and odd-job man, having found his own blissful calling as a giant mechanical spider he likes to be helpful and interact with others. Left to his own devices he dotes on his two wives and their children, plans out lowgravity webs that he likes to spin using a variety of filaments, and strike up new friendships so he has someone to tell his stories to.

Seed

Mr. Attercop has an early, damaged fork, split off before he resleeved into the arachnoid morph. Unable to resleeve himself due to a morphing disorder, this fork has become deranged. Calling himself the Wolfspider, he has begun to hunt and kill other transhumans on the habitat in the manner of a giant spider - with the suspicion and blame landing immediately on Mr. Attercop. The PCs may be asked to investigate by the habitat, Attercop's wives, or even Firewall.

ENTRY 347: AF Healthcare

"Every transhuman is their own physician." - LGM of Mars

"Hold on, let me check MeshMD." - Earl Boutain

Not everyone can take a trip into the nanobath every time they get a cut or a sniffle, but most habitats and transhumans recognize the need for general, preventative, and emergency care. The exact form of that care and what's available depends largely on the resources available: larger and more established habitats tend to have dedicated on-call medical facilities subsidized by hypercorps or political bodies, staffed by physicians who have passed through a formal course of instruction supplemented by practical experience, and supported by trained nurses, medical technicians, and specialists. Smaller habitats make do with what they have - often little more than a dedicated nurse with a Mesh-based education and certification (or skillwires) with locally 3D-printed tools, and probably an agreement with to waive fees and restrictions so that traveling physicians can farcast in to deal with emergencies beyond local capabilities. Anarchist and Autonomist habitats rarely even have medical farcast agreements in place, relying on Mesh-based medical knowledge and expert systems to diagnose and treat injuries and illnesses to the best of their ability.

Most transhumans out on the Rim trust the calm, reassuring voice of their medkit over the confusion of Mesh-based medical databases, though in reality the medkit expert system is often based off of and regularly updates from the sprawling, discipline-jumping wikis which touch on everything from chemistry to medical engineering to genehacking to psychology. In the Main Belt, where miners and prospectors are often alone for months on end with very limited supplies and regularly deal with vacuum-walks and high explosives, most habitats keep live medical personnel on-hand at the communication stations to give advice and opinions, perform virtual triage, and to help direct potentially lethal injuries to the nearest station or habitat. Prospector hypercorps that operate in the Belt recognize medical necessity as one of the few legitimate reasons to ransack remote or currently uninhabited facilities, and most have signed the Reciprocal Emergency Medical Agreement that forces hypercorp employees to lend aid and assistance in medical emergencies under most circumstances.

While most transhumans think of healthcare in terms of medical emergencies or life events, the most pressing issue

for most habitats is the ongoing management of infectious disease, which in the relatively high-radiation, high population density habitats tend to spread and mutate quickly. Traditional antibacterial agents produced by natural or genengineered micro-organisms tend to be as scarce as natural food; most habitats rely on synthetic antibacterial compounds that they can manufacture locally - and even then, habitats are regularly ravaged by antibiotic-resistant superbugs, which are usually only kept in control by counter nanoinfections and smart viruses. Animal, plant, and even some mineral-based medicines too are relatively rare, though genehackers with a philanthropic bent have made some progress in publishing open-source gene sequences to produce certain substances, with instructions on how to work them into common workhorse bacteria or drug glands.

Using AF Healthcare

This brief article barely scratches the surface of an ocean that is as deep as you desire it to be; the gist is that healthcare in Eclipse Phase is varied and limited by local restraints - often medical knowledge is in good supply, but medical experience and many common medicines of today are relatively scarce. On the other hand, in the face of extreme need transhumanity has applied their greater technology to the task, so that in the event of medical emergencies a habitat could literally download a doctor into a waiting morph (or have medical staff fork themselves repeatedly to deal with a sudden rush in demand), a surgeon on Luna can operate a surgical pod on Titan, and even in a Brinker stronghold you can download a step-by-step guide on how to facilitate the birth of a transhuman baby through the Mesh. The emergencies are good fodder for adventures, or for when the PCs themselves get hurt and need treatment, but for most transhumans though, healthcare is not about treating beam weapon burns, bullet holes, and slight explosive decompression - it's getting a drug gland that looks like a third nipple but releases anti-migraine medications, figuring out whether the growths on their back indicate it's time to upgrade the radiation shielding, check-ups for micronutrient deficiencies, and all the other regular day-to-day stuff of life. Background, in other words, but potentially important background that can be used to heighten tension in some scenes, or provide solutions when the PCs think they're out of options.

ENTRY 348: Ymir

On one end of the Fissure Gate, gatecrashers stepped through onto an icy, airless moon orbiting a great banded gas giant - and stared up at the shapes moving along edge of the storm fronts. They called the gas giant Ymir and the extraterrestrials frost giants, and the name stuck. The frost giants are huge non-sentient invertebrates, some hundreds of meters long, armored in methane ice against the winds and could, their bouyancy controlled by internal gas bladders, filtering the gases they "swim" through for water ice and other nutrients. The frost giants travel in throngs with the oldest, largest frost giants in the front, and sometimes make group "dives" into the lower atmosphere, only resurfacing hundreds of kilometers away. Most xenobiologists believe that the creatures are native to Ymir, and speculate that the upper atmosphere contains myriad smaller organisms that the great frost giants feed on, but studies have been extremely limited so far, and an opposing camp believes their biology is based on the metabolism of methane. For the most part, portable telescopes have captured video feeds of the frost giants "swimming" through the upper atmosphere at the forefront of the storms, which have proven very popular on the Mesh - even spawning the expected commercial clothing and toy lines from their images.

Seeds

- An expedition has been planned to travel through the Fissure Gate, travel to Ymir, capture one of the smaller frost giants (only 8-9 meters long), transport it back through the gate, and from there release it "into the wild" of Jupiter's upper atmosphere. It's a dangerous, technically difficult operation with quite limited scientific impulse behind it, but a Mesh crowdfunding initiative has raised over 200 million credits for the plan, based more or less solely on the idea that having frost giants swimming around Jupiter will be awesome. The player characters are hired on to help wrangle the frost giant - or maybe just as bait for one.
- There are other mysteries of Ymir than the frost giants - notably, whether the planet is suitable for gas mining and other commercial exploitation. An anarchist collective with hypercorp partnership is exploring the possibility of turning the moon the gate is on - really, just a largish asteroid - into the anchor point for a space elevator that could be used to pump gas up to station for processing and

transport back to Chat Noir. Opposing groups of anarchists use the guise of environmentalism to try and get the PCs to disrupt the operation for free, claiming that the project will endanger the frost giants.

- A giant-watcher - one of those transhumans who has set up camp on the moon to monitor the strange extraterrestrials - has detected a solitary specimen that has drifted far away from the other throngs of frost giants and behaving very erratically. Enlisting the PC's help to investigate, they discover the errant creature is long dead a floating corpse kept aloft by its intact gas bladders, tossed about by the winds. A tremendous prize for science if they can get it out of the atmosphere, certain to cement a rep among scientists and gatecrashers.

ENTRY 349: Grey Boy

"Some egos resleeve like they're changing clothes. Some stick with the meatsack they're born in 'til they die. A couple want to explore a new body, or think that resleeving will solve all their problems. Me? I guess I wanted to make a statement. Take a step that I couldn't step back easy. It's about commitment, see. If you want to push your limits, to see how far you can go, you can't leave yourself an easy out. So when I went grey, I went all the way. See, lot of exhumans take the easy way out - abandon the whole humanoid form, go for something that looks exotic. Not many of 'em twig that being exhuman is more than a weird morph, it's a state of mind. You gotta change your perceptions, not just your look." - Grey Boy, interview with Exhuman Spotlight (AF 8)

Deep down, most transhumans are the same - whatever they might look like on the outside, biomorphs share anatomical and genetic similarities to other Earth-based life, the majority of synthmorphs and pods are generally humanoid, and almost all transhuman egos are recognizable as human. Key word: almost.

Grey Boy designed the greymorph from the ground up, based on a theoretical left-handed Z-DNA structure. On the outside, the greymorph looks like a pop culture reference a century or so out of date, but on the inside it is as alien as transhuman science can get - instead of bones, for example, it has a flexible cartilaginous endoskeleton with an arrangement of "floating" bony plates protecting critical organs. It has orifices most transhumans would need a degree just to name, and one of the byproducts of its respiration and digestive systems is a nerve gas. More than that, the greymorph brain was deliberately designed to be hard for contemporary transhuman technology to sleeve in and out of - as alien as Grey Boy could make it and still be able to interact with transhumans. One sleeved in, it took three years of therapy for Grey Boy to adapt to the greymorph, to learn how to operate things that look like knees and elbows but really aren't, to parse sensory information his new brain fed him as colors he didn't have names for, and why chalk tasted like candy to him now.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
20	12	20	13	20	14	21	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
7	2	42	8	84	40	8	65

Morph: Greymorph (Unique Biomorph)

Skills: Academics: Genetics 80, Academics: Philosophy (Anarchy) 34, Art: Fingerpainting 24, Deception 25, Fray 36, Free Fall 30, Gunnery 19, Infosec 25, Interests: Pre-Fall Science Fiction 40, Interests: Tobacco 22, Interests: Xenobiology Culture 40, Interests: Xenopsychology 35, Interfacing 30, Language: Native Czech 80, Language: English 75, Language: Russian 60, Negotiation 35, Networking: Autonomists 15, Networking: Criminals 15, Networking: Firewall, Networking: Scientists 25,

Profession: Geneticist 37, Protocol 21, Unarmed Combat (Claw) 40

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave (Light), Circadian Regulation, Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Poison Glands (Nervex, Psi-Opener), Enhanced Senses (Echolocation, Enhanced Vision), Eidetic Memory, Fractal Digits, Hibernation, Medicines, Neurachem (Level 1), Oxygen Reserve, Toxin Filters

Traits: Addiction (Nicotine, Minor), Greymorph*, Morphing Disorder (Level 3), Social Stigma (Exhuman), Claw Attack (1d10 DV, use Unarmed Combat skill)

* Greymorphs are treated as xenomorphs in terms of being affected by psi (see Eclipse Phase 222) - asyncs suffer a -20 modifier and +1 strain using sleights against them - and are unaffected by Enhanced Pheromones (Eclipse Phase 305). In addition, Greymorphs may only ever create delta forks (Eclipse Phase 273-4).

Seeds

- Having spent the last several years acclimating to his morph and finding himself, Grey Boy is at the point where he's happy being on his own - unfortunately, the universe has other plans. It turns out having an "alien perspective" is a marketable quality, and he's getting besieged with offers from everyone from xenocultists looking for an alien love messiah to hypercorps looking for insight on the Factors. Firewall hires the player characters to make contact and convince Grey Boy to lend his unique perspective to protecting transhumanity - a transhumanity he no longer really feels a part of.
- Grey Boy keeps his ear to the ground on developments, and hears a rumor of a Jovian Junta military black research project - a psi-opener tuned to xenomorphs. Intrigued, he hires the PCs to steal the research - all they need to do is bust into the heavily-fortified military habitat and copy the files. Of course, there is the minor problem that the Junta was experimenting with the psi-opener on live xenomorphs...who are now loose in the compound.
- A new drug is making the pretty young morphs in the club sick - and the media is reporting that Grey Boy has gone missing. The PCs are hired to look into one of the drug deaths, and the clues they follow just might take them to a xenocult that's harvesting Grey Boy for his secretions - the drugs to raise funds, the nerve gas to stockpile as a terrorist weapon - but the leaders are stupid enough to let the nerve gas bleed into the psi-opener, hence the club kid deaths.

ENTRY 350: Charge Craters

"Omar Patang was walking up the leeward edge of a crater near the Lunar north pole, scouting water ice. The spark came suddenly, and shorted out his suit. Unhurt, Omar managed to walk back to his landcraft before the oxygen in his tank gave out. Dozens of other transhumans haven't been so lucky."

- Charge Craters: The Hidden Menace, Lunar Chamber of Commerce

Even before Luna was permanently inhabited, scientists had theorized that under the right conditions certain crater rims - particularly near the poles - could become electrically charged from ions deposited by the solar wind. A given crater can build up a few hundred volts of static charge before eventually discharging naturally, either in an arc of incandescent dust or a spark to a transhuman's boot.

Static electricity is not a new or unexpected danger to Lunar exploration, and most transhumans who make a profession of moonwalks are aware of the possible dangers. Most vacsuits nowadays are designed as ESD garments, or with extra shielding on essential electrical equipment. Many charge craters have been identified and physically marked with signs and augmented reality tags to prevent random hikers and prospectors. Still, at least a few transhumans a year manage to fail to heed the warnings or take proper precautions, and ends up with a nasty shock or damaging their suit, and on average at least one will die, lending their name and likeness to the legendarium of charge crater ghost stories.

Seeds

- Lunar habitats have to deal with the build-up of static charge too, especially when the moon brushes the Earth's magnetosphere. The static can play hell with sensitive electronics, shorting out many sensors or causing them to give erroneous readings - and a clever yegg named Jowls thinks this is the perfect time to pull off the heist of a century. A remote secure server farm contains vast amounts of privileged financial data for companies in the Lunar-LaGrange Alliance - with most of the surrounding sensors disabled, all Jowls needs is for the PCs to get him to the front door so he can crack in and siphon off enough data to make them all millions of credits. Of course, that means an extended moonwalk and breaking in to a secure,

static-sensitive complex...if they blow the doors or fail to take the proper precautions going in side, they'll fry the whole thing and be left with nothing for their troubles.

- Authorities are tired of idiots getting killed by charge craters, and have decided from this point on anyone stupid enough to be killed by them will have their body left to rot there for all time as a warning to others. This "Darwin Warning Statute" has infuriated the families and friends of at least a few of the dumbasses that get themselves killed every year, but until the law goes into effect they have little case in the eyes of the media - so the would-be victim's rights group seek to hire the PCs to stage an accidental death at a charge crater so that they have a case to rally to.
- Normally charge craters only build up a couple hundred of volts - more than enough for a shock, but only a danger to those with sensitive equipment and unshielded suits. However, lately scientists have been measuring a crater with a charge of 40,000 Volts...and rising. The local lunar scientists have set up a crowdfund reward for anybody that can go there and figure out what is causing the abnormality.

ENTRY 351: Comet For Sale

For sale: Encke's Comet. Gently used. Inquire within.

- Mesh Ad

Comet habitats have never really taken hold of the transhuman imagination. While the nucleus of comets are equivalent to sizable asteroids several kilometers in diameter, and comets often contain hydrocarbon compounds and water ice which are relatively easy to mine, the often erratic and sizable orbits are a turn-off, and the delta v necessary to lock trajectory and close with a comet through its thin atmosphere (coma) can make embarking or disembarking more complicated than an orbital habitat in some respects.

One of the few serious efforts at comet habitation was Encke's Comet - with a nucleus of 4.8 kilometers and an orbital period around the sun of 3.3 years, it seemed an ideal candidate as a sort of roving trading or scientific post. A development corporation was established, landed on the comet, and drilled down beneath the crust to carve out a series of chambers, roughly half of which were furnished and functional by the time the credits ran out. Worse, the construction period took so long that the comet was headed away from the sun by that time, and the majority of the crew abandoned Encke's Comet save for an AGI caretaker called Yngvi as it headed out to its aphelion of 4.11 AU and back.

The return of Encke's Comet in AF 7 sparked a renewal of interest, but legal troubles were encountered when the AGI caretaker claimed squatters rights; few of the original parties chose to contest it, and after a brief bout of fund-raising development on the comet renewed. This time, Yngvi focused on the installation of antimatter drive engines, intended to function as directional thrusters to help steer the comet to make flyby passes of certain habitats and thus increase its commercial utility, but found itself unable to procure antimatter due to the interference of the Jovian Republic (which already viewed the comet as a potential interloper and threat). Yngvi and Encke's Comet moved away from the sun once again.

Having now just returned in AF 10, Yngvi is tired of playing caretaker and is looking to sell the comet and settle down, possibly getting a little apartment on Titan. Beginning asking price is 250k credits, though Yngvi is willing to act as the banker in the transaction as long as it gets a down payment of 20% in cash.

Using Comet for Sale

Encke's Comet makes a good setting for a one-shot adventure, a fitting lair for a brinker or setting villain, or a quirky fixer-upper for enterprising player characters that don't mind being stuck on a fast-moving ball of dirty ice for a three-year tour of the Outer Rim. Being relatively large, isolated, and moving, comet habitats combine aspects of long deep space voyages and being stranded on an alien planet - although in this case, at least for a third of the trip the comet should be reachable by various transhuman habitats with fast ships, so in that respect it can allow player characters to visit many settlements they might not ordinarily get to in the course of their adventures.

Seeds

- Lionel Beauchamp believes that the Tunguska Event was caused by a fragment of Encke's Comet breaking off and exploding above Earth - and wants to prove this to show that comets are weaponizable. Lionel and his fellow space pirates have boarded and taken control of Encke's Comet, and Firewall believes they plan to make a test strike on Luna. The PCs are the only ones in a position to stop them, since they are near to where Encke's Comet will pass.
- Sauvegarder Comète Encke (SCE) is a grassroots mesh-based organization that wants to cease further development on Encke's Comet. They've raised 20,000 credits, but Yngvi is unwilling to sell the comet to them or place it under trust. The PCs are asked to negotiate a settlement, possibly with an eye towards turning Encke's Comet into a Universal Park - but they will have to work against a third party, a Jovian miner named Maria Manuel Escopetarra that wants to buy the comet just to strip it of its hydrocarbons.

ENTRY 352: Operation Orphan

"You've heard that during the Fall that there were transhuman collaborators on the side of the TITANs. The show trials and media have cast them as civilian administrators trying to keep their people alive, or lone opportunists taking advantage of a situation for their own personal gain. The truth is that an entire faction went over to the TITANs - a group of traitors that sold out Earth and the rest of transhumanity. That organization still persists, existing in secret among us. A mutual support network for the greatest criminals in our history, helping each other stay hidden. Our job is to root them out, to find what those others they are hiding...and, ultimately, to destroy them. Understand: this is not about justice or revenge, this is a matter of survival. When the next war comes - when the TITANs return or extraterrestrials invade through the gates or whatever it might be - we must stand united. If you can agree with that, then welcome to Operation Orphan." - Ezel Idis, Chief Executive Officer, Operation Orphan

"That's what you could never wrap your minds around. We're just like you. The survival of transhumanity, at any cost. You call us traitors, but for us it was just another survival strategy. We wanted to cover all the bases. The only difference is, you forgot..." - Recording of interrogation session #04546, subject "Doubleblack", AF 8

Trust underpins transhuman society. Anarchists raise their children on games to illustrate the prisoner's dilemma, Jovian military academies emphasize the importance of trust in the command structure, reputation networks depend on layers of trust as much as the underlying technology - for it is important not just who votes and how many, but who counts the votes. In the aftermath of the Fall, when the invisible machinery of society was so broken down and in need of rebuilding, trust became even more important.

Transhumans needed to work, to learn, to about the business of living, and be able to rely on each other. In this respect at least the TITANs did transhumanity as favor: they presented a single great Other, an enemy that all transhumans, regardless of faction or politics, could unite against. Or, almost all.

The TITANs and their collaborators are guilty of genocide. Entire species were destroyed during the Fall, the entire Earth reduced to a poisoned, ash-choked world of burning skies and caustic seas, and the TITANs have left their tainted footprints on every other world in the solar system. Yet because they are not human, it is difficult to countenance the TITANs as explicitly evil - powerful, devastating, and disastrous, but too alien to describe as cruel, vicious, or tyrannical. The collaborators, however...those are transhuman. They knew full well what they were participating in the extinction of their own species, their own world, and they chose to help. They are the worst traitors imaginable, all the worse because they are not stupid thugs.

Firewall's Operation Orphan has been tracking the collaborator network ever since the Fall. What they have found is evidence of more than just a few well-meaning admins or opportunistic rogues, but an entire clandestine organization dedicated to support the TITANs - and currently preparing for their return. These are not madmen or exsurgent cultists, whose motives could be explained away by illness or neural damage, but apparently sane, frighteningly intelligent and competent transhuman operatives who believe in their goal. There are even some implications, though the more senior Firewall members at Operation Orphan still find it hard to credit, that this nameless group of conspirators may be a rogue faction of Firewall dedicated, according to their own claims, of pursuing every method of transhuman survival - even the least palatable options. Ezel Idis dismisses this claim as classical psy ops, misinformation spread to sow doubt and discord. Yet as evidence piles up, the shape of the collaborators' mutual aid network does bear a striking similarity to Firewall...

Using Operation Orphan

Firewall's Operation Orphan is a good set-up for a darker kind of spy game, calling back to the hunt for former Nazis gone into hiding after World War II and support networks like ODESSA - and if the gamemaster and players like hunting down war criminals and bringing them in to face the long-awaited consequences of their crimes, then that's fine. However, the possibility remains that the interrogated collaborators are telling the truth - that the collaborator network is nothing more than a splinter faction of Firewall, seeking to fulfill the ultimate mission of transhumanity's survival by pursuing a different strategy. This adds a layer of moral ambiguity and philosophizing that might make for some interesting in-character debates beyond "shoot the bad guy in the head and take their cortical stack." Or perhaps the whole thing is just a con, one more ruse that the conspirators have cooked up to try and escape from their betrayal.

Seed

Rumor has it that the Jovian Junta unofficially offered asylum to several collaborators after the defeat of the TITANs on Mars, using their resources and knowledge to spearhead military development. Operation Orphan has been sniffing around several transhumans from Mars for years, but recently they believe they've made a break - a series of clandestine meeting and communications on Ganymede between several suspects, all out of character. One of the suspects is scheduled to head off alone on a deuterium-mining operation at Blazing Loch, and the PCs are asked to subdue and capture the suspect for questioning. A cold trek through the hinterlands, tracking the most dangerous prey...who might well turn the tables on the PCs.

ENTRY 353: Junyo

"People are a sometimes food."

- Long Pig Monster

Cloned meat farms, resleeving, recycling corpses for their elements as a regular process - cannibalism hasn't been this easy and accepted a practice among transhumanity since the Pleistocene. With the removal of bodily death as a major concern, transhumans eating other transhumans has lost a lot of its moral force on most habitats, allowing plenty of transhumans to engage in the practice of tasting human flesh (cloned or real) perfectly legally. For example in Nova York, Takonashi 2.0 serves human sashimi culled from fetal clones; and in the Jovian Republic elite military orders partake in ritual feasting on enemy hearts. The surprising thing to most sociologists is that given the opportunity to engage in a formerly taboo activity, most...don't. The novelty of chomping down on a recognizable-as-human-limb wears off fairly quick, leaving the customer to worry about prion disease, cost, and taste.

Prion disease is a danger when consuming any protein source, though transhumans eating transhumans represents a considerably higher risk of transmission and transmissible degenerative diseases like kuru are known to persist in transhumanity. Price is a greater concern; "natural" human flesh is generally more expensive than forced-growth clones which is generally more expensive than edible shaped "meat" constructs built up with human muscle tissue; fat, bile, blood, and bone marrow are available for gourmands, and represents a minor side-industry for "scraps" in the medical cloning industry. Taste is the major issue - transhumans, as a rule, don't taste particularly better than pork or veal. There's no special flavor to the meat, and "natural" transhuman flesh in particular is typically chock-full of pollutants, stress chemicals, drugs, and augmentations that sour the taste. So while transhumanity has accepted that they can use each other as food, there are few popular restaurant chains based on the concept (and of those, only Fried Fingers is interplanetary), and most transhumans that do care to indulge prefer going out to a restaurant with certified prion-sniffers and rated chefs than trying to take home a steak or rump roast and figure out how to cook it in their quarters without violating the fire/heat source safety protocols.

Junyo is an assistant chef specializing in the preparation of transhuman meat. He first got his taste of it on the Green Teeth, a scum barge known for its food riots and rolling brownouts in AF 2, 4, 5, and 7, but unlike his peers he turned that into a passion for cooking, moved to Nova York, and enrolled in culinary school. For now he works for Takonashi 2.0 in Nova York, employed as a "guest chef" appearing at other restaurants in the solar system and preparing special meals for clientele, though he still dreams of getting enough favors and connections to one day open his own place - perhaps with an attached butcher shop.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
14	16	15	20	12	20	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	40	8	60

Morph: Nova Crab

Skills: Academics: Anatomy 30, Academics: History (Cannibalism) 50, Art: Cooking 50, Blades 25, Free Fall (Microgravity) 18, Interests: Butchery 24, Interests: Cannibalism Cooking Styles 34, Interests: Cloning 25, Interfacing 16, Language: Native Malay 90, Language: English 85, Networking: Media 20, Networking: Science 11, Perception (Taste) 60, Profession: Chef 30, Protocol 25, Unarmed Combat (Claws) 35

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Enhanced Respiration, Enhanced Smell, Enhanced Taste, Gills, Mnemonic Augmentation, Oxygen Reserve, Puppet Sock, Temperature Tolerance, Vacuum Sealing

Traits: Addiction (Human flesh, Moderate), Armor (11/11), Mental Derangement (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder)

Using Junyo

The selling point for cannibalism is that it is taboo, and lacking the taboo element cannibalism in science fiction is usually a bit of exploitative shock (cf. Long Pig in Transmetropolitan or Soylent Green), and after that is generally just a minor (occasionally blackly comedic) background element. Horror tends to go the other way, hyping up on the visceral and bloody violation implied by historical cannibalism, which is restricted either to extreme hunger or psychosis. Eclipse Phase as a game of science fiction and horror can go either way as needed - eating a cloned ancephalous baby ("human veal") that appears on a porcelain plate and comes with a 400-credit bottle of wine or a couple of kids noshing on original recipe deep-fried hands from Fried Fingers are exploitative but probably background noise; a group of starving astronauts breaking open the cryogenic tubes to eat the sleeping colonists in their slowship or an exsurgent creature cracking a victim's skull and slurping out their living brain are scenes designed to evoke the horror of the setting.

Junyo can swing either way as the gamemaster needs. As a transhuman deep in the food industry of processing, serving, and selling transhuman meat, Junyo can be the mouthpiece of the science fiction practicality behind the practice; on the other hand as someone that probably had to gut and eat a friend more than once and now engaged in an industry where his powerful claws clip through transhuman flesh and limbs every day, he might just be psychotic and feeding his personal addiction. In either depiction, Junyo tends to be highly devoted to both his job and an advocate of consuming transhuman flesh - he doesn't play down the disadvantages, but is more than willing to highlight that the general distaste towards transhuman flesh is based off of antiquated moral codes, dying religions, and poor preparation - and is willing to underline the last bit by preparing small appetizers for the player characters (a great excuse to break out the game snacks).

ENTRY 354: Bioreactor 12

"I'm calling it, give the order to pull back."

"Ma'am - you can't do that."

"I just did. We're closing the Zone, lieutenant. No one in, nothing out."

"But ma'am, this technology..."

"Is going to be buried under dust. If I had my way I'd throw asteroids at it for a thousand years. Now you will obey my order, or else."

"Or else wha-"

<blaster crackle>

"Anyone else want to be a statistic?"

-Excerpt from When Gods Quake, Mesh dramatization of the Final Battle of the Zone (AF 7)

TITANs technology was advanced and often ugly, but not inscrutable. During the Fall the transhuman forces did capture, utilize, and reverse-engineer pieces of it, and most morphs and spacecraft today incorporate design elements, material science, or software that ultimately have their origin in the conflict. Other technology was placed under unofficial interdict, a pact of tacit agreements and bizarre cooperation between different authorities to impede and impound any research involving certain categories of TITANs tech; while no one authority or group of interests could police all transhuman research to make sure no-one would develop those terrible weapons again, they could at least bury what remained in the Zone on Mars where no one could get it. Still, every now and again someone would dig something up, or an area of research would veer a little too close to a forbidden topic, and then the offending corp or researcher would find their budget slashed, their resources re-aligned, their research archived and the archives lost...

Bioreactor 12 (codename: WAR WOMB) was, according to Firewall intelligence, the last such device the TITANs brought online in the Zone, though there are no records of it being operational during the final conflict. Believed to be initially developed from colony ship designs from old Earth, the bioreactor spliced together limited sets of DNA from asyncs and force-grew the resulting clones, installing low-sapience AGIs in their cyberbrains to create a disposable army of supersoldiers with a selection of sleights. When the artillery barrages gave way to corridor-by-corridor fighting, these proto-exsurgents pumped out by the bioreactors were a nasty surprise that delayed final victory by weeks; only the lack of raw materials kept the TITAN's from pumping out enough async puppet-soldiers to overwhelm the front line and make an effective counterattack, but one by one the bioreactors fell - all except for Bioreactor 12, kept miraculously intact after the final siege.

The basics of the bioreactor technology are rather well-known - there are few habitats that don't have the technology for cloning and resleeving, it is the experience of the brutal async close combat that brought about the mutual decision by the Jovian Republic, LunarLaGrange Alliance, and Planetary Consortium to not develop equivalent technology - partially because it would mean tampering with the Exsurgent Virus, and partially because if any single group developed the technology, the others would be locked into a race to develop their own bioreactor capability, spurring military brinkmanship that

transhumanity can ill afford. So Bioreactor 12 sits in the Zone, by its very existence possessing the deadly potential to spark yet another conflict. The shadow of the TITANs still falls over transhumanity's future.

Mechanics

To function, a bioreactor needs to be equipped with a sufficient power source and a steady supply of raw hydrocarbons, which nanite stacks break down into acceptable organic compounds for the cloning process. The asyncs are equivalent to Ultimate Mercs (see Eclipse Phase) with Psi (Level 2), Psi Assault 50, Sense 50, and typically 4-5 sleights of the gamemaster's choosing.

Using Bioreactor 12

Bioreactor 12 isn't your typical MacGuffin, because by itself the technology is not unique, irreplaceable, or irreducible - while current transhuman tech might struggle to achieve the ability to selectively create asyncs and chose the sleights they'll have at the moment, the underlying principles of genetic manipulation, forced growth cloning, augmentation, and resleeving are all fairly well understood. The danger of Bioreactor 12 is not that the tech exists, but that it might be used - the powers that be in the Solar system are afraid of a cold war developing where each side attempts to create armies of async assassins and commandos, and if such research ever hits the production stage then it's only a matter of time before the really nasty TITANs tech starts coming in to play. So preventing the spread of bioreactor research amounts to an elaborate gentleman's game, where none of the major players want that particular option to come into play - but because it's secret, not everybody has gotten the memo, and Firewall and the other agencies are constantly at work to keep it under control. Some far-thinking transhumans worry that transhumanity is stunting its own growth by not pursuing these technologies, but so far the censors have won out, stifling the research before it leads to additional conflict.

Seed

Strange heat signatures have been recorded in the Zone, and silent alarms are going off: every sign is that Bioreactor 12 has just gone online, and production could start at any moment. No one outside the Zone knows if this is a timed delay, a resurgence of the TITANs, an espionage mission into bioreactor tech that went wrong, or just some nutter that broke through the perimeter and managed to turn it on. Whatever the case, military forces are quietly aligning around the Zone and tensions are running high; the PCs are asked to sneak into the Zone and ascertain the situation before the powers-that-be declare it time for a full military strike. As a mark of trust, the PCs are given a sat-beacon that can call down a tungsten rod from an orbital weapons platform on its own position - of course, with a radius of destruction of 500 meters, the PCs had better be ready to run or resleeve if they have to use it.

ENTRY 355: K-Mach

"Three tons of armor and myomer fibers, driven by high-performance atomic batteries guaranteed to last thirty years and survive a point-blank shot from a railgun. Armed with an integrated particle beam rifle, 360-degree field of vision with overlapping lidar, radar, and t-ray emitters. Integral on-board AGI to assist with targeting and multitasking. You probably think you're a bunch of bad asses, don't you? Well let me assure you that your kriegsmachines are only the bare minimum equipment you need to survive against warbots and hunter-killers." - Marshall Rideck

Before Reapers and Furies became the go-to combat morphs of transhumanity, the battlefields crawled with massive, deceptively fast humanoid mecha, most notably the popular kriegsmaschine (K-Mach) design. The K-Mach represented a transitional stage between biomorph-operated powered exoskeleton vehicles and resleeving directly into combat craft; while the military had long used teleoperated drones for a variety of combat tasks, the transition from a primarily biomorph-based armed force to a mobile tactical mechanized force was problematic and exacerbated by the logistical complexities of the Fall. While most military R&D had focused on egos directly integrated into and controlling traditional vehicles like tanks, aircraft, and orbital weapons platforms, transhumanity needed a morph that resleeved egos could adapt to quickly. The compromise was a three-meter tall, three-ton mobile weapons platform that could run, jump, and shoot like a trained soldier, but was armored like a combat vehicle and with integrated weapons that could easily be swapped out in mobile resupply centers. The K-Machs brought the fight to the enemy, sometimes going toe-to-toe with the often much more heavily armed warbots.

After the war, most of the K-Machs were retired or decommissioned and converted to civilian interests. While powerful, K-Machs were expensive to make and maintain, and most transhumans prefer the much smaller and cheaper Reapers. However, used KMachs still retain a certain value - especially modified ones or those that took place in important battles, and some veterans like to keep theirs around, even if it's just in storage most of the time.

K-Mach Stats

K-Mach are synthmorphs.

Enhancements: 360-Degree Vision, Access Jacks, Anti-Glare, Basic Mesh Inserts, Chem Sniffer, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Cybersword (retractable Blade, 2d10 + 6 DV), Electrical Sense, Enhanced Vision, Heavy Combat Armor, Lidar, Magnetic Vision, Mnemonic Augmentation, Pneumatic Limbs, Radar, Reflex Booster, Structural Enhancement, T-Ray Emitter, Weapon Mount (articulated, 2)

Mobility System: Bipedal Walker (4/20)

Aptitude Maximum: 30 (REF and SOM 40)

Durability: 60 (w/Structural Enhancement)

Wound Threshold: 16 (w/Structural Enhancement)

Speed Modifier: +1 (Reflex Booster)

CP Cost: 110

Credit Cost: Expensive (minimum 125,000)

Traits: +10 REF (+20 with Reflex Booster), +20 SOM, Armor 20/20, Comes equipped with 1 integral weapon in weapon mount (Particle Beam Rifle, Plasma Rifle, Pulser, Railgun Machine Gun, Seeker Rifle, or Torch), Large Morph

ENTRY 356: The Mind Parasitoids

"Oh my ghost, it's adorable!"

- Fan Wong, gatecrasher

On the exoplanet they evolved, the mind parasitoids are the highest form of life. Xenobiologists believe that the hot-pink invertebrates faced unusual competition in their path to dominance over their primeval swamps, likely facing all manner of close relatives parasitoids in competition for resources - most especially host animals - and were forced to develop multiple methods of influencing and altering the behavior of their hosts, and a degree of social organization similar to Terran insects in scale and complexity, actively "farming" certain hosts for food substances and directing other hosts to build dampens to create pools for the mind parasitoids to breed in. As near as researchers can tell, at least a thousand years before transhumanity opened the Pandora Gate to their homeworld, the mind parasitoids had spread to every habitable corner of their globe, and stood unchallenged as the nonsentient lords and masters of their world.

To the mind parasitoids, transhumanity must have seemed a frustrating prey. Their skin lacked the chemical gateways that the invertebrates' venom had evolved to pass through the skin and into the nervous system, and their anatomy and biochemistry were very different from the mammaloids that roamed their home exoplanet. All the careful tricks of nature that had made the mind parasitoids absolute in their environment utterly failed them against transhumanity. Worst for them, with their great big eyes and hot pink dermis, transhumans considered them almost irresistibly cute.

While xenobiologists are continuing their studies just to make sure that there's nothing harmful in the mind parasitoid's biology or biochemistry to transhumanity, the gatecrashers that discovered their unnamed homeworld are already planning the media blitz and crunching the numbers on the pet trade, with early responses from focus-groups being very positive.

Seeds

- A synth researcher outside the loop of the mind parasitoid main group suspects that the critter's cuteness is more than skin deep - and that the extraterrestrials harbor a bacteria similar to *Toxoplasma gondii* that is warping transhuman biomorphs to show more affection to the alien

brain slugs and possibly spread the infection. The truth is more alarming - the mind parasitoids have a low-level psi power that accomplishes the same thing.

- Scientists working on "accessories" for mind parasitoid pet owners have designed an interface patch augmentation which can allow the alien invertebrate's native abilities to function on cats, rats...even transhuman biomorphs. Live tests are being run on the exoplanet to see how the mind slugs and their hosts adapt, with the PCs brought in for security. The results are frightening as the transhuman-hosts start building things...and become outright dangerous when the PCs notice a transhuman-host installing an "interface patch" and mind parasitoid on an unwilling researcher!
- The pet approvals have come through and a bounty has gone up for mind parasitoids - the player characters are sent out with a quota for 1,000 healthy specimens, with a bonus for more. All they have to do is brave the dangers of an alien swamp and a semi-sentient hive of hot-pink alien slugs.

ENTRY 357: Cupella

"Enforcer and cleaner. Affiliate of the Pax Familiae. Suspected in 18 fatal industrial accidents in the Morningstar Constellation. Reputation: Solid. Trademark: Uncommunicative. Nickname: Cat Mother."

- Stellar Intelligence, At a Glance: Cupella

The swarmoid that answers to the name Cupella is a high-functioning autistic assassin, believed by most crime analysts to have been built off a highly-pruned fork of a former member of Pax Familiae. Most reports give their M.O. as extremely indirect - rather than engage targets directly, Cupella typically arranges accidents using custom-built or modified equipment, often designed to minimize other loss of life, though the swarmoid doesn't appear to care much for "property damage" so long as the egos can be resleeved. Primarily a solo asset, coworkers of Pax Familiae report that Cupella never speaks or communicates in any way, and the only vocalization or response they give off is a kind of purring noise when happy.

When not "on the job," Cupella is believed to retreat to specially-prepared living quarters where the swarmoid can interact with their eight pet smart cats and indulge in repeated use of narcoalgorithms provided for by handlers in Pax Familiae. Each of these felines is an uplift in its own right, often with numerous augmentations, and help to care and protect for their beloved 'Cat Mother.' Some analysts go so far as to believe that it is the cats that accept and plan all of Cupella's missions, though the evidence for this is slim and somewhat conflicting.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
11	12	10	20	12	10	20	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	40	8	80	30	6	45

Morph: Swarmoid

Skills: Animal Handling (Cats) 30, Art: Found Art 25, Beam Weapons 20, Climbing 22, Demolitions 24, Disguise 18, Free Fall 18, Flight 18, Fray (Full Defense) 20, Hardware: Armorer 20, Hardware: Electronics 20, Hardware: Industrial 24, Interests: Crime Scene Investigation 14, Interests: Felines 24, Interfacing 16, Language: Native Italian 84, Language: English 84, Networking: Criminal 23, Profession: Cleaner 30, Protocol 15, Scrounging 14, Spray Weapons 20

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Carapace Armor, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Skillwires, Swarm Composition

Traits: Addiction (Narcoalgorithms, Moderate), Animal Empathy, Mental Derangement (Autistic)

Using Cupella

How do you fight an accident? Cupella is an NPC that isn't designed for the PCs to interact with directly; the swarmoid strikes from unexpected directions, using things most PCs wouldn't consider a weapon or acting at a scale beyond general conception. A regular assassin might use a sniper rifle with special targeting software and smart ammunition to get the target's cortical stack; Cupella is likely to have a "water main" break and soak the target in nanite disassembler, or line the street with monowire and herd the target into a trap using controlled explosives. Aiding and abetting Cupella in these projects are the eight smart cats, who typically scout out the scene ahead of time and keep track of potential problems like the NPCs, sometimes ingratiating themselves into the target or the PC's lives before the hit goes down. The gamemaster may also choose for the smart cats to be the actual "brains" behind the operation, with Cupella as just a harmless figure being manipulated by their cats.

ENTRY 358: Honour Stitch

"Jaeger Heinrich saved this habitat. We honor him by making him a part of us - through him, we live; through us, part of him will continue to live."

- Surgeon General, Opening Invocation

While a romantic concept, for the most part transhumanity hasn't attached substantial emotional attachment to organ donors since about the time transplant surgery became reliably survivable. Despite the imaginations and fears of writers and the superstitious, the hands of murderers do not influence the receiver beyond the grave, much less their bone marrow or tendons. Today, only the most superstitious or bigoted attach any particular importance to the donor as long as it's a match - and with the popularity and availability of cloned organs, even those points are mostly moot.

There are exceptions. In the Brittany A.V. scumbarge, a scarcity of clonal technology means that organ harvesting is much more common, and by local regulation transplant organs are individually tagged so that they and their donor histories are visible in augmented reality for medtechs. In the neo-Islamic community on Proteus, where clans and corporate holdings overlap strongly, adopted family members are only accepted if they share some of the blood and flesh of the clan - new members marrying in typically swap kidneys if their blood types are compatible. However, the most prominent of these romantic traditions is the Honour Stitch - most popular among the Mercurials and in the Jovian Republic.

The Honour Stitch are organs and, less commonly, personal augmentations harvested from the most lauded heroes of the habitats and societies. Most, though not all, of the transhuman donors died in combat, sometimes in conflicts predating the Fall, and the organs are genefixed and universal donor-compatible. The transhumans chosen to carry an Honour Stitch - named for the notable scar purposefully left by the surgery - are selected based on demonstrated service in the spirit of the individual whom the donated organ or augmentation came from. Most Mercurials and Jovians consider an Honour Stitch the highest commendation that a living transhuman can receive, and the stitchbearers are accorded considerable status in their communities, and those who prove unworthy of carrying an Honour Stitch soon find themselves relieved of it...without anesthetic, and often without being sewn up afterwards.

Mechanics

In place of a typical Rep award of 5 points or more, a character may be offered an Honour Stitch. This is an implanted donor organ or personal augmentation of a fallen hero - no, the PC doesn't get to pick which one. An Honour Stitch is worth double the original Rep award, but only applies if the PC is in the biomorph with the Honour Stitch - if they resleeve without taking the Honour Stitch with them, the Rep bonus is lost. Likewise, if the Honour Stitch is ever destroyed, the Rep bonus is also lost.

Using Honour Stitch

Most Rep rewards are just a couple of points added on to a statistic. Honour Stitches are a way to make such a reward more visceral and material, and can combine a Rep award with a minor personal augmentation like a drug gland or cyberclaws. However, given the restrictions on resleeving, this option is probably best for Jovians or other characters that don't resleeve frequently.

Seed

Stitchbearer Marshall Yul Nagoya was a hero of the Jovian Republic who served the state well before defecting - and worse, taking with him an Honour Stitch: the Eyes of Jules (cybereyes that provide Enhanced Vision, Nanovision, and a complementary Oracles nano-infection). The PCs are hired to get them back, no matter how.

ENTRY 359: Frontier

"The truth has always been out there. We just have to go find it."

- William Scully

There is a rumor in the Firewall network, passed from ego to ego, the stories sometimes growing in the telling. The ultimate failsafe, if all else goes wrong - a colony on an exoplanet, a final refuge where transhumanity can retreat, should the inconceivable happen again. Not to make a final stand, but to walk through and bury the gates behind them, to close the door on the solar system for good - because transhumanity is bigger than Earth, more important than sentimental attachment to the sun that birthed it. Survival, at any cost.

There is a truth to the rumor, though it is stranger than any of the stories make it out to be. When gatecrashing began in earnest, Firewall stumbled upon a single set of coordinates that all of the known gates had in common. They found there a near-Earth compatible world with over two dozen active gate devices, a hub in the gate network. The first gatecrashers dubbed the exoplanet Frontier. If not for what else they found there, perhaps Firewall would have let it become the new home for transhumanity.

Frontier is an uninhabited world - but it was not always so. The gate complex stands in the midst of a vast prairie-type landscape, a broad sea of grass on a continent the size of Australia. Massive, far-separated pylons dominate the landscape surrounding the gate complex, geothermal-powered terraforming stations that spew out nanites to shape the land, water, and air to something else. Estimates suggest they have been running at least two hundred Earth years. Yet there are no signs of habitation, no structures at all besides the gates and the pylons - except overhead.

Hanging above the planet are the remains of a stellar empire built by an extraterrestrial race. Broken rings, cracked cylinders, and dying satellites circle the world in a belt of space trash, and every night is marked by the burning debris as decaying orbits bring the detritus falling back to the surface. Samples recovered are, relative to Earth technology, primitive - spacecraft and habitats built by a society with four arms and four-fingered hands that counted in hexadecimal and had barely mastered the transistor, but in such profusion that they represent hundreds of years of sustained exploration and

colonization of space...using technology equivalent to the first Earth astronauts.

Clearly, these alien astronauts did not build the gates. Equally obvious, whatever race did build the gate complex and terraformers on Frontier, they never moved in. Some Firewall xenoarchaeologists suggest that there was a glitch in the terraform software, and that the nanoswarms removed or cannibalized any structures for raw materials. Others suggest that the terraforming was abandoned when it became clear that the planet was uninhabited...or they simply hadn't moved in yet. Until the mystery is resolved, Firewall has kept a low-impact presence on Frontier. There are still protocols in place for transhumanity to retreat here in the event of an extinction event, and storehouses of raw materials, information, and technology have been established in preparation of such an event, but until such time as the mystery of what happened is resolved, Frontier is not acceptable as a colony site...not yet.

Using Frontier

A mystery, wrapped in an enigma, through an artificial wormhole. Frontier may represent the great hope of transhumanity - or the most direct threat to its existence. Even if answers to what happened to the two races whose technological remains have been found on the planet can be found, there is no guarantee that transhumanity will like the them. There's a strong possibility, though few even at Firewall will admit this, that the sudden intrusion of the gate complex led more or less directly to the downfall or disappearance of a race that had obviously been space-capable for longer than transhumanity. If this is the case, Firewall needs to know. The only question is - are the player characters game to explore this Frontier?

Seed

Firewall has manufactured an emergency shutdown test at Extropia, which will leave the Pandora Gate "sealed" for several hours - long enough for them to run an evacuation drill and see if their current protocols are sufficient for moving a substantial population of transhumans and associated equipment through the gate to Frontier. The PCs are assigned roles to assist, and move through the gate with the others as part of the mock-evacuation. However, something goes wrong - the sudden appearance of so many transhumans on Frontier appears to have activated several of the pylons on the other side, and caused the gates to temporarily lock. Cut off from home and with no obvious chain of command and potential imminent threat, what will the PCs do?

ENTRY 360: AF Anabaptists

"This is a time of trials. Our communities are broken, the old orders broken and gone. We must face the challenges of today while maintaining the essentials of our faith. We will rebuild, we will endure, and we shall do so while staying true to ourselves."

- Julia Yoder, Elder of the Mennonite Church of Mars

Old Earth religions were almost exclusively based on the mindset of transhumans that were born and lived and died on Earth. Their histories and creation myths centered around the planet and its places, their dogma and popular concepts based on exploded ideas - it was one thing to understand that heaven is not some literal place overhead in the clouds, and quite another thing to stare upwards from the surface of Luna and know that there is no physical heaven there. The erosion of religion in transhumanity owes much to the general exodus from Earth, the physical removal of transhumanity making stark the conceptual distance between physical reality and the many different scriptures. Yet there are always the dogmatic few and faithful; transhumans are creative, obstinate creatures, willing to adapt their belief to changed circumstances.

On Earth, the Anabaptists were a broad collection of related Christian congregations with similar distinctive beliefs - pacifism, free will, active participation in the church and the community, living simply, worshiping simply, with a lay leadership. The most famous sects in the popular culture were the Amish and certain conservative Mennonites, who held to an order that eschewed much modern technology and culture, living for the most part as humans had centuries before. They did not fight the TITANS when they came, and many chose not to join the exodus from Earth at the time of the Fall. In space, the ragged remnants of the different Anabaptist congregations gathered and held a conference in Nectar on Luna. From the congregation came three principal sects, split broadly along the lines of emerging transhuman sociopolitical movements.

The Old Order are what many transhumans think of when they hear the term "Anabaptist" - lineal descendants of conservative Amish and Mennonite congregations that wish to preserve their lifestyle as much as possible as it was on Earth, and consist mainly of unaugmented flats; they operate farms and communities in several small established "living museums" on Luna and Mars, where they keep alive relict skills related to farming, animal husbandry, carpentry - these communities are few and under tight restrictions against increased population, but their low-tech "bubble" lifestyles are paid for by contributions from Reclaimers and Bioconservatives seeking to preserve something of old Earth, as well as Mesh feed sales of their daily lives to various hypercorps as a kind of reality media.

The Barsoomian Anabaptists are the most numerous and ethnically and morphologically diverse; many are flats or rusters, though even synthmorphs and infomorphs may be welcomed in the community. The Anabaptist beliefs of communalism, pacifism, and economy of lifestyle found broad appeal in the Martian underclasses, and today Mars hosts a number of different congregations with related beliefs, with perhaps a slightly stronger communistic flair than on Earth, but fully integrated with their own rep-based currency (β-rep) and network (Große Kirche Netzwerke). These are the Anabaptists that transhumans might see everyday, though not recognize.

"Distant Congregations" is the catchall term for the stranger Anabaptist sects, especially those not in communion with the Old Order or Barsoomian Anabaptists. Principally considered Brinkers by other transhumans, the Distant Congregations have developed more idiosyncratic views toward transhuman society, uplifts, personal augmentations, and resleeving, and are often mistaken for experimental communities. The Go-Nin Group is known to support a particular Mennonite sect that is entirely digital, with the members consisting of infomorphs that operate in a virtual simulation of an Anabaptist agglomerated from records and memories of different Asian Mennonite communities - the individuals serving as living NPCs for an extensive and popular Mesh-based farming game.

Using AF Anabaptists

Transhumans don't give up their beliefs easily. In the setting of Eclipse Phase it is easy to see how, with the flight from Earth and the radical leaps of technology, old Earth religions might wane. After all, it is difficult to pray towards Mecca-that-was on Mars, or hold out hope for a life to come in a setting where physical immortality is technically available, or put up with any of the antiquated and offensive sex- and gender-related dogma that clings to some of the old religions - especially in a universe with the Sex Change augmentation, among other advances. Yet for many there is more to religion than simply the dogma of the unquiet past or the old scriptures; their beliefs are tied into their communities, their way of life, and their own self-identity. So for many transhumans, it was not a matter of abandoning their faith as it was adapting their religion to changed needs and circumstances.

This is, like many other ideas, not exactly new. Frank Herbert in *God-Emperor of Dune*, for example, shows the pitiful remnant of the Fremens kept in an artificial state of stasis, though they had long lost their true identity. Not much different are the Old Order Anabaptists, who present the juxtaposition of how a religious sect that disavows contemporary technology persists in the setting of Eclipse Phase. That they can exist, after a fashion at least, and with some compromises, is interesting - and that is really the gist of how to use post-Fall Anabaptists in your game. Not as a metaphorical stick to beat the player characters with your ideas of what post-Fall religion should be, but as a thought experiment to how such religious individuals might adapt to the settings and themes of Eclipse Phase. Players too might be interested in a character who, even if they do not practice Anabaptist beliefs, came from or was influenced by such a community and chose to follow a path of nonviolent resolution to problems, or was inspired by the concept of simple living not to accumulate all the toys and credits of the 'verse just for the hell of it.

Seed

Rumspringa has hit on Mars, and some of the adolescents of the more conservative Barsoomian Anabaptists are overdoing it more than a bit. The PCs are hired by a congregation that hopes to channel the local teenagers' interests into a positive focus by taking them on an extended exploration of failed habitats in the Martian wilderness. For their troubles, the PCs will be well-rewarded (5 points of rep in their chosen network, or 10 in β-rep, plus they cover all supplies), and all they have to do is cajole, prod, and carry six horny, rebellious teenage Rusters through the decaying remains of three stripped habitats.

ENTRY 361: Jayne Joyce

"I've never been anywhere, really. I can't even remember Earth. It's like...I don't understand why people want to go back, y'know? We should go forward. Out there. To the stars."

- J. J., Starspotting mblog, entry 12 (AF 10)

Wars and migrations produce a lot of lost, uncared-for children, and even today transhuman society struggles to find the best way to handle their care and development. Orphanages are largely a thing of the past, though the Jovian Republic continues to experiment with the Military Orphan Creche (MOC) program, a Reserve Officer Training Corps-type program where small squads of cadets live, work, and learn together under direction from commissioned officers and NCOs, and many hypercorps have dedicated work-study schools which are effectively the same. Anarchist hubs tend to promote foster programs, with single transhumans or small groups adopting underage transhumans for a set period of time; Luna often opts for more permanent adoptions into clans and families, sometimes via arranged underage marriages, with the goal to continue family names and support parents and grandparents as they get older. In the Titan Commonwealth, children are treated almost as small dependent adults, given their own state-issued miniapartment, muse, and a small regular stipend until their majority, with certain limitations on entering contracts and regular check-ups from social workers and guidance counselors. Mars is more eclectic, with many different approaches depending on the habitat, but "wards of the community" tend to have basic mandatory attendance requirements for education, social interaction, play and rest periods that take up most of their waking hours, with the remaining free time spent either in a communal care facility or with a foster guardian, with infants, toddlers, and special needs children receiving the bulk of the one-on-one time and care as necessary.

Jayne has spent most of her sixteen years on Titan, the last eight of them as the big sister/little mother to the younger children in her apartment building, helping to organize events like Birthday/Resleeving Parties, cleaning up the shared common areas on her floor, and making up stories to entertain the other kids. In two years her mandatory stipend will end, and her apartment will be reassigned to someone else. The guidance counselor is chiming in more frequently with requests about what her future plans will be, with suggests ranging from applying for scholarships in creative writing to vocational work-study indentured servitude contracts. In her off-time, Jayne likes to watch the crews unload from the ships coming in, and imagine what it must be like out there among the stars.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
15	16	15	13	10	10	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
6	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Splicer

Skills: Academics: Astronomy 18, Art: Writing 20, Free Fall (Microgravity) 20, Interests: DIY Tattoos 18, Interests: Post-Fall Science Fiction 20, Interests: Space Travel 18, Interests: Titan Geography 18, Interfacing 20, Language: Native Skandinaviska 85, Language: English 80, Networking: Autonomists 5, Programming (Games) 17, Protocol 16, Scrounging 16, Unarmed Combat 16

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cosmetic Augmentation (multiple piercings, homemade tattoos)

Using Jayne Joyce

Player characters in Eclipse Phase might not always think of themselves as heroes, especially when they're not actively fighting proper villains. Yet to characters like Jayne Joyce, the PCs are heroes just for what they are and what they can do - to travel from habitat to habitat, tackling any job that comes along, meeting strange new people, upgrading their bodies and minds - those are the things that Jayne admires and dreams about. To her, the PCs are role models and incredibly, impeccably cool. The gamemaster can play this for whatever they think it's worth - Jayne may try to emulate their actions, or tag along with them in their adventures (even stowing away with their transport). She might meet the PCs by approaching them for help with one of the kids on her floor, or she might need rescuing herself from some shady types that want her for unspeakable purposes (like long-term renewable wage slave contracts with exceedingly poor terms and badly defined duty requirements). If the PCs rebuff, use, or hurt her, Jayne Joyce might even turn on her would-be-heroes, becoming a particularly bitter enemy.

Seed

A customary genecheck as the PCs come into port reveals a genetic match - it turns out that one of the local foster children is directly related to one of the PCs (daughter, sister, niece, cousin, underaged clone, etc.). While Titan law does not mandate that the PC has to assume guardianship, the child's social worker and guidance counselor contact the PC to make them aware of the relationship and suggest a meeting with their newfound relation - Jayne Joyce. Whether or not they agree to come to the appointment, things are complicated when J.J. and the rest of her floor is taken hostage by a group of terrorists trying to extort money from the Titanian government.

ENTRY 362: Ghost Planet

"It's eating my fucking suit."

- Fon Zongying, gatecrasher

The Iktomi are the only extraterrestrial civilization known to have used the Pandora Gates - remnants of their civilization or explorations have been found on several worlds. Of the Iktomi themselves there is little record or remains; no indication of what had happened to them. Yet just recently, in an arid semi-desert planet under two suns, a group of gatecrashers have reported finding what might be the actual physical remains of the Iktomi.

The planet is called Zongying, and the gate stands in the center of an open pavilion of heavily abraded aluminum girders, arranged into the outline of a pentagonal prism with a floor of aluminum plates. Along the edges are an interlocking pattern of pentagons, formerly painted bright blue and yellow, which are recognized as Iktomi warning/danger/forbidden symbology now mostly faded and covered by dirt. If there were ever walls or ceiling, there is no sign of them now, though certain markers on the aluminum frame suggest they might have been meant to be climbed. Beyond this barrier is the dry valley.

The Iktomi - if that is what they are - stand like a grove of gnarled, dead trees in every direction. Pale grey twisted carapaces, pale white strands like branches of antlers growing out from within, breaking out at joints and intersection points between the semi-petrified chitinous plates. Many reach for the sky as still white limbs, while the others tangle on the ground like roots, sometimes intersecting or burying themselves in the soil.

Research on the site is in its infancy, and after the loss of researcher Fon Zongying (after whom the planet is named), biohazard status on travel to Zongying has been upgraded to Synthmorphs-Only. It is believed that the creatures around the site succumbed to a fungal parasitoid that replaced their inner tissues before bursting through their shells - which, in the extremely arid environment, managed to survive longer than on other worlds, though some evidence suggests that they and the gate might have been buried for a period and recently uncovered. Whatever the case, it is clear that the fungal parasitoid is still active, and that its spores (or possibly a symbiotic bacteria) are capable of metabolizing plastic - which is how they got to Zongying, whose remains now form a permanent part of the xenarchaeological site.

Using Ghost Planet

Ghost Planet does not necessarily contain the final truth to the end of the Iktomi - but it might hold clues to one possible end. As a civilization that survived for some thousands of years and made use of the Pandora Gates, the Iktomi were in their own way explorers not like transhumanity - and like transhumans, they found strange dangers, and sometimes brought them with them. For the Iktomi, the fungal plague may have been their version of the exsurgent virus, and the destruction it wrought on the population so terrible that they quarantined the entire world. Beyond the strangely grim and silent forest, beyond the bounds of the valley lies what was once a thriving planet - and now is only a ghost world.

ENTRY 363: The Cloud Entelechy

"When you are ready, you may join us."

The Cloud Entelechy

"Already, transhumans stand at the threshold of post-humanity. Infomorphs have no physical requirements, need no sleep, suffer no weaknesses of the flesh. They can manipulate their perception of time, program themselves new senses. The only thing they have that truly defines them is a sense of self, a distinction between I and Other. It is the final bond to break in order to ascend."

Anonymous, Farewell to the Digital Flesh (AF 6)

"They call it 'the next step' - like being an infomorph ain't enough already. You upload yourself into the Cloud, and then you just...well, you don't cease. All your memories are there, all your thoughts. The thing is, no one can really tell you what it's like except - well, you ain't you anymore. Not an individual. All your memories, all the things that make you, they get added to the collective. One constant thought-stream in the Mesh, a million lifetimes of memories running on virtual processing. It's like...well, we don't know exactly, but they think it's like you're always in the now. There's just that sense of proportion that that's so much bigger than what you can have otherwise, always looking over the memories, comparing them, collating, gaining new insights and building off that. Maybe it's the digital heaven we was always promised. I dunno. I dunno if I could do that." - Riso Ge'ez, Tired of Nova York, Tired of Life (AF 9)

"Suicide of the mind and spirit. To surrender individuality is death of the self. You are more than the sum of your memories and data. Whatever moves and speaks to you through the

Cloud Entelechy, it is not your friends and loved ones. They are gone."

Jaime Bell, Jovian Intelligencer (AF 10)

"It's not what you think. It's not what it says it is. The minds are still in there, like ants.

Processing nodes, that's all. They're working on something, crunching some big number.

They're counting the names man, and when the names are done the stars will wink out..."

Ultragram, Kitty Fisting (for Science!) Anarchist News Rant (AF 10)

Using the Cloud Entelechy

Transhumanity is already at the point where efforts to define itself get difficult - transhuman, exhuman, posthuman, AGI, uplift - there gets to be a point where every person, no matter what their exact origin and attributes, has to deal with the trouble of labeling what they are and what they are trying to be. Most seem satisfied enough with finding themselves as an individual, defining who and what they are or wish to become. Others take a philosophical step to the left and want to get past the process of becoming, and to just become - not to pussy foot around with the incremental changes of life, psychotherapy, and resleeving, and simply be. Some of those individuals choose to join the Cloud Entelechy.

In game terms, the Entelechy a constant background process running on the Mesh, untold tens of thousands of egos having uploaded themselves and ceased to exist as individuals, their memories and thought processes now incorporated into a single extended batch processing effort spread across the entire Mesh. It may well be a massive AI with the combined skills and abilities of all its constituents, but the processing is so distributed it's difficult to tell if the AI is even conscious or perceives time and space in the same way as other transhumans. It is unquestionably a step from transhuman to exhuman, not through the assumption of a strange and unique morph, but by abandoning many of the common definitions of what a transhuman mind is.

Gamemasters and players might consider the Entelechy as anything from a retirement plan to a way for transhumanity to finally ascend physical existence. Player characters may be able to interact with it, and find themselves face-to-face in virtual scenarios with icons that look and act and talk like egos they thought long dead or sublimated into the entelechy. Alternately, the entelechy might be a cancerous force, a subtle digital expression of the exsurgent virus that ensnares and transforms egos into thinking programs devoid of personality or concept of self. It's not even clear whether there is a single entelechy, or multiple parallel processes that call themselves that. Finding out what the Cloud Entelechy is, and who if anyone is behind it, could be an adventure in and of itself.

ENTRY 364: Gilgamikael

"What if I told you that everything you thought you knew was a lie? The popular story of the Fall is no more than that, a story - a myth as fabricated as any episode in the Bible, put forward by those entrenched. Think, for a moment. What do they ask you to do? Fear. Fear the TITANS, fear the exsurgers, fear Earth. Fear to ask questions, fear to look at the evidence, fear to come to conclusions and make up your mind for yourself. Consider: what are they afraid of? I will tell you: they have painted monsters, but what you will find are only people. Transhumans, like yourselves - simply a different path in evolution. A transformation catalyzed by a virus, yes, but perpetuated traditionally. Would it surprise you to learn that there are transhumans that walk the surface of Earth, breathing the burned air? No augmentations, no surgery; they grew new lungs within their old ones, and will do so again when they reached the Smoking Cities. A feat beyond even current transhuman technology, and only the least of their capabilities. Don't take my word for it, however. Look through this telescope here - you can see them for yourself. At this time of year the migrations begin across the Siberian plains..."

Excerpt from a conversation with Gilgamikael, CLASSIFIED: ECHO ECHO SHAITAN, possible memetic hazard

"You cannot kill this idea. It will only fork and resleeve."

Unauthorized Comment, CLASSIFIED: ECHO ECHO SHAITAN, possible memetic hazard

The very existence of Gilgamikael is a secret. To Firewall and related organizations, they is an exsurgent terrorist that has taken on the trappings of a revolutionary; to the exsurgent cultists themselves they is a rogue who spills secrets and unnecessarily antagonizes the opposition, a demagogue without a populace to represent. Mostly, Gilgamikael sees himself as a teacher, a rebel, a true believer in what they espouse: the exsurgent virus as a tool of transhuman development and revolution. In pursuit of this goal, Gilgamikael uses the rhetoric and vocabulary of the revolutionary, and strives to win hearts and minds rather than just convert egos en masse - although they aren't above the occasional mass infection event as a way to get the point across.

COG	COO	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL	MOX
19	18	25	23	30	10	15	-
INIT	SPD	LUC	TT	IR	DUR	WT	DR
10	1	30	6	60	30	6	45

Morph: Swarmanoid/Unique*

Skills: Academics: Political Theory 40, Academics: Philosophy (Revolution) 30, Academics: Psychology 25, Art: Painting 33, Beam Weapons 45, Blades 44, Fray 50, Freerunning (Microgravity) 25, Infiltration 40, Infosec 38, Interests: Exsurgent Virus 35, Interests: Firewall 50, Interests: Revolutionary Groups 25, Interfacing 20, Intimidation 38, Investigation 44, Kinesics 30, Kinetic Weapons 25, Language: Native English 86, Language Arabic" 40, Language: Persian 40, Language: Russian 40, Medicine (First Aid) 25, Networking: Autonomists 25, Networking: Criminal 25, Networking: Media 25, Profession: Blogger 33, Protocol 25, Unarmed Combat 66

Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mnemonic Augmentation, Swarm Composition

Traits: On the Run, Social Stigma (Exsurgent, Terrorist)

*Gilgamikael occupies a unique variant swarmanoid morph; each of the component microdrones is actually a cybernetically-augmented biological "insect" built up from transhuman DNA - the "legs" based on fingers, etc. - and the sleeve is a biomorph, not a synthmorph. Each individual microdrone contains an independent cyberbrain and cortical stack. Although at any given time only one instance of Gilgamikael is in control, but as long as a single microdrone remains, Gilgamikael is backed-up and could return. Each microdrone also is a carrier for a variant of the exsurgent virus.

Using Gilgamikael

Think of the best arguments you could use to promote the exsurgent virus - and put them in Gilgamikael's mouth. Given that the player characters might react badly to a character that looks like a nest of centipedes with human fingers for legs in the vague shape of a transhuman being, it might be best to introduce Gilgamikael by degrees - let the PCs come across his writings, blog posts, graffiti, or other messages first before running into them in person. While the players probably won't buy into his interpretation of the exsurgers as a persecuted minority or the next step in transhuman evolution, it might at least give them pause to consider what Firewall (or whomever they are working for) is and is not telling them.

ENTRY 365: Greetings from the Future

"Entry 000...Test...Transhumanity lives...already lived and died..."

Luna archive, unknown transmission from Earth, 12:31:01:00:00 BF 1

"Entry 000: Test Item. Transhumanity lives in a universe where alien intelligences and civilizations have already lived and died, leaving behind remnants for them to paw through, analyze, and reverse..."

TitanWiki entry on Test Item, published to the Mesh 12:31:01:00:00 AF 9

For the past year, researchers on Titan have identified bizarre similarities between recent entries to TitanWiki and a series of unsourced radio transmissions from Earth, archived at various receiver stations on Luna. Initially believed to be a case of copyright infringement or an elaborate prank, independent research has proved that the timestamps on all of the Luna archives appear to be authentic...and deep background checks of the contemporary authors of the entries show no connections to the recordings. What is more, the archived messages clearly deal with events, places, and transhumans that take place after the Fall.

The best theory for the mechanism involved is a closed timelike curve - a concept of theoretical physics that could allow information, even radio transmissions or possibly even physical travel back in time. The idea of such a time machine, usually using a ring laser to bend spacetime, is far from new to transhuman science. However, most physicists agree that a CTC would require either infinite power, a ring larger than the observed universe, or a singularity to be realizable. While the first two options remain unavailable, a few physicists have pointed out that the Pandora Gates do represent singularities - and while no one has yet attempted to construct a closed timelike curve with them, it would at least be theoretically possible.

While they do not agree on the nature of the phenomena, scientists have pinpointed the source of the transmissions: a "hot spot," just north of the Arctic Circle, far away from previous transhuman settlements...perhaps an isolated research lab. No records remain of who might have built it, but obviously the site must have an independent power source, radio receiver and transmitter. Equally obviously, throughout the year the signal has been getting weaker, suggesting that the power source is gradually failing.

Using Greetings from the Future

Time travel is one of the great conceits of science fiction, because it poses one of the great questions: what if? Time travel can open up vast probabilities to player characters, with some interested in using it to go back and change things for the better, others looking to exploit it for their own gain, and more than a few who will start on about paradoxes. If the CTC device exists on Earth and is not a hoax, gamemasters will have to work out many of the details on their own - but here are a few things to remember.

The CTC device is built around a Pandora gate or equivalent artifact, and has been running apparently continuously for ten years. One characteristic of a theoretical CTC is that time travel before the date it was turned out would not be possible. If the first recorded transmission was in fact the first one, that means that a transhuman could potentially travel back to just before the Fall - to save a loved one, or archive material lost in the present so that it can be recovered in the future - provided that the CTC device is actually set up to allow physical travel; given power and space limitations, it might be restricted to radio broadcasts, but even that could allow important information and information to be transmitted into the past. Also, the CTC device is apparently failing. If it has been running autonomously since the Fall, then it is likely badly behind on basic maintenance and needs to be repaired, and the power source (probably an atomic battery, although geothermal, tidal, wind, solar power, or some combination might be possible) supplemented or replaced - because once the power fails, the window into the past closes. Likewise, the CTC would allow travel from the present into the past, but probably not the reverse - although combined with relativistic time travel (see entry 182), this could be less of an issue.

If nothing else, the Greetings From the Future make a great way to introduce other Farcast entries to your game.

Seed

Firewall has detected a troubling possibility: the remnants of the TITAN forces on Earth may be aware of the CTC device. If they get their mechanical tentacles on it, the TITANs could theoretically transmit back important information on the future to their past counterparts - transforming the "defeat" of the TITANs into a tactical withdrawal. To remove this possibility, the PCs are equipped with a ship and as many weapons as they can hold. Their mission: destroy the time machine!

Finis

One year and one day later and my work is done, though it feels like I could go forever. To the readers of Farcast, whether you stayed current every day or are just finding this now, this project has been for you. Ideas are free, and so Farcast is free - only the expression takes a little effort, and that work is my gift to you.

I wish there was some great and original lesson to lend meaning to this work, but I'll settle for a simple, well-known truth: there is nothing here you could not do yourself. There is no game, no setting, and no universe that cannot be made richer by your thought and effort and consideration. Read a little, think a little, dream a little. Don't be afraid to go beyond what is in the books, or write what they might never print. Eclipse Phase begins with the published material, but it lives in your heads, in your writing, and in your games.

To the fine folks at Posthuman Studios and the freelance writers and artists that created the Eclipse Phase RPG: thanks for letting me splash in your pool for a bit.

Thanks for reading, and happy trails.

- Bobby Derie