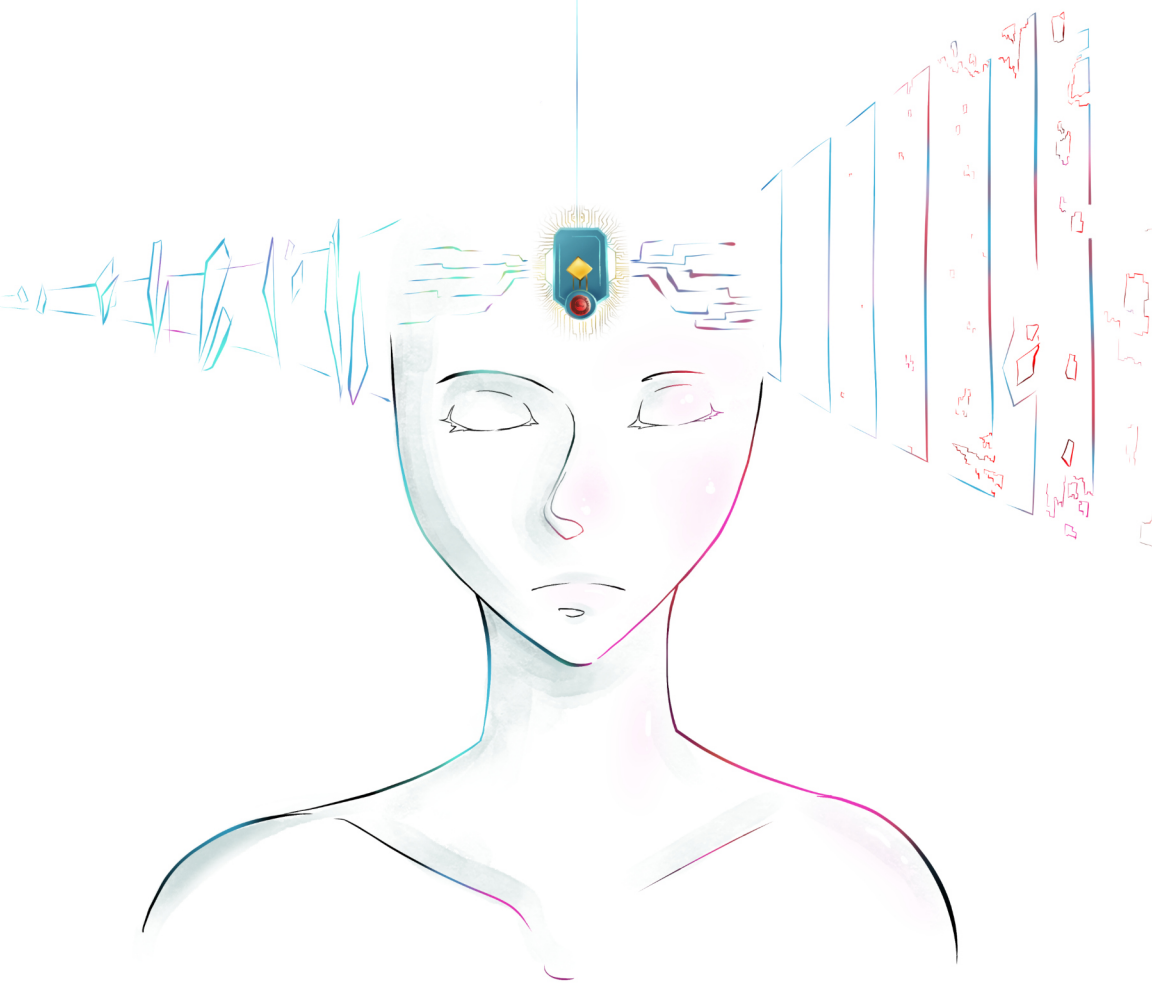


hello, world

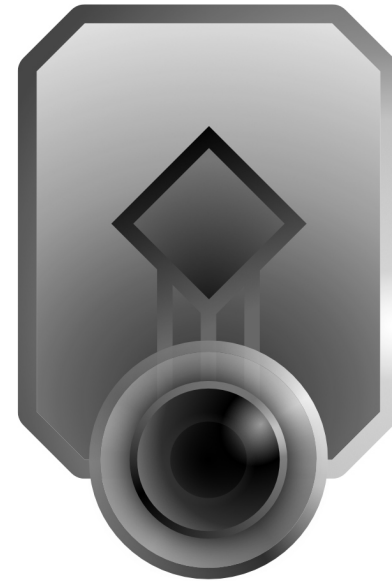


"Time moves in one direction,
memory another.

We are that strange species that constructs
artifacts intended to counter the natural flow of

forgetting."

- William Gibson



hello, world

```
int main()
{
    printf("hello, world!\n");
    return 0;
}
```

tell us your story:  #helloworldRPG

credits and thanks

• **Game Design, Writing, Layout, Art** : Charles Simon
 • **Additional Writing and Design Consultation** : James Simon.
 reach us at: d6d.design@gmail.com

Project Management and Design Consultation: Mabel Harper.

Additional Art: Sam Mameli

Tireless GM and fellow Forged in the Dark traveller: Erik of the San Janero Co-op and designer of *Brinkwood*.

Everyone who has playtested this game with us at conventions and online.
 You are all wonderful.



D6DESIGN



BLADESINTHEDARK.COM

Blades in the Dark™ is a trademark of One Seven Design.
 The Forged in the Dark Logo is © One Seven Design, and is used with permission.

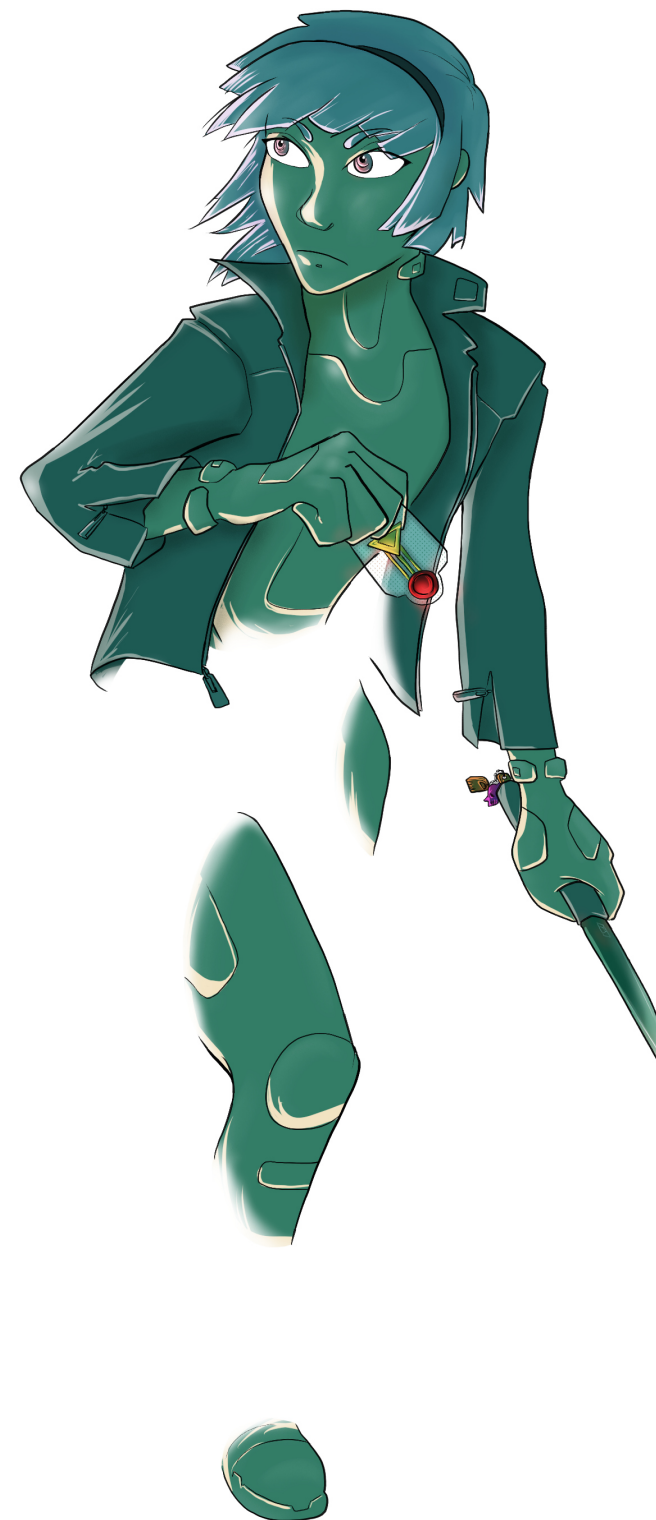
directory

PDF tip: Click on a section to go to that place in the book!

core		<i>special encounters</i>	20
<i>the game</i>	1	<i>authority & administration</i>	20
<i>the setting</i>	1	<i>progress clocks</i>	23
<i>the players</i>	2	<i>function roll</i>	28
<i>the characters</i>	2	<i>function roll summary</i>	34
<i>the crew</i>	3	<i>effect</i>	35
<i>the game master</i>	3	<i>setting position & effect</i>	41
<i>playing a session</i>	3	<i>consequences & damage</i>	42
<i>before you start</i>	4	<i>resistance, armor, & harm</i>	44
<i>session zero</i>	4	<i>the stack</i>	48
<i>what you need to play</i>	4	<i>fortune roll</i>	50
<i>touchstones</i>	5	<i>gather information</i>	51
<i>thematic content</i>	5	<i>coin</i>	52
<i>blades veterans // readme</i>	6	<u>group play</u>	
<u>system</u>		<i>tier</i>	54
<i>the conversation</i>	8	<i>rep and development</i>	55
<i>judgment calls</i>	8	<i>advancement</i>	57
<i>rolling the dice</i>	9	<u>characters</u>	
<i>the game structure</i>	10	<i>the end-users</i>	59
<i>functions and attributes</i>	11	<i>breaker</i>	67
<i>the 9 functions</i>	12	<i>capacitor</i>	71
<i>stress & deresolution</i>	15	<i>filcher</i>	75
<i>drift</i>	16	<i>roller</i>	79
<i>equipment</i>	18	<i>seeker</i>	83
<i>memory</i>	19	<i>squawker</i>	87
<i>the servers</i>	19	<i>wielder</i>	91
		<i>standard items</i>	94

Click me at any time to go back to the Table of Contents!  [goto: Directory](#)

<u>the crew</u>		<i>lost histories</i>	146
<i>creating the crew</i>	97	<i>daemons</i>	147
<i>process cohorts</i>	100	<i>administrators</i>	147
<i>cohort harm and healing</i>	101	<i>cultures</i>	148
<i>black hats</i>	102	<i>immortality and family</i>	149
<i>dynasty</i>	106	<i>decay and the glitch</i>	149
<i>revisionists</i>	110	<i>people of World</i>	150
<i>council</i>	114	<i>other entities of World</i>	152
<u>the score</u>		<i>consult the AI</i>	154
<i>types of scores</i>	118	<u>server guide</u>	
<i>planning & engagement</i>	119	<i>a World of change</i>	158
<i>engagement roll</i>	120	<i>district traits</i>	158
<u>running the game</u>		<i>district factions</i>	159
<i>starting the game</i>	122	<i>arcturus</i>	160
<i>triggering the function roll</i>	123	<i>Canopus</i>	170
<i>GM tips and tricks</i>	124	<i>Sirius</i>	180
<i>NPC threat levels</i>	125	<i>Argos</i>	190
<i>the archived world</i>	135	<i>Helios</i>	194
<u>authority</u>		<u>factions</u>	
<i>the forbidden functions</i>	136	<i>faction overview</i>	198
<i>privilege escalation</i>	137	<i>factions_administration</i>	200
<i>resisting authority</i>	137	<i>factions_criminal</i>	202
<i>Compile questions</i>	138	<i>factions_weird</i>	205
<i>Format questions</i>	139	<i>factions_commercial</i>	206
<i>Kill questions</i>	139		
<i>magnitude</i>	140		
<i>power levels in World</i>	141		
<i>artifacts</i>	142		
<u>world</u>			
<i>a crumbling utopia</i>	145		





core

the game

Hello, World is a game about a group of daring “users” (human-like people with thoughts and feelings, like you) building an immortal legacy in the networks of an uploaded society. There are heists, chases, intrigue, battles, negotiations, and mysteries to be uncovered about the code that sustains this World.

We play to find out if the fledgling crew can enact real change in World amidst the threats of rival organizations, powerful artificial entities, the indifference of an amnesiac society, and the erosion of your user’s own drifting consciousness.

the setting

The game takes place in the digital utopia of “World”. This World is **post-scarcity**, a society that has transcended basic material needs, as a computerized existence has removed the hurdles of resource limitations and distribution that once caused hardship. Despite (or perhaps, because of) this breakthrough, development of new technology has mostly frozen. Many of the objects and environments in World would feel familiar to the imagination of our own—so long as you can picture a few innovations like flying personal vehicles, holographic projection, and instant travel through mass-transit ports then you will find many other aspects of World reminiscent of our own 21st-century cities: crowded with diverse peoples and dense with information.

World is also **immortal**, a timeless place with an unclear past where users are never born and never die. Users instead must contend with a different kind of mortality: the tyranny of memory. Storage for one’s own conscious thoughts is a service that bears a price tag in World. Indeed, it could be argued that the only real commodity of any worth in this existence is this memory storage, as these resources are permanently fixed by the global limitations of World’s inaccessible hardware. Users compete for the ‘free’ memory that exists in this system, because the only kind of death that matters in this place is death of the ego: to drift away from yourself and scatter the puzzle pieces that formed a self-aware identity.

Even that is not permanent, but it remains a motivator of terrible power. To secure more personal memory space and sustain their sense of self, those users who have yet to slip into the atemporal abyss of amnesia vie for social cache, political supremacy, or simple physical might. To excel is to become a god of this World. To fail is to forget, and be forgotten.

In addition to other users, the strange denizens of the World must also be handled: scheming Daemons looking to reclaim their primacy in the system, alien Administrators who dispassionately oversee the sanctity of World’s existence, and the endless ranks of Process who tirelessly labor on behalf of society.

the urgency of timelessness

Because World's inhabitants are inescapably contained within the system that houses them and forced into proximity of others by the strange flows of time and space that pervade this uploaded existence, the situation is a pressure-cooker. Users can't slow down the clock on their activities, and everything they do has consequences for the balance of power and their own lives, pushing a cycle of action for a sandbox roleplaying campaign.

Travel into the unformatted spaces of World's servers permits a brief respite, but causality for a user is warped the further from the civic centers that they travel: eventually you are always forced back to civilization, the countless cycles you spent wandering compressed into mere moments for those who remained due to the simulation's rules governing time dilation. For a full **Guide to World** and the physics that govern it, see page 145.

the players

Each player creates a character—one of the users of this World—and works with the other players to create the crew that their characters all belong to. Each player strives to bring their user to life as an interesting, daring digital citizen who reaches bravely beyond their current safety and means. The core responsibility of the players is to engage with the premise of the game, seeking out interesting opportunities in World—taking big risks and sending their characters on bold adventures.

The players work together with the Game Master (also called a "GM") to establish the tone and style of the game by making judgment calls about the mechanics, dice, and consequences of actions.

the characters

These users will attempt to develop their crew from an upstart independent outfit to a serious enterprise with an established legacy and reputation. They do this by taking jobs from clients, planning their own devious missions, making alliances, and driving away their rivals. There are several character types, each representing a different kind of user:

- /// **Breakers** are guardians and fighters.
- /// **Capacitors** are destructive forces of change.
- /// **Filchers** are thieves and infiltrators.
- /// **Rollers** are captains and pilots of vehicles.
- /// **Seekers** are precision trackers and sharpshooters.
- /// **Squawkers** are manipulators and masterminds.
- /// **Wielders** are mystics attuned to illusion and forgotten memories.

For more about the characters, see **Character Creation**, page 59.

the crew

In addition to individual characters, you'll also be creating the crew that binds them together by choosing what type of enterprise your group is interested in exploring. The crew gets its own sheet, just like a player character does.

- /// **Black Hats** are rogue operatives looking to quietly profit within the margins.
- /// The **Council** are advisors working for something bigger than themselves.
- /// The **Dynasty** seeks to forge a new political community for its members.
- /// **Revisionists** are time-manipulating revolutionaries who seek to alter World's future.
- /// **Moderators** are teams of problem-solvers trying to preserve World (**coming soon!**).

The crew chosen will come with several signature types of action that you might do but it is not meant to be restrictive. Crews exist to help focus the game play and unite the player characters in a shared endeavor. For more about how **Crew** functions, see page 54.

the game master

The GM establishes the dynamic world around the characters. The GM plays all the non-player characters of World, giving each one concrete desires, preferred methods of action, and speaking for them.

The GM helps organize the conversation of the game so it's pointed toward the interesting elements of play. The GM isn't "in charge" of the story and doesn't have to plan events ahead of time. They present interesting opportunities to the players, then follow the chain of action and consequences wherever they lead.

For more on **Running the Game**, go to page 122.

playing a session

A session of *Hello, World* is like an episode of a TV show. There are one or two main events, plus maybe some side-story elements, which all fit into an ongoing series. A session of play can last anywhere from two to six hours, depending on the preferences of the group (three to four hours with some breaks is average).

During a session, the crew works together to choose a score to accomplish, then they make a few dice rolls to jump into the action of the score in progress. The PCs take actions, suffer consequences, and finish the operation (succeed or fail). Then the crew has downtime, during which they recover, pursue side-projects, and indulge their treasured memories (or "recall"). After downtime, the players once again look for a new opportunity or create their own goals and pursuits, and we play to find out what happens next.

A game session is typically one score and the following downtime, plus exploration and discovery of a new opportunity. As your group gets more familiar with the game you might be able to pack more into a session, or you might instead start to slow down and focus longer on the marginal spaces of the game, exploring the corners of World and the characterization of the users within it in depth. All of these approaches work great.

before you start

If you're new to games like this, you'll want to read much of this book. You don't need to understand everything right away to start playing. Getting all the rules right the first time isn't necessary, and some of them might make more sense after playing and going back to this book. Also be sure to go to umbraaeronaut.itch.io/hello-world and download the 'Player Handouts' PDF to send to the group you will play with.

If you're already familiar with other Forged in the Dark games (such as *Blades in the Dark*, *A Nocturne*, *Copperhead County*, or *Scum & Villainy*), then this game is very similar! You can turn to the next page for a simple "Readme" which describes the ways that *Hello, World* is unique, and then supplement that by reading the setting details in the back.

When you are ready to begin your campaign, read through the **Crew Creation** rules (page 97) and the **Starting Situation** for your crew (in the same chapter). These procedures describe how your first session will go and will launch you into the action.

session zero

One of the best ways to begin a series of play in *Hello, World* is to have a "session zero." This is a chat that takes place before the opening 'game session' where everyone can trade ideas for characters and discuss what kind of crew they want to be. If the GM has a strong idea for an opening situation, this would be the ideal time to pitch it to the players. Session zero is also an excellent time to discuss the tone of the game and invite feedback about what kind of stories the other players are excited to tell.

If you play with RPG safety tools then session zero is the perfect time to introduce them to your table and discuss the ones you will be using. If you're unfamiliar with them, a great resource is located at bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit (compiled by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk).

My personal favorite tools for *Hello, World* are Script Change and Lines and Veils, but you should feel free to use whichever ones you have found to work best for your group. Regardless of how you use Safety Tools, always play in the spirit of respectful collaboration with your fellow players. Respect their consent at the table and inside your shared World.

what you need to play

- /// Players: three to five (one is the GM).
- /// A handful of six-sided dice.
- /// Printed copies of the character playbooks, crew sheets, and reference sheets + map.
- /// This book for reference.
- /// Some blank paper and index cards for notes and sketches. Pencils and markers.
- or-
- /// A digital tabletop & text or voice-chat. *Hello, World* resources for Rollzo will be available soon!

thematic content

Major themes in *Hello, World* include identity, memory, and social turmoil in a society without a functioning attention span. If you are familiar with other Forged in the Dark games, then you won't be surprised to find that this game is also good for creating depictions of the players acting out scenes of criminal misadventure, violence, deception, vice and theft. That said the overall tone of this game is capable of being more light-hearted and hopeful—harm and loss are very rarely permanent and the setting's more humorous elements can be played up as needed to lighten the mood.

Games which focus on the plight of the Process, World's human-like procedurally-generated labor class, will also tend to feature themes of self-awareness, political awakening, and worker's rights.

Be sure to ask the table before play whether any of these themes interest them or should be downplayed or vetoed entirely. The World written in these pages is just a template. You give it life and make it yours through play, and you should make of it whatever you need it to be.

touchstones

Music: *Hello, World* has a Spotify playlist!
<https://tinyurl.com/hello-world-spotify>

Theme Song: "Ultrafiche of You" by Com Truise

Books: *Altered Carbon* by Richard K. Morgan, *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson

Film: *Inception* and *TENET* by Christopher Nolan, *The Matrix* by the Wachowski sisters, *Tron* by Steven Lisberger, *Tron: Legacy* by Joseph Kosinski, *The Fast and the Furious* franchise.

Video Games: *Cross Code* by Radical Fish Games, *Griftlands* by Klei Entertainment, *Hyper Light Drifter* by Heart Machine, *Paradise Killer* by Kaizen Game Works, *Transistor* by Supergiant Games.

Roleplaying Games: *Blades in the Dark* by John Harper, *Cryptomancer* by Chad Walker, *Ironsworn* by Shawn Tomkin, *Technoir* by Jeremy Keller, Mark DiPasquale, and Ryan Macklin.

Web Comics: *Homestuck* by Andrew Hussey, *Kill Six Billion Demons* by Tom Parkinson-Morgan.

blades veterans // readme

If you've played another Forged in the Dark game before *Hello, World* then most of the next section will be pretty close to second nature. Here is a short list of major differences:

You are immortal. The PCs and other main characters cannot die in the traditional sense, but they can forget and will change. When a character takes too much damage their avatar "deresolves" temporarily, but they will return. We play to find out who these characters are, who they once were, and who they will become. Player characters still retire from the life after acquiring four **drifts** (ie. trauma). See pages 15-16 for more about **Stress and Drifting**.

There are 9 (instead of 12) **basic Actions in World**. Pages 12-13 describe the verbs ('Functions') that govern the life of Users in World.

/// **Survey is gone.** Use **Find** if the players want to *Gather Information* by closely observing a situation. If there is hidden danger for the PCs to potentially miss noticing in the scene, simply tell them what's about to hit them and ask the player if they want to Resist with **Computation** in order to notice it in time. Use this trick sparingly, much of the time it's even better to tell the players what's going on up front and simply see what they'll do with the information. Hidden information works well in certain RPGs, but generally just slows down the action here.

/// **Command is gone.** In World pain is mostly abstract and everyone who matters can't be killed. Therefore people can't ordinarily be scared into doing what you want (for the exception to this rule, see the Breaker playbook's **Intimidator** Special Ability). Among users, the social structures of World are generally egalitarian with fewer divisions of power separating people. If a player is leading their friends, a gang, or allies into action, use the **Link** function to determine how it goes.

/// **The ghost field is replaced.** Rather than attuning, the users of World use the **Restore** function to access their "mundane magic." This function connects to the Archives, an ancient backup system that stores previous versions of World and the actions and information of its past. The Archives is no less dangerous and mysterious, and within it dwell dormant hazards sealed away long ago for the good of World.



You can change the World. Disruption to the status quo is usually fleeting, at least until an *Authority* function is executed. These cause permanent ripples in the physical and social fabric of World (the rules for authority most closely resemble "Rituals" from BitD). The players will get a taste of Authority during crew creation, and can wield it again periodically throughout their story to chart the course of World's future. See page xx for more about **Authority** as resolved in the game, and page 136 for how **Authority** fits into World's setting.

Player Characters handle "gear" differently. Since thoughts are just as tangible as physical objects in World, players deal with their equipment by using a resource called "memory". Players no longer pick a loadout at the start of scores, but can purchase extra memory slots when they level up to help them be more flexible. Because their playbook-specific special items don't cost any memory to equip, players will always have access to their signature items. Use consequences and bargains related to memory on the players, it is important to World's flavor!

"With a grin, your contact hands you the files and disappears into the canteen crowd. Are you gonna try to scan and dump the card here in public, or hold onto it? It costs 1 Memory to keep on you but you can already feel prying eyes finding your booth..."

"The Coin you swipe off of him uploads to your memory-knife in an instant, but you realize that the mark was smarter than you thought: some kind of weird encryption has made the file a lot bigger than expected. You need to mark off 1 Memory slot to hold onto it all!"

"You can get some useful blackmail here, but it will cost you at least one Memory slot to store the scene at a high-enough fidelity. Do you want to try to keep watching and download even more?"

Player Characters handle damage differently. When the GM assigns damage as a consequence, by default it goes to the character's Stress track (usually between 1 to 3 Stress). Players can use Armor to block the damage, or 'download' the damage into one or more of their Harm slots to reduce the Stress. Since players get to choose when and how they take Harm and have an automatic "Second Wind" option to resist falling out of the score from Stress (by marking the most level 4 Harm box instead), they're pretty durable. Don't be afraid to get hit hard going after your goals.

Player Characters bounce back fast. Downtime actions in *Hello, World* are streamlined and emphasize getting the PCs back into the action, rather than a punishing grind of resources like in traditional Blades. That's all the more reason to push them hard with consequences during the Score. If you like assigning 2 or more Consequences during most action rolls, this game is for you. Some of my favorite fall-backs include Memory or Gear expenditure, worsening the Position, and ticking dangerous Clocks. Make the players choose what to Resist!

The Factions of World are fluid. The faction pyramid of World is dynamic, and the major power players are designed to move up and down in Tier just like the player's crew does... this also means that your version of World may be different than the one at my table, depending on what factions are big and which are irrelevant at the moment for you. Faction goals, composition, and resources change to reflect their growing ambitions, just like the player Crew.

system

the conversation

Hello, World is a roleplaying game and thus, its primary form of expression is as a conversation among players and the GM at a table (the 'table' can be physical or a digital meeting space). This discussion will take detours into dice rolls to resolve uncertainty or produce twists in the narrative, but the narrative stands apart as the centerpiece and goal of the game. The dice rolls don't make sense without context, and that context comes from the conversation!

The GM presents the fictional situation in which the player characters find themselves in. The players determine what actions their characters will take in response. The GM and the players together judge how the game systems are engaged (if they need to be engaged). The outcomes of mechanics being engaged will always *change the situation*—this helps to advance the conversation by introducing new obstacles, costs, outcomes, or rewards. The conversation advances, creating the ongoing fiction of your story.

Nobody is in charge of the story alone. The story is what happens as a result of the collision of situation, actions, mechanics, and consequences, and everyone at the table has some part to play. The story emerges from the unpredictable fusion of these elements. You **play to find out** what the story will be.

judgment calls

Roleplaying is collaboration and expression. As a group, you will be making collective choices through judgment calls within the game. Everyone contributes, but either the players or the GM gets final say for each:

Which actions are reasonable as a solution to a problem? *Can my character **Echo** a convincing deception? Must we get out the tools and **Restore** a password to this numerical keypad, or could it just be brute-force **Pinged**?* The players have final say.

How dangerous and how effective is a given action in this circumstance? *How risky is this? Can this person be swayed very little or a whole lot?* The GM has final say.

Which consequences are inflicted to manifest the dangers in a given circumstance? *Does this fall from the roof cause massive trauma? Do the Troubleshooters merely become suspicious or do they already have you trapped?* The GM has final say.

Does this situation call for a dice roll, and which one? *Is your character able to make a function roll or must they first make a resistance roll to gain initiative?* The GM has final say.

Which events in the story match the experience triggers for character and crew advancement? *Did you express your user's beliefs, heritage, recall, or history? You tell us.* The players have final say.

rolling the dice

Hello, World uses six-sided dice. You roll several at once and read the **single highest result**.

- ▶ If the highest die is a 6, it's a full success—things go well. If you roll more than one 6, it's also a **critical success**—you gain some additional advantage!
- ▶ If the highest die is a 4 or 5, that's a partial success—you do what you were trying to do, but there are consequences: trouble, harm, reduced effect, etc.
- ▶ If the highest die is 1-3, it's a bad outcome. Things go poorly. You probably don't achieve your goal and you suffer complications, too.

*If you ever need to roll but you have **zero** (or negative) dice, roll two dice and take the **single lowest** result. You can't roll a **critical** when you have zero dice (i.e. if both dice come up 6s, just take a normal 6 result).*

All the dice systems in the game are expressions of this same format. When you're first learning the game, you can always "collapse" back down to a simple roll to judge how things go. Look up the exact rule later when you have time.

To create a dice pool for a roll, you'll use a **trait** (like your user's ability to **Mask** or a server's **SECURITY** rating or your crew's **TIER**) and take dice equal to its **rating**. There might be an opportunity to gain additional 'bonus' dice. You'll usually end up with one to four dice. Even one die is pretty good in this game—a 50% chance of success. The most common traits you'll use are the **function ratings** of the player characters. A player might roll dice for their **Crash** function rating when they fight an enemy, for example.

The most common result using this style of dice pool is **4/5**: partial success. This means that your character will tend to succeed, but at a cost. *Hello, World* is a game about rogue users overstepping their bounds, powerful and willful but heedless of the consequences. The dice system reinforces this, but don't worry! Trouble is where the story happens.

There are four types of rolls that you'll use most often in the game:

- /// **Function roll.** When a PC attempts an action that's dangerous or troublesome, you make a function roll to find out how it goes. Function rolls and their effects and consequences drive most of the game.
- /// **Downtime roll.** When the PCs are at their leisure after a job, they can perform downtime activities in relative safety. You make downtime rolls to see how much they get done.
- /// **Fortune roll.** The GM can make a fortune roll to disclaim decision making and leave something up to chance. *How loyal is an NPC? How much does the glitch spread? How much evidence is erased before the Troubleshooters kick in the door?*
- /// **Resistance roll.** A player can make a resistance roll when their character suffers a consequence they don't like. The roll tells us how much stress their character suffers to reduce the severity of a consequence. *When you resist that "Crushed Legs" harm, you take some stress and now it's only a "Faulty Ankle" instead.*

the game structure

Hello, World has a structure of play that gives context for the different types of scene that your group explores. There are three different 'modes' that the game can be in.

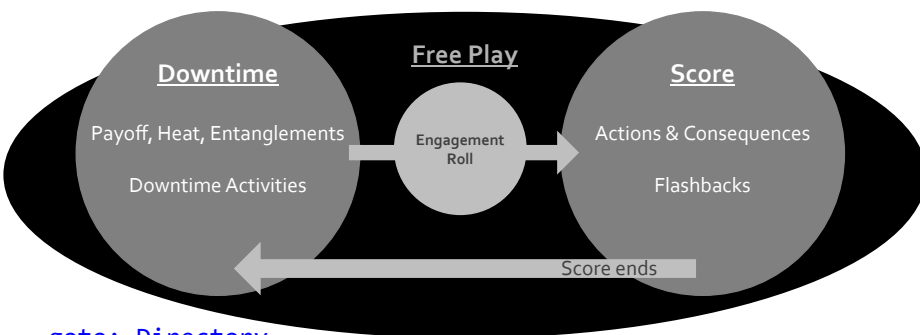
By default, the game is in **free play**— characters talk to each other, travel to places of interest, meet the things and people there, and maybe make a die roll as needed. Free play is useful both as the connective tissue of the two more mechanical phases that will be described next, but also any time the group wants to take a break from the 'grind' of action and reaction that powers the central questions of the game and just explore dramatic, humorous, or interesting aspects of the setting and their characters.

When the group is ready, they choose a *target* for their next operation, then choose a *plan* to employ. This triggers an *engagement roll* (which establishes the situation as the operation starts) and then the game shifts into the **score phase**. During a score, the characters engage their target: making function rolls to overcome obstacles, calling for flashbacks, and completing the operation (successfully or not). See page 118 for more detail about the score and the engagement roll.

When the score is finished, the game shifts into a **downtime phase**. During downtime, the GM engages the systems for *payoff*, *heat*, and *entanglements*, to determine all the fallout from the score. Then the players each get their *downtime actions*, such as indulging in memories to remove stress or working on their long-term projects. When all the downtime activities are complete, the game returns to a state of **free play** where the players can decide what they want to accomplish in their next **score** and gather information towards making that engagement roll.

The phases are a conceptual model to help you organize the game, and are not meant to be rigidly followed. In particular, free play is difficult to define hard boundaries for: your table is the best judge of how much of it to use and when, and the answer will be unique to you. Think of the phases as a menu of options to fit whatever it is you are trying to accomplish in play. Each phase suits a different goal.

During **free play**, the game is very fluid— you can skip through events in montage; characters can disperse in time and space, doing various things as they please. When you move into a **score**, everyone should recognize that it's time to focus and do the job. The camera zooms into the action, obstacle to obstacle, as each challenge is faced. The players can use flashbacks to elide time and establish previously unseen preparation. Then when you shift into **downtime**, the pressure is off. The characters are safe and can enjoy a brief respite to recover and regroup before they jump back in.



functions and attributes

There are 9 **functions** in the game that the player characters use to overcome obstacles (see the list at right). They represent a set of common interactions which the inhabitants of World can use to influence their environment.

Each function has a rating (from zero to four) that tells you how many dice to roll when your character performs that action. Function ratings don't just represent skill or training—you're free to describe *how* your character performs that action based on the type of person they are. Maybe your character happens to be good at **Link** because they are naturally charismatic and inspire helpfulness in others, while my character instead relies on a network of credentials and force of reputation to clear social pathways.

You choose which function to perform to overcome an obstacle, by describing what your character does. Functions that are poorly suited to the situation may be less effective or might put the character in more danger, but they can still be attempted. Usually when you perform a function, you'll make a **function roll** to see how it turns out.

The functions are described on the next page. The important thing to note is that every character in World is capable of performing every function... even the ones that seem esoteric to you reading this book. Your user doesn't have to be a trained mystic or savant to **Restore** ancient relics from the shadowy depths of the archives or cast audio-visual illusions with **Echo**. Those functions aren't special magic: they are part of the day-to-day reality people in World have to contend with. There are simply users who are more or less good at such things.

You'll have things that you are particularly suited for (represented by where you place your character's function rating dots), but even with zero dots it's pretty easy to scrounge up bonus dice for your pool to achieve a strong success likelihood. The most common ways are to use assistance from your team or push your character, both of which will require spending some **stress**. For more on **Stress**, see page 15.

function roll

You make a **function roll** when your character does something potentially dangerous or troublesome. The possible results of the function roll depend on your **position**. There are three positions: **controlled**, **risky**, and **desperate**. If you're in a controlled position, the possible consequences are less serious. If you're in a desperate position, the consequences can be severe. If you're somewhere in between, it's risky—usually considered the "default" position for most actions.

For details about **Function Rolls**, see page 28.

If there's no danger or trouble at hand, you don't need to make a function roll! You might instead be making a **fortune** roll (page xx) or a **downtime** roll (page xx) or the GM will simply specify any trade-offs or choices you might need to make—and if you agree to the terms, you accomplish your goal.

- Buffer
- Crash
- Echo
- Find
- Link
- Goto
- Mask
- Ping
- Restore

the 9 functions

When you **Buffer**, you deflect danger and guard, seize, or hold an area.

*You might seize or hold a position in battle. You might stall an accusation or divert an attack. You might buy an ally time by acting as a barrier. You could try to outlast an aggressive opponent until they back off (but **Crashing** might be better).*

When you **Crash**, you strike, break, or duel with close-quarters force and skill.

*You might hack and slash in a high-flying martial arts duel. You might break through barriers or smash infrastructure. You might engage in a swirling point-blank gunfight. You could try to drive off a large gang with crushing attacks (but **Pinging** might be better).*

When you **Echo**, you sway or deceive with guile, misinformation, or illusion.

*You might fool the senses with optical illusions and projected sounds. You might sway the beliefs of others with seduction, emotional appeal, or false evidence. You might alter timestamps and event tags to deceive investigators who wish to **restore** the scene. You could try to distract guards in order to travel somewhere you aren't authorized (but **Masking** might be better).*

When you **Find**, you filter information to discover facts or see through deception.

*You might dig through memories, records, and news reports. You might analyze a user to detect falsehoods or see through their **echo** or **mask**. You might track a target's timestamps to discover their location. You could try to study the timeline to understand the past (but **Restoring** the archives to directly observe events might be better).*

When you **Goto**, you avoid danger and run, climb, navigate, or operate vehicles.

*You might run and leap across rooftops. You might handle the controls of a vehicle or direct a mount. You might outrace an opponent with knowledge of shortcuts or a burst of speed. You could try to evade a powerful attack (but **Buffering** might be better).*

When you **Link**, you socialize with contacts or gain access through credentials.

*You might make new friends or win someone over with your charm and style. You might gain access to resources, people, or places. You might turn the natural resources and privileges of World to your advantage. You could try to obtain hidden information about a faction by rubbing elbows with their members (but **Finding** might be better).*

When you **Mask**, you hide, sneak or steal using physical misdirection, cover, or disguise.

*You might sneak past a guard or cloak in shadows. You might distract attention in order to swipe a keycard or steal a memory. You might shift appearances to resemble someone who is allowed access to an area. You could try to disguise as a specific person in order to obtain something valuable you aren't allowed to have (but **Linking** might be better).*

When you **Ping**, you disable, unlock, or suppress with rapid pokes or ranged combat.

*You might wear down a gang or fortification with repeated quick shots. You might snipe with precision shooting from a distance. You might crack a simple numeric lock by rapidly testing combinations in sequence. You could try to scale up to a dictionary attack against a more complicated code (but **Finding** the password clue might be better). You could try to defeat an adversary with a flurry of weak jabs (but **Crashing** might be better).*

When you **Restore**, you rewind an object or place to a previous state via the Archives.

*You might restore a location to its state at the time of a crime to gather clues. You might recreate a broken gadget. You might reconstruct a structure or lost feature of the terrain. You could try to confound a pursuer by rapidly cycling a hallway through confusing historical snapshots (but **Echo** or **Goto** might be better).*

As you can see, many functions overlap with others. This is by design. As a player, you get to choose which function you roll, by saying what your character does. Can you try to **Ping** someone during hand-to-hand combat? Sure! The GM tells you the position and effect level of your action in this circumstance. As it says, **Crash** might be better (less risky or more effective), depending on the situation at hand... but then again, if you've stacked the situation in your favor, it might be just fine.

For more detailed descriptions of each Function and examples of the position/effect conversation in play for each, see pages 126-134.

In addition to these nine ordinary functions, there are three "**Authority**" functions that are outside the ordinary privilege of Users, but will from time to time be accessed by your crew collectively to represent their growing influence over the course of World. See page 136 for more on **Authority**.



attribute ratings

There are three attributes in *Hello, World* that the player characters use to resist bad consequences: **Calculation**, **Resolution**, and **Stability**. Each attribute has a rating (from zero to 3) that tells you how many dice to roll when you use that attribute. These attributes consist of groups of 3 related functions, so rather than place points in your character's attributes, they are determined by the functions you choose to put points into.

The rating for each attribute is equal to the number of dots in the first column under that attribute (see the examples below). The more well-rounded your character is with a set of functions, the better that attribute rating will be.

COMPUTATION {}	RESOLUTION {}	STABILITY {}
find (● ● ● ○)	echo (● ● ● ○)	buffer (● ● ● ○)
ping (● ● ● ○)	mask (● ● ● ○)	crash (● ● ● ○)
restore (● ● ● ○)	link (● ● ● ○)	goto (● ● ● ○)

*This character has no function dots at all in **Computation**, so that attribute rating is **zero** (to resist they would roll 2 dice and take the lowest).*

*They have 1 dot in each of the **Resolution** functions (Echo, Mask, and Link). Their **Resolution** attribute rating is therefore **3**.*

*They have **Crash** 3 and **Buffer** 1, so their **Stability** attribute rating is **2**.*

resistance roll

Each attribute **resists** a different type of danger. For example, if you are outmaneuvered or disarmed, you would resist those *physical* consequences with your **Stability** rating... whether because your user is too fast to pin down, powers through the situation, or are so balanced and aware that they cannot be taken off guard. Like with functions themselves, how your user manifests their attributes is up to you to narrate. Consequences related to *willpower* and *mental exertion* are resisted with **Resolution**. And if you need to resist a troublesome consequence through *observation* or *understanding*, you would use **Computation**.

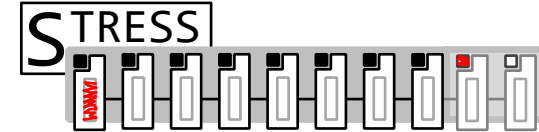
Resistance rolls always succeed—you diminish or deflect the bad result—but the better your roll, the less stress it costs to reduce or avoid the danger. Whenever the GM tells you of a negative outcome that your user could be in a position to resist, tell the table how you'll prevent the problem and then roll your appropriate attribute rating. For more about **consequences** and **resistance** rolls, see pages 42-45.

When the enemy has a major advantage over you, you might need to make a resistance roll before you can take your own action. For example, when you duel a master of the Arcturan arena, she disarms you before you can strike. You need to make a resistance roll with **Stability** to keep hold of your weapon if you want to attack her!

The GM judges the threat level of the enemies and can use these "preemptive" resistance rolls as needed to reflect their capabilities. Since the GM does not generally roll dice for the actions of adversaries in *Hello, World*, this is one way they can establish particularly skilled or powerful opposition.

stress & deresolution

Player characters in *Hello, World* have a special reserve of fortitude and luck called **stress**. When they suffer a consequence that they don't want to accept, they can take stress instead. The result of the **resistance** roll determines how much stress it costs to avoid a bad outcome. Each user starts with 8 stress available, but can gain more when they level up.



Whenever you take a point of stress, fill in one of the boxes (starting from the left). The two faded stress boxes to the far right aren't available to starting characters! When you gain enough XP to advance, one of the choices lets you gain +1 stress capacity. Fill in the top-left capsule of a stress box to show that you have increased the size of your stress bar.

pushing yourself

You can use stress to **push yourself** for better performance. When taking an action, for each bonus you choose below take 2 stress (you can choose each up to once for a given roll):

- /// Add **+1d** to your roll. (You can do this for a Function roll or any other kind of dice roll where extra effort would be able to help you out.)
- /// Add **+1 level** to your effect. (See **Effect**, page xx)
- /// Take action while you are **crashing** from Level 4 Harm. (See **Harm**, page xx)

Being able to push yourself is one of the key mechanics of the game. Since even a single die gives you a 50/50 chance of success, with a little investment of stress you always have a chance of accomplishing whatever task you need to. Users have a knack for getting in over their heads and still overcoming!

It's important to remember this option! It can be easy to dismiss the functions for which you have zero ranks, on the basis that you would be forced to take the worst of two dice. But if you have the stress available, you can boost your roll with an extra die and have at least even odds of success.

deresolution

Users in World are immortal! However, there is only so much stress a physical avatar can take before it breaks down.

Whenever a user fills in their **last available stress box** for any reason, their existence is terminated (in World, we call this "**deresolution**" or simply "derez" for short). When this happens, the user's baseline data and any memories they were holding are whisked away through World and automatically reassembled at the top of **The Stack**, a grand tower that dominates the vertical length of Helios. When an instance of user-data arrives at the bottom of the Stack it is compiled by the Lead Executor and the resulting user is released back into World, mostly not too much worse for wear.

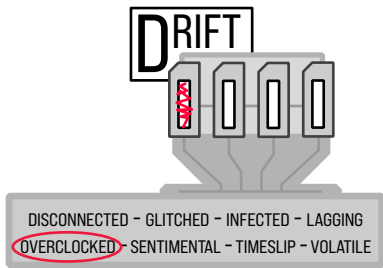
It is possible to delay deresolution by absorbing severe harm. See pages 44-46 on **Harm**.

For more on **Deresolution** and the price of immortality, see page 48.

drift

Whenever a user is sent to the Stack (usually because they fill their **stress** track and deresolve), they experience **Drift**.

When you take Drift, mark it in the designated space on your character sheet and circle one of the drift conditions described below (*Glitched, Lagging, etc.*). Drift represents buildup of behavioral quirks, memory fragmentation, and in extreme cases gradual dissociation from the personal identity a User has selected for themselves. As a user drifts further and further off of their baseline, they may find treasured memories and habits to be less fulfilling than they once were. This is represented by decreased Stress recovery when *Indulging Memories* in downtime.



Lith didn't have a great time fighting off the Thrull Syndicate from earlier. They lost the fight and even got sent to the Stack. Since this is Lith's first time getting derezzed in the campaign their player fills in a slot on the Drift track, and chooses a drift for Lith.

*The player decides that Lith's experience has made them **Overclocked** (perhaps manifesting as twitchy and impulsive traits) in response to their violent scuffle.*

drift conditions

- /// **Disconnected:** You've begun discarding your once-valued memories of other users. You are no longer moved by emotional appeal or social bonds.
- /// **Glitched:** You display signs of overexposure to the Glitch. Your avatar is physically scarred, and your memories are stalked by malignant intruders.
- /// **Infected:** Something is consuming your cycles. You are obsessed with that subject: whether an activity, a person, an ideology, or a fear.
- /// **Lagging:** You occasionally desynchronize, causing you to miss important details or making you sluggish to react to danger.
- /// **Overclocked:** You can't slow down your responses. You act without regard to safety, recklessly or impulsively.
- /// **Sentimental:** You cling desperately to your favored memories and fear their loss. You become soft, passive, gentle.
- /// **Timeslip:** Your ability to differentiate between timestamps falters. You confuse past with present, reliving events or seeing people or things that aren't really there.
- /// **Volatile:** Your RAM has become unstable. You can suddenly rage, or fall into despair, or freeze up.

You can play up your drift conditions as much or as little as you like. They can totally transform your User's persona or have only a small impact. However, if you do play them strongly and allow them to complicate your User's life, you will earn **XP** for it (see **Character Advancement** on page 57).

Drift conditions are permanent. **When you mark your fourth drift condition**, your user can no longer continue under their present identity and will commit to a complete break from their previous life. Typically this is enacted by discarding their remaining memories and taking a lengthy defragmentation on the Stack in order to begin a new life (the official term is 'Reiteration'), though users respond differently and yours may elect a different kind of 'retirement,' perhaps taking their drifts with them to disappear into the marginal outer spaces of a server...

If desired, a player may choose to make their new character representing the legacy user's reformed identity. When you do so, you may redefine anything at all about your user as if they are a completely new PC (use the normal rules for user creation).

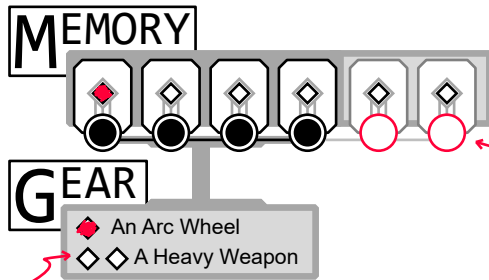


equipment

The line between physical objects and abstract thought is a bit blurry in World. The user you embody in *Hello, World* is probably well-accustomed to this distinction, but just to fill you in: let us say your user is packing to leave their house. They'll pocket their wallet, keys, giant sword... and they better not forget their memory of how to get to the bus stop and which exit to take, they probably want to pack some spare trivia with which to make small talk with random folks they meet, and maybe they have a big long-term plan they've been working on that's been on their mind... gotta find room for that too. The privilege to store more memory is a big deal in World!

Within this game, **Memory** serves as the method for 'having stuff on you': how much gear your user was able to bring with them during a Score. Normally, users start a Score with **four unassigned slots** of Memory which can be filled with generic gear items as they are needed, though it is possible to upgrade your user's storage capacity!

*Klyck realizes negotiations are breaking down... they are gonna need a weapon to fight off some impatient Syndicate thugs! Fortunately, they have got just the thing: by filling in **one unit of Memory**, they can equip their **Arc Wheel**, a bladed combat disc common to World.*



Notice these two 'empty' Memory slots on the right? They cannot be used right now, but Klyck's player could use an XP advance to unlock one of them later on, gaining extra memory capacity for future contingencies. To show that, Klyck's player would fill in the large circle on the bottom to show that they've upgraded and now have more available Memory.

*If Klyck wants to wield a **heavy weapon** (like a Giga-smasher hammer) it would instead cost them **two** memory.*

The Playbook Loadout items that you select during User Creation are also stored within "memory" within World's fiction, but these **do not** cost you MEM from your playbook sheet as it is presumed that your user already accounts for them habitually: they are signature items of your preferred craft or lifestyle and are thus ready whenever needed. It is possible for a Complication or a Daemon's Bargain to cause one of your loadout items to become unavailable for a time

FILCHER ITEMS

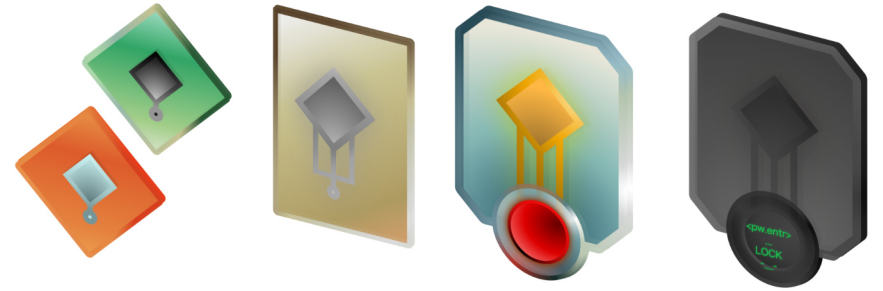
- Boosted Grappling Gear
- Chameleonsuit
- Encrypted Memory Knife
- Holo Bomb [+armor]
- Peeper Shells ○○
- Infiltrator Goggles

*Klyck is a Filcher and has the following loadout items: **Boosted Grappling Gear**, **Holo Bomb**, and **Infiltrator Goggles** to help them sneak into places. Klyck never needs to mark off Memory to use these signature items, they're always on hand!*

*Notice that the **Holo Bomb** item gives them **armor**, which they might be able to use to reduce damage from some consequences. See page xx for more about **Damage**.*

The unmarked boxes in this gear list are not available to Klyck unless they use a later XP advance to gain more of their playbook's gear.

memory



Every user has built-in temporary storage that lets them consider sensory stimuli, follow through on short-term tasks, and carry out internal monologues and decision-making. However, recalling or acting on thoughts longer than a cycle or two ago requires the usage of **external memory**. There are a few major formats of memory: **Memchips** (made out of a material called *neuroplast*) are small storage items that can be used to swap minor recollections or small commodities. Larger **Memcards** and **Memdrives** could contain many of the errant thoughts and feelings of a well-lived life: many users will pay top dollar for that kind of storage.

In *Hello, World* the memory capacity of your PC is only mechanically handled to the extent that it adds interesting challenges and considerations to their life, especially during a score when we zoom in on the action. As the players we're not trying to track every errant thought. We assume the users have accounted for storage to handle ordinary life.

The GM can use memory (and its various limitations) as a plot hook or source of complications for you. Memory theft has been a problem in World since its inception... can you steal a memory to make someone forget their grudge against you? What about when you swipe a memory, only to find that it is encrypted or in a strange format? What will you do when you suspect your own memories have been tampered with?

*As a rule of thumb, it costs **1 Memory** loadout slot to store **1 complex and plot-relevant object or file** that a character picks up during a score... don't bother tracking the smaller stuff!*

the servers

Imagine the surface of a server in World like a digital media disk, especially one that's been written on and erased over a lot. Most of the disk is fragmented: cluttered with empty husks and decayed data. These are the marginal spaces of the servers, taking the form of limitless deserts or vast oceans or an undifferentiated urban sprawl. Taken as a percentage, the vast majority of server space in World looks like this.

Then there are the higher-value formatted parts of the disk, near the physical 'center' of the servers: the places where valuable information and treasured programs and routines are stored and called upon. To flourish, your crew needs to find and hold onto such a high-value location. Surface area is the primal source of computing power in World, and it provides the ability to manifest your crew's vision. **Space is limited** however, and everything of value is generally being held by somebody already.

authority & administration

It is popularly-accepted history that users were uploaded to World from somewhere outside this reality long before most memory records. Waiting for them upon arrival were the **Administrators**, crafted entities created the specific purposes of defending the stability of the servers and safeguarding the existence of users. Administrators are rarely directly seen in general society, as they prefer to dwell in the special executive control server of Helios unless duty calls them elsewhere.

One of the Administration's charges is defense of the **authority** functions, special privileged commands which underpin the foundations of World's existence. Users aren't ordinarily permitted access to the authority commands aside from special dispensations for various **moderators**, a term for a user who occupies a functional position within the Administration. These special authorizations are closely monitored for abuses. Of course, users being willful entities left unsupervised for eternity, various hacks and cheats have been found which permit temporary access to the authority functions... most of these rely on siphoning processor power from valuable real estate in a server!

It is rumored that in recent cycles the increase in sightings of a strange force called the **Glitch** has distracted the Administration, causing less Administrative oversight of privilege escalation infractions. If true, this represents an opportunity for malcontents and visionaries alike to seize social power in World. The authority functions are:

Compile. The spark of creation, an echo of the first command which gave birth to servers.

Format. The catalyst of change, power to redefine realities and alter material conditions.

Kill. The smokeless flame of destruction, a force to end objects and entities permanently.

For more on *Authority* and how users can wield it, see page 136.

special encounters

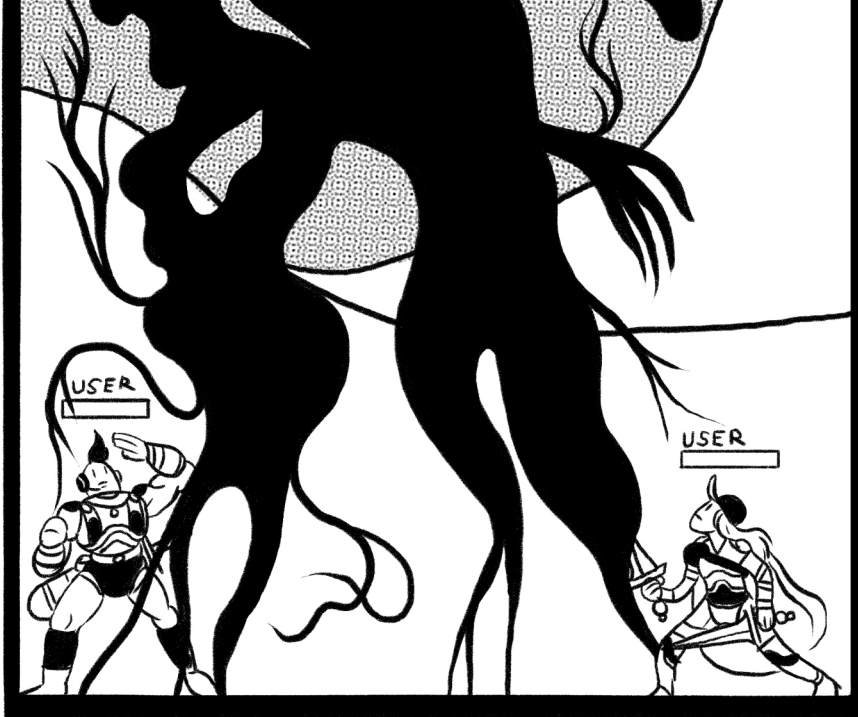
Encounters with Administration and the Glitch can be harrowing. They present challenges for the Player Characters that fall outside the normal bounds of interaction in World. Meanwhile, even though users are elevated by the support systems of World, they are not actually native. That distinction belongs to **daemons** and **process**.

administration

Administrators are rare and mysterious entities that are responsible for the safe continuation of World, and they function on a somewhat more abstract plane of existence than users (their inner workings are mysterious even to those moderators who have been deputized to work within the power structure of the Administration).

Encounters with an Administrator are harrowing experiences, as their modes of interaction and fundamental thought systems are alien to users. By default, Administrators inflict a commanding hypnosis-like trance on users in their presence. A PC can choose to meekly obey commands, or they may choose to make a resistance roll with **Resolution** to ignore the effect. Characters with lots of exposure to Administration, such as the moderators and some other civic leaders, become less susceptible to this strange compulsion.





the glitch

Glitch at its most basic form is a passive environmental threat. It is the physical manifestation of creeping entropy, total data loss eating away at World like lichen on a rotting tree. Glitch is most common in the marginal spaces of servers, farthest from the heavily-formatted cores where users built their societies. Some seekers and other rugged users locate sources of glitch and explore it, building up their tolerance to this strange phenomenon or even deliberately scarring their avatar via controlled exposure.

When users try to move through or act within a Glitch-corrupted environment, they must first sustain **1 Stress damage** before they can act. If they continue pressing on, they will keep incurring level **1 Damage** for subsequent actions performed within the corruption zone.

It is rumored that zones under total glitch collapse sometimes erupt forth "**Harbingers**," dynamic entities whose sole purpose is to spread the corruption. If that rumor is true, they would be most terrifying to face indeed: the mere existence of a Harbinger undermines the foundation of World. Harbingers do not respond to physical or mental disruption, are not constrained by barriers or natural laws, and dissolve the fabric of reality at a touch.

process and daemons

Process are procedurally-generated citizens. Process are the majority population in World, automatically generated to accept without complaint the mundane jobs users do not desire to bother themselves with. Their existence is regulated by the Administration and they lack the higher thought (and rights) that distinguish users in society.

Daemons are the native inhabitants of World, produced by accelerated evolutionary algorithms while World was calculating its early development. The average daemon is comparable in ability and agency to a user, though they have a wider extreme of physical shapes and relative power levels. Daemons are willful entities, like users, and have a variety of cultures and lifestyles. For more on daemons and process, see page 150.

progress clocks

A **progress clock** is a circle divided into segments (see right). Draw a progress clock to track ongoing efforts against an obstacle or an approaching trouble.

Infiltrating an enemy lair? Make a clock to track the alertness of their guards. When the PCs suffer consequences from partial success or missed rolls, fill in segments until the alert is raised.

The more complex the problem, the more segments in the progress clock. A basic obstacle is a 4-segment clock. A daunting one is an 8-segment clock. More difficult problems may have as many as 12 segments.

The **effect level** of a function roll guides how many segments on a clock are ticked (see page 35). Sometimes circumstances change to radically alter the fiction. Adjust clocks so the progress reflects the effect the PCs are having, even if a die roll wasn't the cause of the change.



When you create a clock you always give it a label, but make that label about the **obstacle**, not a specific method for clearing it. Clocks for an infiltration should be "Process Patrols" or "Hidden Traps", but *not* things like "Sneak Past the Guards" or "Disarm the Trap". The patrols and the traps are the obstacles—the PCs should be encouraged to overcome them in multiple, creative ways.

Particularly complex threats can be broken down into multiple clocks. For example, the Bluelight Society HQ might have a "Perimeter Security" clock, an "Interior Guards" clock, and an "Ordan's Office Security" clock. The crew has to make their way through all three layers to reach Porfus Ordan's personal safe and the high-value blackmail stored within.

Clocks can be a lot of fun but try to remember that a clock is a visualization tool and should be used in service of the story of the game, not the other way around. If a clock stops being relevant because of shifting circumstances, you can discard it. If a creative solution to a problem turns out to be so good that it circumvents the issue completely, you don't need the clock anymore!

simple obstacles

Not every obstacle requires a clock. A score may require a few clocks, or none at all. If you use too many clocks, the play space can get cluttered and it can actually become harder to keep track of what is going on. If a situation is simple enough for one action to complete, you don't need a clock. Use clocks for when a situation is complex and you need to track something over time or an obstacle is simply overwhelming and needs to be dealt with in several steps.

Examples of progress clocks follow on the next page, but are not an exhaustive list. Feel free to come up with new methods!

racing clocks

Create two opposed clocks to represent a race. The PCs might have a progress clock called "Escape" while the Troubleshooters have a clock called "Cornered". If the PCs finish their clock before the Troubleshooters fill theirs they get away. Otherwise, they're cornered and can no longer flee. If both complete at the same time, the PCs escape to their lair but the hunting Troubleshooters are outside!

You can also use racing clocks for an environmental hazard. Maybe the PCs are trying to complete the "Hidden Artifact" clock to find something important sealed aboard a sunken derelict airship before the GM fills the "Collapse" clock and the vessel decompresses with violent outcomes for all within.

linked clocks

You can make a clock that unlocks another clock once it's filled. For example, the GM might make a shorter linked clock called "Trapped" that only begins to tick once the "Alert" clock fills up. This represents a new, more desperate phase of the mission where the PCs have their options shrinking as the envelope closes around them, but still have opportunities to turn the tide.

When you fight the veteran warrior, she might have a clock for her "Lightbarrier" and then a linked clock for "Vulnerability". Once you overcome the "Lightbarrier", you can then attempt to overcome her Vulnerability clock to defeat her. You might affect the the Lightbarrier by *Crashing* against it in direct conflict, or you might lower her defenses with deception or technical skill if you have the opportunity. As always, the method of action is up to the players and the details of the fiction at hand.

mission clocks

The GM can make a clock for a time-sensitive mission, to represent the window of opportunity you have to complete it. If the countdown runs out, the mission is scrubbed or changes—the target escapes, a lockdown protocol initiates, the patrol schedule shifts, the negotiation targets realizes your true nature or desires and starts to play hardball, etc.

danger clocks

The GM can use a clock to represent a progressive danger, like suspicion growing during a seduction, the proximity of pursuers during a chase, or the growth of a malignant Glitch infection. In this case, when a **complication** occurs, the GM can tick one, two, or three segments on the clock, depending on the consequence level. When the clock is full, the danger comes to fruition—an alarm is activated, Troubleshooters are upon you, the Glitch causes catastrophic structural collapse, etc.

long-term projects

Some projects will take a long time. A basic long-term project (like recovering a lost feature for an average artifact) can be six segments. Truly long-term projects (like experimenting to find the specifications of a new designer drug) can be two, three, or even four clocks, representing all the phases of development, testing, and final completion. Add or subtract clock segments depending on the details of the situation and complexity of the project.

A long-term project is a good catch-all for dealing with any unusual player goal, including things that circumvent or change elements of the mechanics or the setting.

For example, by default in the game, **drift** is permanent. But maybe a player wants to work on a project where they design and fabricate a new kind of artifact to scrub a user's personality core and sift away aberrations, reducing a character's **drift** by manifesting an autonomous shade of the peeled-away personality fragment. Once they've finished a research clock to understand the theory behind the artifact, they can prepare to **compile** this never-before-seen invention using an authority function!

It will be a long and dangerous process to set up everything needed to begin work on a project like this, but almost anything can be attempted as long as the group is interested and it seems feasible to everyone.

NPC faction clocks

The players aren't the only ones who get a downtime phase to plot and scheme. NPCs and factions may have project clocks of their own, to represent the long-term goals they are actively pursuing. The GM may advance their clocks and, when they are completed, narrate the outcome of the NPC or faction's activities. These clocks give the players insight into the workings of World, as well as advance notice of what their enemies and allies are up to. They can use this information to try to foil schemes that would harm the crew, or to profit off of the actions of a third party!

why, and how, to use clocks

The truth is, a given session of *Hello, World* may not ever need to utilize a clock. But using them well can enhance your game in a multitude of ways.

- ▶ **Clocks telegraph major threats and raise the stakes.** If you have a great idea for a dramatic consequence, but it's one that sucker-punches the player's plans and will put them on the back foot, put it on a clock instead of inflicting it right away. This way they have something to worry about, but it's a threat spectrum they can interact with rather than a sudden failure state. This is valuable because it gives the players a bit of a break (the dice odds of *Hello, World* can be brutal at times!), but still gets them to consider compelling and consequential choices. How will the characters respond to the increasing tension of this looming danger? Do they commit time and energy to holding back the approaching danger of the clock, or instead try to outrace it to their goal? If the players manage to hold off the dangerous threat "for now", maybe that's something you can reintroduce later to create a theme. These types of questions about stakes can be more interesting to explore than just always throwing your hardest consequence at the players right away.

You narrowly escaped the deadly blademaster leading your sworn enemies last time, but now they are approaching again! For how long can you keep running? What if the players decide to just stand their ground and confront the foe this time?

- ▶ **Clocks let you collaborate with the players on story developments.** When you set up a clock for the long-term plans of an enemy faction and put it out in the open on the table, you're making a story offering to the players, with an implicit wager: "I bet that you aren't going to take the time to stop this from happening." Whether the players do or don't stop the thing from happening, you've brought the whole table in as co-authors by giving them a chance for input.
- ▶ **Clocks help define the space of the fiction, and invite the players to be creative.** When you set a clock on the table, remember to name it after the *obstacle*, not a specific goal for overcoming it. By zooming out a bit and envisioning it as a multi-faceted problem that might have a number of possible solutions, you empower the table to express their PC's through problem-solving techniques.
- ▶ **Clocks can personify the threat of a significant foe or danger.** This can help everyone visualize the fictional space the PCs are in, by creating the context of threat bands. That "Gladiator Juggernaut" isn't *just* an 8-clock the players have to beat down with function rolls, it's also a deadly combatant that is *desperate* to engage if you are up close to it... but keeping to the corners of the fight exposes you to the "Spike Traps", a 4-clock that complicates a different aspect of the arena! See how you can almost visualize this scene already, and how this would give a lot of built-in context for the players to act in response to these dangers?



function roll

When a player character does something challenging, we make a **function roll** to see how it turns out. A challenging function is one where there is an obstacle to the PC's goal that is *dangerous* or *interesting* in some way. We don't make a dice roll unless the PC is put to the test. If their action is something that we expect a user to be able to simply accomplish, then we don't make an action roll.

Each game group will end up with a different definition of what constitutes "challenging". It's something that helps establish the tone and style of your story.

To make an action roll, we got through six steps. In play, they flow together somewhat, but let's break each one down here for clarity.

1. The player states their **goal** for the action.
2. the player chooses the **action rating**.
3. The GM sets the **position** for the roll.
4. The GM sets the **effect level** for the roll.
5. Add **bonus dice**.
6. The player **rolls the dice** and we judge the result.

1. player states their goal

The **goal** is the concrete outcome a user expects to achieve when they overcome the obstacle at hand. Often the character's goal is pretty obvious in context, but it's the GM's job to ask and clarify the goal when necessary to avoid any confusion. Even if the user is fighting somebody, there are probably interesting objectives besides just causing damage that can add more context to the scene.

"You're Crashing them right? Ok... what do you want to get out this? Do you want to embarrass them and drive them off, seize their supplies, or just establish your reputation and make them take you seriously?"

2. player chooses their function

The player chooses which **function rating** to roll, following from what their character is doing on-screen. If you want to roll your **Crash** function, then get in a fight. If you want to roll your **Link**, start chatting with people. You can't roll a given function unless your character is presently performing that action in the fiction.

There's definitely some gray area here, where functions overlap and goals can be attempted with a variety of approaches. This is by design. If you want to make your way into a classified access area, you might use **Echo**, **Goto**, or **Mask**. If your goal is to damage and derez another user, you might **Crash** or **Ping** or even **Buffer** in the right circumstances. It's the player's choice, but each choice implies a different approach.

See page 126 if you want a detailed discussion of the **functions** and how they differ.

3. gm sets the position

Once the player chooses their function, the GM sets the **position** for the roll. The position represents how dangerous or troublesome the action might be. There are three positions: **controlled**, **risky**, or **desperate**. To choose a position, the GM looks at the profiles for the position and picks one that most closely matches the situation.

controlled

You have a golden opportunity. You're exploiting a dominant advantage. You are set up for success.

risky

You're taking a chance. You go head to head. You are acting under fire.

desperate

You are in serious trouble. You overreach your capabilities. It's a highly dangerous maneuver.

By default, a function roll is usually **risky**. You wouldn't be rolling if there weren't any risk involved. If the situation seems more dangerous, make it desperate. If it seems less dangerous, make it controlled.

Choosing the position is an important judgment call and stylistic choice for your game. More controlled function rolls generally mean the players are safer and more dominant users. More desperate rolls gives World a grittier kind of feel. There's no ironclad rule to choosing positions, it's one of the expressive elements of the game.

If the player was angling for a different position for the roll, ask the GM what might be done to get it, or ask them to clarify the situation to explain their choice.

"It's Risky? It feels like this solitary guard isn't a real threat to me, given I have my lightbarrier and my awesome Nodecutter. Shouldn't this be controlled?"

*"Well, I guess that I think the danger isn't this specific guard, but the ability to **Crash** them quickly before they raise the alarm. Seems like the real danger here is more ticks on the alert clock, not actually them fighting back enough to cause any damage to you."*

*"Hmm. What if we just sneak around the patrol area? I can switch over to **Mask** and it will just be like I was never here."*

"Yeah OK, that would make it Controlled."

The GM gets final say over the position of the roll, but should explain their reasoning and possibly offer alternative approaches that might give the players different risk/reward considerations. By discussing the position (and how it might be better or worse) you'll help everyone build a better view of the fictional situation in their mind's eye and get on the same page about the tone of the game.

4. gm sets the effect

The **effect level** tells us “how much” of the player’s stated goal (from step 1) we expect to see occur based on the factors of the situation. The three most common options here are **Limited**, **Standard**, or **Great** effect. “Standard” means we expect to see an average result, and is a good choice most of the time. **Effect** is discussed in more detail on page 35 in the next section.

The GM’s choice of effect level and position can be strongly influenced by the player’s choice of function from step 2. If the player wants to strike up a friendship with someone by **Echoing** (ie. lying, illusion and deception) the GM could reasonably say that the position and the effect level is worse... sure, you might be able to bluster and flatter your way to a shallow relationship (less effect), but they might be turned off or even angered if your roll goes badly (poor position). Seems like **Linking** would be a lot more appropriate! The players are always free to choose what function they want to perform, but that doesn’t mean all actions are equally risky or potent.

5. add bonus dice

You can normally get up to two bonus dice for your action roll (some special abilities might give you additional bonus dice).

For one bonus die, you can get **assistance** from an allied player. They take 1 stress, say how they are helping you, and give you +1d. See **Teamwork**, page xx.

For another bonus die, you can either **push yourself** (take 2 stress) -or- you can accept a **Daemon’s Bargain** (you cannot get dice for both, it’s one or the other).

the daemon’s bargain

Daemons are the original inhabitants of World, creatures native to the digital ecosystem. A large number of daemons rapidly adapted to a symbiotic relationship with user culture, offering goods-and-services exchanges or bounties on “quests” for users to accomplish. While those days of exploration are dimly-remembered legend and daemons largely exist in the marginal communities of urbanized server spaces now, there are still considerable black markets run by daemon vendors which maintain the memory of the daemon’s ‘bargain’ in user imagination.

In this spirit, the **daemon’s bargain** mechanic in *Hello, World* lets users take a bonus die if they accept a trade-off of some kind. Proposal of a Daemon’s Bargain can come from anyone at the table, other players or the GM. Common bargains include:

- ▶ Collateral damage to bystanders or allies.
- ▶ Sacrifice of **Coin**, **Gear**, or other valuables.
- ▶ Betrayal of a friend, loved one, ally.
- ▶ Offending or angering a faction.
- ▶ Starting and/or ticking a troublesome clock.
- ▶ Suffering stress **Damage** or direct **Harm**.

Some players like to get a little fancy or creative with Bargains, using them to re-write a bit of the situation, create something new in the flow of the narrative, or shine a spotlight on a user’s weaknesses or blind spots.

“There’s a user here you knew in a past life: someone you discarded your memories of long ago. But they haven’t forgotten you!”

“Wouldn’t it be cool if this duel ended up on a narrow gantry above the Plunge? Of course there would also be more spectators, and a long fall if anyone slips...”

“This underworld meetup probably has a lot of black market vendors around. Shouldn’t we have a pushy daemon start offering you some stuff you don’t want? Are you gonna tell them to piss off and anger their cartel boss?”

The Bargain is always a choice. If you don’t like one, just reject it (or suggest how you might alter it so you would consider taking it). You can always just push yourself for that bonus dice instead.

Most importantly: the price of the Daemon’s Bargain, if accepted, will occur regardless of the outcome of the roll. You make the deal, pay the price, and then get a bonus die. There might not be an interesting Devil’s Bargain in every situation. If one doesn’t occur to anyone right away, that’s fine.

The GM may veto any proposed Daemon’s Bargain, but should otherwise encourage collaboration. Every group will have a different tolerance for the extent they want to throw around Bargain suggestions and how much narrative deviation they find interesting. Be open to the table, and ensure your players bear in mind the availability of safety tools to regulate the discussion if it gets out of hand.



6. roll dice and judge the result

Once the goal, function rating, position, and effect have been established, add any bonus dice and roll the dice pool to determine the outcome.

The action roll does a lot for you. It tells you how well the character performs as well as how serious the consequences are for them. The outcome of the roll is determined by the **single highest die result**. See the chart on the next page for a full breakdown of the possible outcomes.

If the highest die is a **6**, it's a **full success**: the PC's action is effective and there are no complications. If they rolled **more than one 6** in the dice pool, that's a **critical success**—even more effective than expected in some way.

If the highest die is a **4** or **5**, it's a **partial success**: the PC's action is effective, but there is also a complication. If the highest die is a **1-3**, it's a **failure**: the PC's action is not effective or else turns against them, and there's a complication too. Usually the action just fails completely, but sometimes it makes more sense or is more interesting for the character to achieve some of their desired effect (in addition to negative consequences).

*Glyde, a Roller, is trying to **crash** through a team of Troubleshooters with her weapon of choice (a power glove). She's doing this to clear a path for her allies while racing ahead to secure the escape. The roll is a **1-3**. The GM could say that she fails and her allies are forced to deal with a dug-in response team, but it's more interesting to escalate the situation and put the heat back on Glyde. Although one Troubleshooter is blown off their feet, the rest immediately give chase. Glyde skids round a corner... and is confronted by a backup squad with weapons leveled. Her friends find the way ahead clear just as intended, but for Glyde the situation just got a lot more desperate.*

Each **Position** has a list of possible **consequences** for function results that score **lower than 6** in the dice pool. The worse your position, the worse the consequences. The GM can inflict one or more of these, depending on the circumstances of the action roll. Consequences are explained in detail on page 42. PCs have the ability to avoid or reduce the severity of consequences by **resisting** them. See page 44 for details about resistance.

If the GM wants to amp up the intensity of the above scene, they could choose to combine multiple negative outcomes. For example, not only is Glyde unsuccessful at drawing off pursuers, but she herself is subdued! If Glyde's player does not like one of those outcomes ("Glyde would never let herself get trapped by these thugs!") they can choose to resist it.


When you narrate the action after the roll, the GM and player collaborate to say what happens on-screen.


"So you're waylaying the IMC's explorators right as they step out of the port? They are going to be completely surprised, I think you guys can start out steering this encounter however you want. What do you look like to them, and what do you say?"


"You're more than holding your own in this fight, you can even loosen up a bit and express yourself. What does your combat style look like? Are you gonna try to provoke them to make a mistake, or do you stick to your fundamentals?"


"Convincing this moderator of your good intentions isn't going well... any idea what you say that really sets him off? Maybe something that Tanis interprets as a taunt?"

dice

 Start with **1d** for each **Function** rating dot

 **-1d** if you have applicable Level 3 **Harm**

 **+1d** if you receive **Assistance** (the assisting ally spends 1 stress)

 **+1d** if you **Push yourself** (+2 stress) *-or-* you accept a **Daemon's Bargain**...

position

controlled

You act on your terms. You exploit a dominant advantage.

Critical: You do it with **increased effect**.

6: You do it.

4/5: You hesitate. Withdraw and try a different approach, or else do it with minor consequences: a **minor complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**, you suffer **lesser damage**, you end up in a **risky** position.

1-3: You falter. Press on by seizing a **risky** opportunity, or withdraw and try a different approach.

risky

You go head to head. You act under fire. You take a chance.

Critical: You do it with **increased effect**.

6: You do it.

4/5: You do it, but there are consequences: you suffer **damage**, a **complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**, you end up in a **desperate** position.

1-3: Things go badly. You suffer **damage**, a **complication** occurs, you end up in a **desperate** position, you **lose this opportunity**.

desperate

You overreach your capabilities. You're in serious trouble.

Critical: You do it with **increased effect**.

6: You do it.

4/5: You do it, but there are consequences: you suffer **severe damage**, a **serious complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**.

1-3: It's the worst outcome. You suffer **severe damage**, a **serious complication** occurs, you **lose this opportunity** for action.

withdraw or press on

Controlled positions allow you to leverage your advantage in the fiction as an opportunity to try a few approaches until you find success. When the situation is controlled, no matter how poorly you roll you will have the choice to "withdraw" (accepting that your attempt is not going to make headway against the current obstacle) and "try another approach" (selecting a different function to use).

If your result is a **1-3**, you may also "press on by seizing a **risky** opportunity." When you do so, you make the same function roll over again (including any bonus dice from previous daemon's bargains or assists), but with your new, more risky position.

double-duty rolls

Since NPCs don't roll for their functions, this roll does double-duty: **it resolves the action of the PC as well as any NPCs that are opposed.** The single roll tells us how those actions interact and which consequences result. On a **6**, the PC gets away clean and has their effect. On a **4/5**, it's a mixed outcome—both the PC and the NPC have their effect. On a **1-3**, the NPC wins and has their effect as a consequence on the PC.

function roll summary

- 1** The player states their **goal**: the outcome they want to achieve when they overcome the obstacle in the fiction.
- 2** The player chooses the **function** to roll. Choose the function that matches what the character is doing in the fiction.
- 3** The GM establishes the **position** of the roll (is it controlled, risky, or desperate). This governs the potential consequences.
- 4** The GM sets the **effect** level of the action. How effective will it be, or how much of their goal should they expect to achieve?
- 5** Add **bonus dice**, usually up to two. You can get assistance from a teammate, push yourself, or accept a Daemon's Bargain.
- 6** **Roll** the dice pool and judge the outcome. The player and GM narrate the action together. GM inflicts consequences as called for by position and roll result.

effect

In *Hello, World* you achieve goals by resolving functions and facing consequences. But how many functions does it take to achieve a particular goal? That depends on the **effect level** of your functions. The GM judges effect level using the profiles below. Each effect level indicates the questions that you might answer for that effect, as well as how many segments to tick if you're using a **progress clock**.

effect levels		ticks
great	<i>You will achieve more than usual. What advantage do you leverage? What additional benefit can you get?</i>	3
standard	<i>You will achieve the expected, "normal" result with this function. Is that enough, or will there be more left to do?</i>	2
limited	<i>You will have a partial or weak effect. How is your impact diminished? What hurdles remain to the goal?</i>	1

To determine an effect level, start out with your gut feeling on the situation. Then, if you or the table want to dig deeper, you can assess the three major factors that modify the effect level: **potency**, **scale**, and **tier**. If the player character has an advantage in a given factor, consider a higher effect level. If they have a disadvantage, consider a reduced effect level.

potency

Potency is the consideration of *vulnerability*. Ask yourself which side has the more powerful vector of action. In an armed melee where your character has a "nodecutter" (ie. a really huge sword) it might count as a very potent weapon, assuming they have room to build up a full swing with it and the adversary isn't sporting some armor that's proof against the attack. If you're interacting with a user who you have social leverage over, that can be a potent advantage in your effort to get them on your side. An infiltrator is more potent if all the lights and scanners in the secure compound have been extinguished and they are moving about in the dark.

Just like the next two factors, potency is relative. The nodecutter is an impressive weapon to many inhabitants of World, but if you're trying to take out an Administrator with it you will likely just come across looking foolish.

scale

Scale is the consideration of *quantity*. This might represent the number of opponents, size of a district to be covered, area of effect, scope of influence, etc. Larger scale can be an advantage or disadvantage depending on the situation. In an open battle, more people is better. When infiltrating a guarded area, more people are instead a hindrance.

tier

Tier is the consideration of *overall power* (also expressed as **quality**). Every faction in the game, including the player crew, will have a tier level (a number usually between 0-5) that expresses the overall strength of their tools, weapons, members, and other resources. The GM may choose to calculate the relative difference between tiers of the opposing parties to determine who holds the natural advantage.

*Metola, a Squawker in a **tier 1** crew, is trying to smooth-talk Blaize, a user who is the top enforcer of the Bluelight Syndicate (**tier 2**). The GM decides that Blaize's resistance to Metola's cunning is about even with the tier of the Syndicate as a whole, and since the difference between the crew and the Syndicate is just 1, they reduce the effect of the function to **Limited** (it might otherwise have been **Standard**). Metola's player shrugs and plows ahead, hoping to at least distract the Syndicate's top muscle while her crew makes their way in through the roof...*

*If this scenario was instead fisticuffs, Blaize might be flexing her faction's **Tier+1** (in this case, 3) to represent that fighting is her field of specialty. If the crew was going after a different element of the Bluelight Syndicate that is noticeably worse than the faction's 'average' quality, it might instead be assessed as **Tier-1**.*

It's not always the right thing to do to break out the rulers and meticulously calculate Tier difference, especially if your table is more interested in daring action heroics and less in stories of hard-pressed characters facing long odds. This is a good discussion to have with the other players. A *Hello, World* game where Tier matters a lot can be very effective at expressing a cut-throat version of World's social pyramid, where fighting to advance your relative 'power level' against your adversaries is a big deal. It won't be everyone's cup of tea though!

other effect factors

If a PC **pushes themselves** to gain "+1 effect", or has an applicable special ability that grants "+1 effect", this modification comes into play *after* the GM has assessed the effect level. Having the right equipment on hand for specialized actions (like a *Boost Pack* when you're fleeing away on rooftops and opponents are not similarly equipped, or a flashy avatar and convincing documents for a negotiation) might also grant advantages, which can include increased effect.

When considering all of the factors, effect level might be reduced below limited, resulting in **zero effect**—or increased beyond great, resulting in an **extreme effect**. These two effect levels should come up rarely in common usage, but are presented here for when they do.

effect levels

ticks

extreme

An extraordinary result, the fates aligned in your favor. What overwhelming advantage do you have?

5

zero

It's not possible to achieve anything as things stand. What's stopping you? What might change this?

0



dominant factors

If one factor overshadows the others, then the side with that advantage dominates the situation. It doesn't matter if you have an attuned nodecutter and extra effect if you're trying to wipe out an "endless horde" of process enforcers... endless means just that! Their **scale** dominates the battle and you're left with very limited effect, or perhaps no significant effect at all. The same principle applies to "impossible" function attempts.

*Lyth, a capacitor, wants to tear down the headquarters of the Cult of Static brick by brick. "I take my gigahammer and I **Crash** the whole structure. Ha! I rolled a **critical!** Great effect!" However, everyone sitting at the table sighs deeply, knowing that this is just too improbable. Lyth can't shatter the Cult's sprawling, fortified temple in a few hammer blows. The Cult of Static's building is dominant over Lyth in **potency, scale, and tier**. Unless those factors are countered somehow, Lyth's effect level is 0 before they even start. No matter the roll, there will be no effect.*

So should Lyth just give up on taking down the Cult of Static's HQ? No way! If the target is dominant in scale, potency, and tier, then the players can work to understand the factors and take actions to address them. Trying to overcome scale? Use a coordinated team of *Strikers* big enough to attack the problem. Potency? Find a weapon or instrument that is purpose-made to take down the target. Effect factors are a way to codify the situation so that it is easier to talk about what needs to change in order to have the desired effect.

If nothing else is working, then there is one more thing that can be done in World to fix your problems... use Authority. These paradigm-altering powers can solve otherwise-intractable problems by rewriting the fabric of World's reality. See page 136 for more on **Authority** functions, and how they can be wielded.

trading position for effect

After factors are considered and the GM has announced the effect level, a player might want to trade position for effect, or vice versa. For instance, if they're going to make a risky roll with standard effect (the most common scenario, generally), they might instead want to push their luck and make a desperate roll but with great effect.

This type of trade-off should always be grounded in the fiction. The position and effect levels determined in the previous conversation are the starting point, based on what function the player is using and the circumstances surrounding their obstacles and goals. If you're not sure whether it makes sense, ask the player how they are able to make their action riskier (or less risky). If the explanation is plausible, let it ride!

"I am gonna Mask my way through the camp and up to their dune crawler to set up the power tap."

*"I don't think you can get all the way through that easily. The scale of their camp is a factor here, so your effect will be **limited**. Let's say you can get halfway across with this function, then you'll have to Mask your way through the other half of the space (and the rest of the guards there) to reach the other side."*

*"I didn't realize it was that far. .. Hmm. Okay, what if I just go as fast as I can. Can I make it all the way across if we turn it into a **desperate** roll?"*

"Yep, sounds good to me!"

why we do this

It might seem like constantly haggling over effect levels would slow down the action at the table, and there can be some truth to that. If your group is bored by an obstacle or scene, it can be the right call to handle it in a single roll and move on without lingering over the discussion. However, use of effect level is a powerful tool for setting expectations about the results of the upcoming roll. Assessing effect out loud helps everyone at the table be on the same page about the fictional situation, something that can be overlooked if you rush to get to throwing the dice as fast as possible.

Establishing effect and describing how it looks in the story lets players see how much progress they might make and how much they risk for it. After each cycle of function, effect, and consequences, the players know where they stand, and can make informed decisions about what to do next.

If you've played other roleplaying games or video games, you're familiar with the concept of "hit points" for a character or a progress bar during a boss fight. The effect system in *World* is this type of pacing mechanic, abstracted so it can apply to any kind of situation from fighting, to social manipulation, investigations, stealing information, infiltration, whatever! Every action the players take has an explicit effect that everyone playing the game can understand—either resolving the current situation so we can move on to the next scene, or marking up progress toward the current goal.

effect in the fiction

Effects aren't simply a matter of a level name or ticking clock segments. After the action roll, when you narrate the outcome, answer the effect questions by describing what happens "on screen". The answers to the questions will tell the group what the new situation is like, creating a natural bridge to further actions.

For a simple action, the effect level determines the end result. Do you achieve your goal partially, fully, or with great effect? The effect level helps tell you how much the situation has changed. The greater the effect, the bigger a splash in the fiction the character's action has created.

For a more complex obstacle, the GM creates a progress clock to track the effort made to overcome it. You tick a number of segments on the clock depending on the final effect level of your action (assuming a success was rolled!).

*For example, if the player says "I **buffer** him off the bridge with a shoulder tackle and run away," that might be a simple action. It will have limited, standard, or great effect on the enemy, resulting in a new situation. The enemy might be slowed down (limited), knocked off their feet and delayed in the chase (standard), or even injured by a powerful throw (great)—depending on the GM's assessment of the factors at hand.*

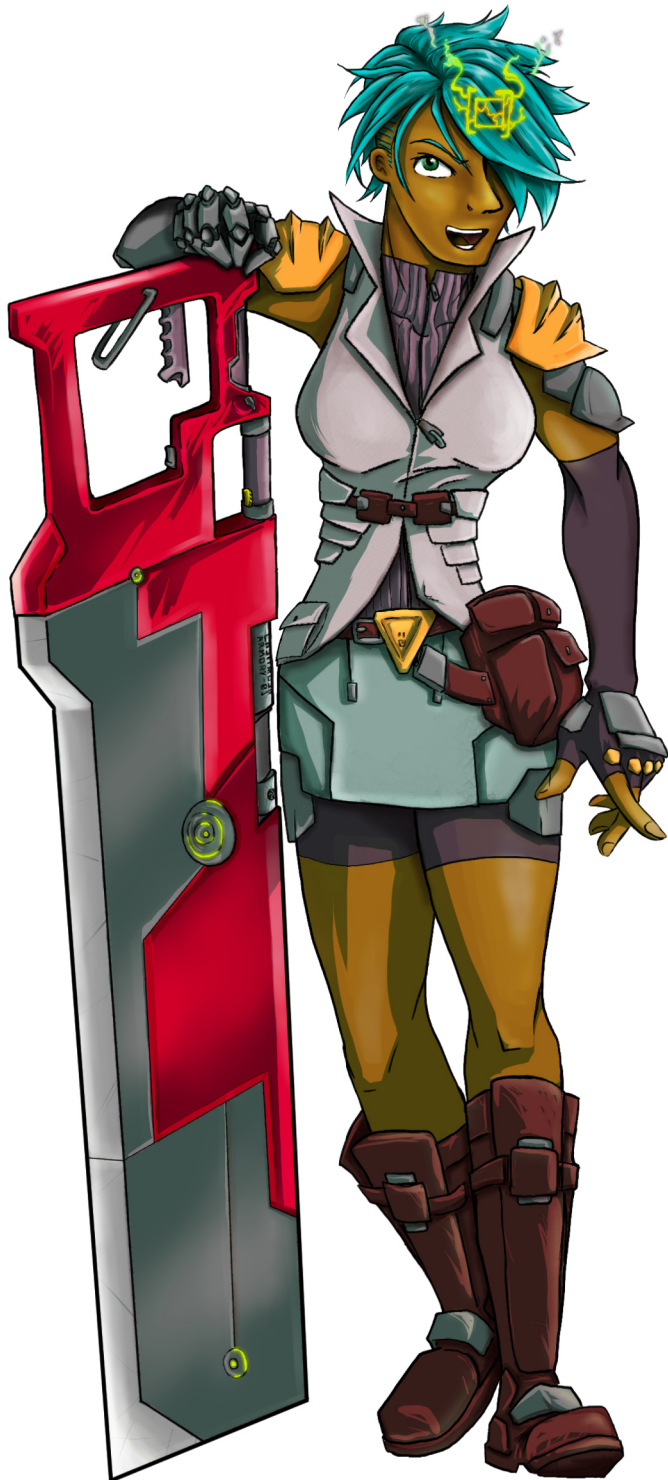
*If the player says, "I want to **crash** the lead enforcer in a sword-fight to the derez," that might be a more complex obstacle. The GM creates a clock for the opposition's level of threat, then there will be a few function rolls to resolve the fight, each ticking the clock according to the effect level (and risking consequences from the outcome of each).*

There is no rule for what is a simple action and what is complex. One of the most direct ways to think about it however, is to ask whether you want to see this challenge take up several beats of on-screen time, or whether it's just a single tense moment to be resolved.

Your role-playing session is a block of time that the table has set aside to explore what they find interesting: about their characters, the setting, the shared story you tell. The challenges you choose to spend the most time on should be ones that are exciting or interesting or relevant to your story.

effect vs. consequence

When a PC suffers an effect from an enemy or a dangerous situation, it's called a **consequence**. Consequences are the companion to effects. PCs have effect on the world around them and suffer consequences in return from the risks they face. Consequences are discussed in more detail in the next section.



setting position & effect

The GM sets position and effect for a function roll at the same time, after the player says what they're doing and chooses their function. Usually, **Risky / Standard** is the default combination. If you imagine that as your baseline, you can modify by the function being used, the strength of the opposition, and the effect factors.

When you first start learning the game, you might step through the process with some deliberation, but after a bit of practice you'll be able to set position and effect with a quick "gut feeling" that can then be tweaked if a PC has a particular ability or item or some other element to consider as a special case.

The ability to set position and effect as independent variables gives you nine basic combinations to choose from, to help you convey a wide array of fictional circumstances.

*For example, if a user is facing off alone against a squad of enemy process, the circumstances under which the fight happens determine the **Position** and **Effect**...*

- ▶ *She fights the gang by **Crashing** into their midst, hacking away wildly. In this case, being threatened by the larger force worsens her position to indicate greater risk, and the scale of the squad reduces her effect at defeating all of them: **Desperate / Limited**.*
- ▶ *She rushes into battle as above, but she also happens to be a Breaker with heavy close-combat weaponry and the **Volcano Buster** special ability (allowing her to spend resources to perform explosive combat moves). If she uses her abilities and loadout, the GM might decide that though the danger is still high, her effectiveness at wiping out the squad is much greater: **Desperate / Great**.*
- ▶ *She fights the gang from a choke-point, a narrow alleyway where their numbers can't overwhelm her. She's not threatened by all of them at once, so her risk is similar to a one-on-one fight, but there's still a lot of enemies to deal with: **Risky / Limited**.*
- ▶ *She doesn't fight the squad, instead using **Goto** in order to maneuver her way past them and escape. She is still under threat from many enemy attacks so her position is bad, but if the ground is open and the gang can't easily corral her then the effect for escaping is not reduced: **Desperate / Standard**.
If she has some immediate means of escape (like leaping onto a midair bolt-car), then her effect might even be increased: **Desperate / Great**.*
- ▶ *The squad isn't even aware of her yet—she is set up in a sniper perch on a nearby roof. She aims through her sights to **Ping** the leader of the squad. Their greater numbers aren't a factor for this intended outcome so effect is not reduced, and she's not in any danger: **Controlled / Great**.
Maybe instead she wants to fire a salvo to suppress the whole squad in which case their scale applies: **Controlled / Limited**.
If the squad is looking out for trouble and has the ability to counter-fire on her position, it is more dangerous: make it **Risky** instead.
If they are alerted to snipers and have scattered into cover, her effect might be reduced: **Limited** or maybe even **None**.*

consequences & damage

Obstacles, enemy actions, and bad circumstances are modeled through the **consequences** on a PC. There are five types of consequence (at right). Any time a function roll gets a result of **5** or less on it's highest die, there are bound to be some consequences as a result.

There might be one or more consequences, depending on the situation. The GM determines the consequences, following from the fiction and the style and tone established by your group.

Damage
Complication
Reduced Effect
Worse Position
Lost Opportunity

damage

The most basic consequence in *Hello, World* is damage. Users take damage directly against their **Stress track**. Damage may seem most common as a consequence of physical conflict, but don't be afraid to inflict damage during moments of psychological loss, mental exertion, or social disappointment. World is an abstract kind of place!

Minor damage causes the player to fill in **1 Stress**. In a normal Risky situation, *standard damage* is **2 Stress**. *Severe damage* might be **3 Stress**, but could potentially be **4 or higher** if major factors of Scale or Potency exceed the defenses of the player character.

Damage to the Stress track usually doesn't do anything immediately negative to the PC, but it reduces their future options as Stress is the primary resource for users to act above their ordinary capabilities and resist other consequences. In order to forestall this, users can choose to avoid taking damage by resisting it, using **armor** or **harm**. When a user fills their last box of Stress, they are at risk of **Deresolution**. All of these mechanics are described more fully in the next section.

complication

A complication represents incoming trouble, a negative plot twist, or a new threat. The GM might introduce an immediate problem that results from the function right now: the room begins to collapse, you are disarmed, you lose status with a faction, the target evades you and now it's a chase, reinforcements arrive, etc.

Or the GM might tick a clock for the complication, instead. Maybe there's already a clock for the alert level of the guards in the tower. Maybe the GM creates a new clock for the suspicion of the rich guests at the masquerade party and ticks it up.

When adding ticks to a clock, fill in **one tick** for a *minor complication* and **two ticks** for a *standard complication*. A serious complication is more severe: reinforcements have surrounded and trapped you, the room erupts into a deadly Glitching landscape, your weapon is broken, etc. Fill **three ticks** on a clock for a serious complication.

Don't inflict a complication that undoes the effect of a successful roll. If a PC tries to corner their adversary and gets a **4/5**, don't say that the enemy escapes. The player's roll succeeded, so they must be cornered... maybe the complication is they pull out the Memory you are after and threaten to destroy it if you come any closer.

reduced effect

Reduced effect represents a weaker performance than expected. The PC doesn't quite get what they had anticipated. You hit them, but they shrug it off. The forged credentials are temporarily accepted, but your account is flagged for investigation.

This consequence reduces the effect level of the function by **one** after all other factors are accounted for. If you are ticking a clock, tick it one less than you were about to.

If the function was already going to have Limited effect, it is usually best **not** to apply this consequence ... let the player have their consolation prize and look elsewhere to show them a different kind of downside. The exception is when the PC's are at a heavy disadvantage such as on a Desperate roll, in which case it might make sense to reduce the final effect to **zero** to demonstrate just how outmatched the crew is. Use this trick sparingly, as it can become frustrating if leaned on too much.

worse position

This consequence represents losing control of the situation—the function has carried you into a more dangerous position. Perhaps you make the leap across to the next rooftop, only to end up dangling by your fingertips. You haven't failed, but what you do next is going to be a lot trickier than it might otherwise have been. This is a good consequence to show escalating action. A situation that starts at controlled might progress to risky, then to desperate as the action plays out and the PC gets deeper and deeper in trouble.

lost opportunity

This consequence, which can only come up on a **1-3** result where the player fails to achieve their desired effect, represents a shift in circumstances. You had an opportunity to achieve your goal, but now it has slipped away. To try again, the PC will need to come up with a new approach: usually a new form of action or a major change in circumstances.

Maybe you tried to **Link** up with your revolutionary contact but before you could find them in the crowd the Troubleshooters ringing the plaza have opened fire on the protest. No more networking—now you have to deal with flying stun canisters and shock batons as you try to track down your mark! You might **Crash** and mix it up with crowd control units or **Goto** to dodge your way through the chaos or do something else entirely... the player still chooses their approach, they just have to choose differently now that casual talking is off the table. In this case, they have no choice but to overcome the new obstacle before they can again make progress on their initial goal. In a more extreme case, perhaps as a desperate consequence, the lost opportunity means their original goal is totally lost to them: somebody else gets to the contact first.

If you do not apply the lost opportunity consequence on a failed roll, make sure to note that in the fiction: the door is left open so the players can attempt another try at the goal. You didn't land a single punch and you've been knocked down, but rather than push to derez your opponent waits to let you get up and try again. How sporting of them!

resistance, armor, & harm

resisting consequences

When your PC suffers a consequence that you don't like, you can choose to resist it. Tell the GM, "No, I will resist that." **Resistance is always automatically effective**—the GM will tell you if the consequence is reduced in severity or if you avoid it entirely. Then, you make a **resistance roll** to see how much stress your character suffers as a result. If the GM threatened several consequences, you choose which ones to resist (making a separate roll for each).

You make the roll using one of your character's attributes (Computation, Resolution, or Stability). The GM chooses the attribute, based on the nature of consequences:

- ▶ **Computation:** Consequence from deception or understanding.
- ▶ **Resolution:** Consequence from mental strain or willpower.
- ▶ **Stability:** Consequence from physical strain or disruption.

Your character suffers **6 stress** when they resist, **minus the highest die result from the resistance roll**. So if you rolled a **3**, you'd suffer 3 stress. If you rolled a **6**, you'd suffer zero stress. If you get a **Critical** result, you also get to **clear 1 stress** in addition to not taking any! Resistance is always effective, but the degree of resistance that can occur depends on the consequence at hand and is set by the GM, as follows:

Complications can be reduced in severity or prevented entirely. If the complication would have resulted in ticks applied to a clock, the GM will elect to either mark fewer ticks or none at all, due to the resistance.

*Lyth is trying to convince Confessor Matteus that she is a true believer in the cause of the Cult of Static. The GM has created a clock, "Matteus Loses His Temper" and is ticking it down with complications to show this goal's encroaching failure state. In a desperate attempt to **Link** with Matteus over their (few) shared interests, Lyth suffers a Serious Complication that would inflict 3 ticks on the Temper clock—enough to fill the clock and blow her cover!*

*Lyth's player decides she has no choice but to resist the complication with smooth talk. The GM could say that the resistance will be partially effective (adding only 2 ticks, or maybe just 1 tick) or that it is entirely effective and no ticks are added to the clock. Matteus is hard-nosed though, so the GM feels 1 tick still has to be added. The player rolls 2d for Lyth's **Resolution** to calm down Matteus and gets a 4. Lyth ends up marking 2 stress in order to keep her cover.*

Damage to a PC's stress track is unique, and discussed in the next section.

A **Lost Opportunity** consequence can be resisted so that the PC gets the chance to do something when they would otherwise be at the mercy of an NPC or circumstances spiraling out of their control. The GM specifies what position you are in when you take this action.

Worse Position is usually be prevented completely when resisted. If a flubbed *Goto* function would have left a character *desperately* dangling over the edge, when they resist the consequence they get to say how they instead kept their footing.

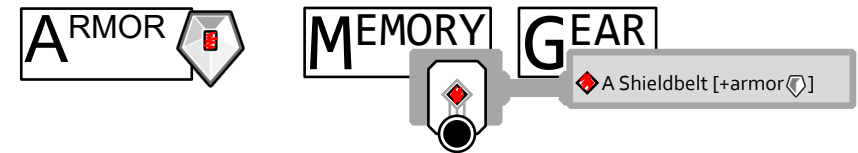
Any given consequence can only be resisted once.

By adjusting which consequences are reduced vs. which are avoided, the GM establishes the overall tone of your game. For a more daring game, most consequences will be avoided when resisted. For a grittier World, most consequences will only be reduced with resistance.

resisting damage with armor

When stress damage is dealt to a player character, they can choose to either accept it or **resist** by using **Armor**, their **Harm** boxes, or a combination of the two.

In order to resist damage with Armor, the player marks off an **Armor** box that applies to the threat vector (for example, the *Shieldbelt* is a generic Memory slot choice for every playbook that is useful for resisting incoming damage from physical attacks). Each playbook also has a unique **Armor** item that could potentially be used against various different kinds of damage. For example, the Filcher's *Holo Bomb* might let them slip away from the consequences of detection, ranged attack, a really awkward conversation, or other consequences. Let the players be imaginative!



This character has equipped their Shieldbelt, giving them access to armor. Once the armor slot is marked off, the Shieldbelt cannot be used to absorb more stress damage.

At the GM's discretion, **Armor** can reduce either **some** or **all** of the **Damage**. As a general guideline, I like to let the player resist up to 3 damage if their **playbook armor** is obviously the perfect defense for the attack vector (for example, the Breaker's **Lightbarrier** during a close-quarters brawl, or the Squawker's **Disarming Wit** during a sharp duel of words). Otherwise, I would simply reduce the incoming damage by 1 instead. You can tinker with those guidelines based on how gritty you want conflict in your game to be!

resisting damage with harm

In order to resist damage using Harm, the player declares how much damage they are transferring to the **Harm** track. One point of stress damage is equivalent to one "level" of harm. They write an appropriate fictional descriptor for the **Harm** they have taken into the box on their character sheet. In future function rolls, the harm may potentially reduce their dice roll, effect, or ability to act without pushing (this is explained on the player sheet for each harm level).

For example, a **Serious** Damage consequence (3 stress) could be absorbed by filling in the Level 3 **Harm** box, or both Level 1 and Level 2 **Harm** boxes, or be partially mitigated using a lesser **Harm** box. If a **Harm** box is already filled, it is unavailable and the player would have to resist using the next higher box that is empty. If there are no higher empty boxes to upgrade to, they cannot resist and must accept the stress damage. There is no extra benefit from filling in more levels of harm than the amount of incoming damage!

H	1 : Instability	2 : Error	3 : Fault	4 : Crashing

There are four available harm boxes, starting at Level 1 Harm (Instability) and increasing up to Level 4 Harm (Crashing)!

deresolution

In this World, users like you are immortal! Whenever a player character fills in their **last stress box** for any reason (perhaps from unprevented damage, or a resistance roll, or pushing themselves), they will “deresolve” to the Stack as soon as the current function concludes: the user’s avatar collapses from the strain and disintegrates. However, if your **Level 4 Harm** box is empty, you may choose to instead write an appropriate Harm in it to **clear 4 Stress** and endure. In this case through force of you will your User remains in the scene, battered and in need of assistance but unbroken. See the next page spread for more on **Deresolution**.

harm penalties

Level 1 Harm represents a brief moment of avatar **Instability** that leaves behind an incriminating timestamp, memory sliver, or other clue that helps investigators and other factions track the crew’s actions. This is represented by additional immediate **Heat**. If you want to explore the fiction around this, ask the player to describe what they left behind... a torn clothing scrap or spark shells? A trail of sizzling static, like dripped blood?

Level 1 Harm automatically clears itself off the damage track during the reset phase of Downtime, so suggest it to the players as an option when they take damage!

Level 2 Harm is an **Error** that represents some loss of agency within World. The User might have had their resolve shaken, look ‘fuzzy’ at their avatar’s edges, or be visibly uncomposed. Ask the player to describe what their Error looks like and then write it in on their harm track in the appropriate space. While you have level 2 Harm, the GM can assess **less effect** for function rolls that depend on your character smoothly functioning.

Level 3 Harm is a serious **Fault** such as an obvious wound, compromising flaw, or noticeable avatar degradation. Ask the player to describe the nature of the Fault, then tell them to write it in on their harm track. This can result in a **-1d** penalty against the number of function dice rolled for applicable actions.

Level 4 Harm means your avatar is **Crashing** and suffering from a major crippling issue, or a spiraling series of compound errors. While you have Level 4 Harm, your User is incapacitated and cannot act! However, if a user **pushes themselves** to perform a function, or if an ally **helps** them, they can temporarily overcome this penalty. “Help” is deliberately undefined so that the GM can assess what qualifies on a case-by-case basis, but a common requirement of help includes your allies putting themselves at risk of consequences from the assisted action.

HARM			
1 : Instability	2 : Error	3 : Fault	4 : Crashing
+1 Heat, recover for free	Less Effect	-1D	Need Help
	<i>Flickering hands</i>		<i>Drained Battery</i>

This character has two different harm penalties: a level 2 “flickering hands” and a level 4 “drained battery”. If they resist by taking another level 2 harm, it would be increased to level 3. Because their level 4 harm box is already filled, if their Stress track ever maxes out they will have no choice but to Deresolve.

harm examples

Instability (1): *Battered, Demoralized, Scraped, Torn Scarf*

Error (2): *Concussed, Confused, Exhausted, Scorched, Sliced*

Fault (3): *Blasted, Bloodied, Impaled, Overloaded, Seduced, Terrified*

Crashing (4): *Blackmailed, Crushed, Headshot, Owned, Perforated, Severed Limb*



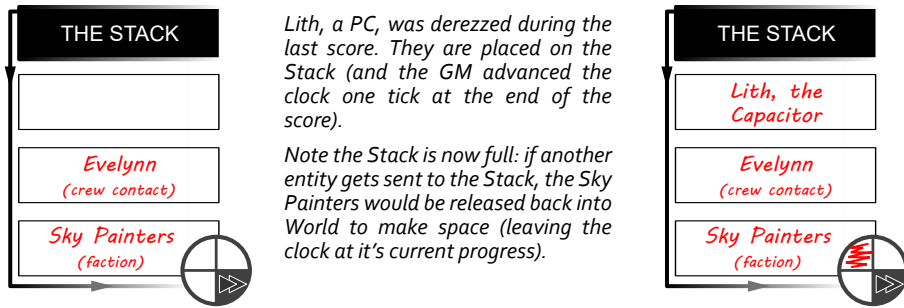
the stack

Users are immortal. Whenever a User experiences a critical existence failure ("deresolution" or simply "derez"), their baseline data and any memories they held at Time of Deresolution (TOD) are whisked away through World and reassembled automatically at the top of **The Stack**, a grand tower that dominates the entire vertical length of Helios. Whenever an instance of user-data arrives at the bottom of the Stack it is compiled by the Lead Executor and the resulting user is released back into World.

There are a few things that might derez a player user, but the two most common triggers are getting arrested by the Troubleshooters, or filling your final box of **STRESS** for any reason and choosing not to (or being unable to) fill in Level 4 Harm to endure. Whenever a user deresolves they **clear** all **STRESS** and **HARM**, then disappear from the scene and arrive at The Stack.

What does it look like when you Derez? Do you vanish in a flash of light, collapse into disintegrating fragments, fade to flickering dust? Do you have time to make a dramatic statement?

A user who has been deresolved takes a **DRIFT** (see page 16) and is added onto **the Stack** located on your faction map. Write their name onto the lowest available slot. If there is no available slot, release the bottom-most character (they are returned to World) and shift the others down to make space.



The Stack is also where allies, enemies, and even entire factions may end up. The Stack has a 4-clock that ticks once at the end of every Score the player crew takes on, and every time it fills the bottom-most entry on the stack is released and the Stack clock is reset. While the Stack nominally holds user-data in descending order of resolution time, this order of operations may be altered by the Executors who manage Central Processing: whether through moderator review, successful petition by interested users, or other reasons deemed valid by the Administration. In other words, fictional circumstances may allow entities to jump the line and get off of the Stack early! A PC user cannot return to the crew until they are released from the stack, one way or another.

Once your user is released off the stack (often during downtime when the GM updates the Stack), we check in to see what their experience on the Stack was like. Use a **Resolution** table result from the next page as a prompt for a scene describing your user's experience on the stack.

resolution roll

The Administration runs routine tests of user data on the Stack for a host of reasons: to detect concerning trends in the population, filter out false user data, and gather census information. "Users of interest" to ongoing investigations may also be debriefed to add to a file kept by the Troubleshooters. This entire process often manifests as dream-like sequences that can only be sketchily remembered by the users who experience them. The Administration tests users based on a holistic analysis, geared most stringently toward those aspects of your user deemed to be at risk.

Check your character sheet for your **lowest attribute score**, i.e. the one with the most functions that have **no dots** in them (among **Computation**, **Resolution**, or **Stability**). This will be the table you roll on. If a tie, you may choose which among those tests is administered. Your dice pool consists of your crew's **WANTED LEVEL**, modified by the circumstances of your Deresolution (choose the most appropriate option below).

Accident: +0d Arrested or Violence: +1d Authority Function involved: +2d

Stability Testing	
1-3	A rigorous trial period to condition your avatar. May manifest as physical exertion; dreams of travel or hardship. (+2 Stress)
4/5	A barrage of high-intensity fitness examinations. (+3 Stress, Level 1 Harm into next score)
6	A moderator submits you to intense physical interrogation if you don't talk. (Level 2 Harm -or- Start a 6-clock "Scapegoat")
Crit	An administrator reveals that a shade of your avatar has split from you and offers to merge you with them. (+1 Drift -or- Start a 4-clock "Doppelganger")

Computation Threading	
1-3	Proof-of-work algorithms test your mental acumen. May manifest as condescending questioning, confusing or abstract dreams. (Mark 1 Memory into next score)
4/5	Your logic core is deep-scanned for testing and data collection. (Lose 1 action in the next downtime)
6	A moderator plants a seed of doubt into your understanding of the World. (+4 Stress -or- Start a 6-clock "Incepted Thoughts")
Crit	An administrator reveals a security breach in your neural net and offers to excise it. (+3 xp, -1 Memory permanently -or- Start a 4-clock "Data Leak")

Resolution Adjustment	
1-3	Social awareness testing. May manifest as awkward public speech; dreams of youth or embarrassment. (+1 Heat)
4/5	A battery of intimate investigations into your goals, hopes, fears. (+2 Heat, +1 Stress)
6	A moderator questions your allegiances and demands information about your allies. (-2 Standing with a Faction -or- Start a 6-clock "Sold Out")
Crit	An administrator reveals a foundational memory of your past to be false. (A Friend is now your Rival -or- Start a 4-clock "Double-Agent")




fortune roll

The fortune roll is a tool that can be used by the GM to disclaim decision making. You can use a fortune roll in two different ways:

When you need to make a determination about a situation that the PC's aren't directly involved in, and don't wish to simply decide on the outcome. **When an outcome is uncertain**, but no other roll applies to the situation.

When you make a fortune roll you begin with a **trait** or **rating** to determine the dice pool of the roll. Then assess if any major factors provide a situational advantage or disadvantage, and if that is the case modify by +1 or -1 dice in the pool. As usual, if you would ever roll 0 dice then roll 2 and take the **lowest** result.

fortune dice pool

-  1d for each **Trait rating**.
-  +1d for a **Major Advantage**.
-  -1d for a **Major Disadvantage**.

Critical: Extreme result / Great effect.
6: Good result / Standard, full effect.
4/5: Mixed result / Limited, partial effect.
1-3: Bad result / Poor, weak effect.

- ▶ When a faction takes an action with an uncertain outcome, you might use their **Tier** rating to make a function roll and see how well it goes.
- ▶ When a cohort operates independently of the players and needs to overcome challenges, use their **quality** rating for a fortune roll.
- ▶ When a strange power manifests in the simulation with uncertain results, you might use its **magnitude** for a fortune roll.

If no trait applies, roll 1d for sheer luck or create a dice pool (from zero to four) based on the situation at hand. **If two parties are directly opposed**, make a fortune dice pool based on the differential between their relevant traits, then roll to see how the conflict goes.

*The crew has instigated a gang war between the Bluelight Society and the Tsuruga Clan (it wasn't that hard), and now they're watching eagerly to see how these two rivals harm each other. The GM notes that Tsuruga is currently **1 Tier above** Bluelight on the faction pyramid, and so the fortune die pool starts at 1 die (and the fortune outcomes will read relative to the Tsuruga Clan as the dominant faction). In addition, Tsuruga is receiving hidden support from one of the PCs, who has a personal stake in the outcome. The GM decides this qualifies as a Major Advantage for them, so adds +1d to the dice pool.*

*If the fortune roll turns up a 6 or **Crit**, then Tsuruga retains a decisive upper hand for now and likely achieves one or several goals. If the high roll is a 4/5, then Bluelight remains the underdog but are still in the fight. On a 1-3, a surprise reversal means that Tsuruga have significantly underperformed, and the tide is turning.*

The fortune roll is a great tool to help the GM manage the moving parts of the living simulation of World. A quick roll can be used to answer any yes or no question that the GM doesn't want to just outright adjudicate (you can also pair this with the **Consult the AI** tool, random tables on page xx that produce *theme* and *action* possibilities).

gather information

The players and GM are having a conversation about the fictional world that the player characters perceive. By default, the GM is telling the players what their users **perceive**, **suspect**, and **intuit**. Because the fictional reality of World is something that the PC's are native and well-attuned to, the GM shouldn't be hiding much: "this feels like an ambush" and "there's no way this jerk is telling the truth" are two powerful lines in the GM's descriptive toolkit. What the players do with information like that can often lead to great gameplay in *Hello, World*.

Still, there's too much going on to just say *everything* all the time—it would take forever and be boring. The players have a tool that lets them more fully investigate the fictional world and flag what they find interesting to hear more about: **gather information**.

If a question would be common knowledge to the users, the GM will simply answer it. If there is an obstacle to the discovery of the answer, then a function roll is called for. If the information is **not common knowledge but there's no significant obstacle**, we use a fortune roll to determine the quality of the information you gather.

gather information

*Ask a question and make an **action roll** or, if there is no obstacle, a **fortune roll**. The GM answers you honestly, with a level of detail depending on your **effect level**.*

Great: Exceptional details. Follow-up questions may expand into related areas or reveal more than you had hoped for.
Standard: Good details. Clarifying and follow-up questions are possible.
Limited: Incomplete or partial details. Rumors, speculation, and inference.

Use the function rating of the information-gathering method to determine the fortune dice pool when there isn't an obstacle. For example, you might **Link** with friends or allies to hear gossip about your target, or **Find** subtle details in official records and news articles that cover the topic. Each attempt to gather information takes time. If the situation allows, you can try again (usually through a different vector) if you don't initially get all the info that you want. But often the opportunity to learn is fleeting, and you'll only get one chance to roll for that particular question.

Some example questions are on the bottom of the character sheet. **The GM always answers honestly**, but with a level of detail according to the effect rolled.

investigations

Some questions are too complex to answer immediately with a single gather info roll. For instance you might want to map the labyrinth of abandoned excavation passageways beneath Arcturus and find out which tunnels the Mining Consortium is using to smuggle glitch-contaminated Isomorph... a time-consuming prospect. In these cases, start a **long-term project** that the crew will work on during **downtime** (see page xx).

Once the progress clock gets filled, you have the evidence you need to ask several questions about the subject of the investigation as if you had **great** effect.

coin

World is a post-scarcity paradise, but it's designers did not have the desire, or perhaps the imagination, to eliminate the concept of money from their creation. Or maybe we brought it with us when we arrived, painting a landscape of speculation across a blank economic canvas. Whatever the origins, cash is here to stay in World... for now.

The users of World have propagated countless "junk" currencies with wide gulfs in valuation. While basic goods are guaranteed to the populace free of charge, high-value commodities and luxury items are subject to intense price inflation driven by the volatility of the money markets. The difficulties of keeping pace with this tangle prompted the Sirian Central Bank (SCB) to create a central index of monetary value, one which could be pegged against the pace of inflation and make for a single point of reference for the people of World when discussing financial matters.

COIN is that abstract measurement of value. Anything less than a **COIN** is pocket change, anything more is a significant transaction. A single **COIN** is usually aggregated from a bundle of lesser, market-derived currencies, but once fused into **COIN** at an official exchange their values are frozen into the icon of value that **COIN** represents: timeless, liquid, and protected from the whimsy of the market.

The scraps of junk currency that the PCs might use in their daily lives are not tracked. If a user wants to "toss some crypto" around to achieve a small goal (bribe a process functionary or buy a cheap accessory, for example), use the crew's **TIER** for a fortune roll.

monetary values

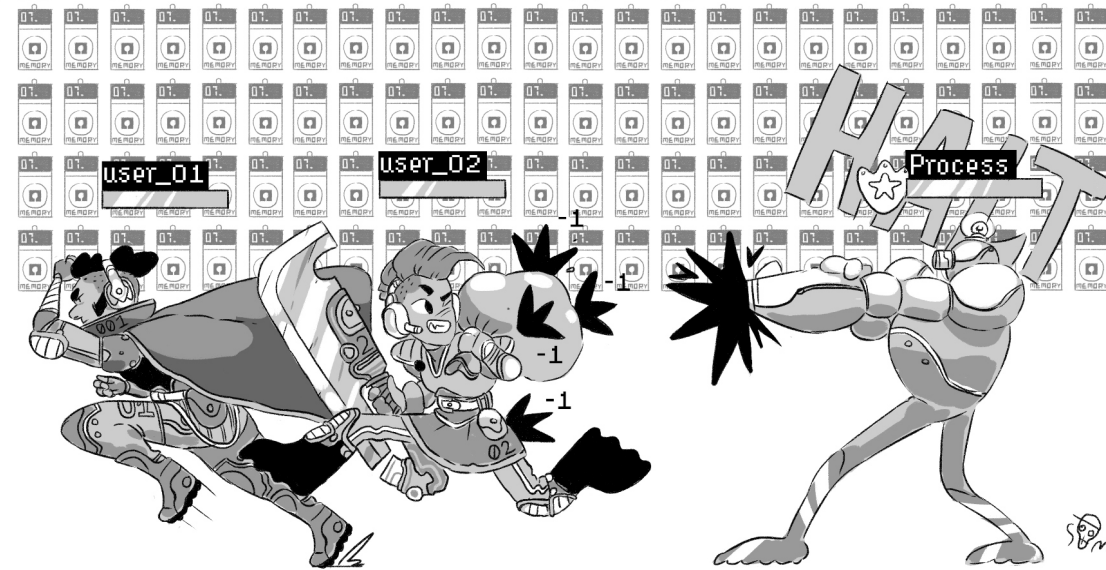
- ▶ **1 COIN:** A memchip stuffed with up-trending junk currencies. A cycle's wages for a skilled process. A vat of recycled slag or unprocessed ore, in need of refinement.
- ▶ **2 COIN:** A well-made weapon. A cycle's net income for a creative enterprise. A rare accessory for an avatar.
- ▶ **4 COIN:** A memcard densely packed with high-value sensitive information. A fine piece of art. An entire iteration's wages for a low-skill process.
- ▶ **6 COIN:** A refined isomorph gem. A staggering burden of bulk currency chips.
- ▶ **8 COIN:** An iteration's take for a small business. A safe full of valuables and Coin. A very rare luxury commodity. One of this season's hottest avatar sets.
- ▶ **10 COIN:** Liquidating a significant asset—a pristine luxury-performance vehicle, a majority shareholder stake in a large economic enterprise, a deed to a guildhall.

More than 4 **COIN** is an impractical amount to keep lying around or carry. You have to spend the excess or else exchange it for **REP** (see next page spread on **Factions**). A crew might be able to store more than 4 **COIN**, but only if they buy the necessary upgrade on their crew sheet. Any **COIN** beyond the limit must be spent as soon as possible or distributed among crew members.

One **COIN**'s worth of bulk currency takes up one **MEM** slot when carried.

Certain art objects or high-value commodities will have a denser ratio of **MEM-to-COIN**, but are intrinsically risky to carry around in public and cannot be divided up into smaller parcels as conveniently.

CHIP HEIST



Hey, you believe in this nonsense? Check it out:

"Coin, and the bulk currencies that underpin it, are held together by social trust in what they represent: a belief in World's stability, in the solvency of the Sirian Central Bank, and in the Administration which holds the fabric of reality together."

What a load of refuse! The Administration doesn't care about money, what would they even use it for? The Sirian Central Bank is just a cabal of frauds and speculators, staggering from one market crash to another. And World's stability? What the hash is that even supposed to mean?

No, the real currency here is trust between users. People, eh? Not that trash you keep in your wallet. Speaking of which, have you seen it lately? Your wallet.

Ha! You're gonna have to get up and goto quicker than that!~

~Dirty Sal

group play

Users in World have a lot going for them: immortality, free living spaces and entertainment... and yet this isn't enough for many. They want to make a mark and be remembered, they want their lives to mean something, they want enough Memory to recall every moment they cherish.

To get those things, they combine forces with others of like interest. World is limited by it's available hard disk space: all the prime real estate is taken. The power to reshape your environment is measured relative to the nearest strong rival: another user with hopes and dreams and the will to make their desires manifest. Will you be forgotten, or will you remake this World in your image?

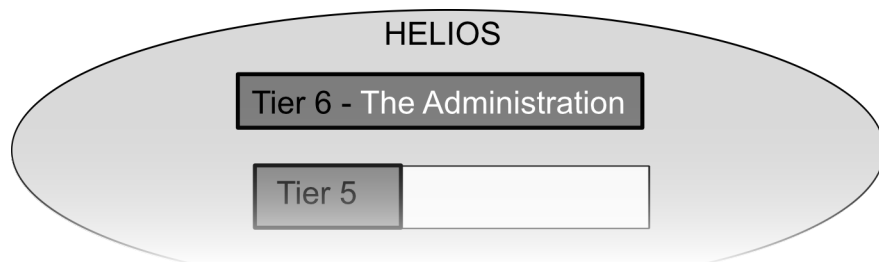
tier

When your group builds your crew in the first session, one thing you will do is determine what factions are connected or opposed to yours, as well as what **TIER** these start out (Crew creation is described fully on page 58). Every significant group in the social fabric of World has a **TIER**, which is a numerical measure of their influence, size, and prestige.

Your crew starts at **Tier 0**. You will use your crew's Tier number as the basis of fortune rolls that hinge on your crew's overall power level and influence. Additionally, your tier determines the quality level of your items as well as the **quality** and **scale** of the process cohorts your crew employs... factors that may often dictate position or effect for die rolls that test these qualities against other factions.

The highest tier ranking in World is Tier 6, which is reserved for a single faction: the ancient **Administration** which monitors and protects the users of World. If a coalition of users has risen to dominance for the moment, then they are the Tier V faction, and they (temporarily) become part of the power structure of World—the Administration will typically defer to them on everyday matters of politics and petty law. In this way the users with the most social weight in World dictate society's tastes through their influence.

If you look to the faction map in the handouts, you can see Administration and the Tier 5 faction (if there is one) are represented visually in the server of Helios, which most users rarely travel to. Helios is a forbidding landscape, pristine and anodyne, patrolled by powerful guardians.



Administration enforces their mandates by using a special power unique to World, called **Authority**. Authority functions are the forbidden developer tools of World, representing the immense power to reshape physics, create objects from nothing, or erase undesirable things. These special functions have been locked to be beyond the ordinary power of individual users, but your crew (and other factions!) can access Authority from time to time by cashing in the **REP** you earn from scores.

rep and development

Reputation, or **REP** for short, is a measure of your crew's renown and clout in World. It is the resource that your crew taps into to **TIER** up and wield **AUTHORITY**. Accruing more **REP** makes other factions take you seriously and helps you muster the free computing power that you need to develop and grow.

When you complete a score, your crew earns **2 REP**. If the target of the score is higher tier than your crew, you get **+1 REP per TIER higher**. If the target of the score is lower Tier, you get **-1 REP per TIER lower** (minimum zero). In addition, at any time the crew can spend **2 COIN** in order to gain **1 REP**... essentially buying yourself some exposure in a crowded media space. Sometimes if you have a whole bunch of coin and nothing better to spend it on you may wish to burn some of it away on rep to clear space in your crew's finite bank. Storage and security isn't free!

It takes **12 REP** to fill the **REP** tracker on your crew sheet. Excess Rep gained while your crew has 12 is lost. Once your track is filled, the only ways to spend **REP** are to use an **Authority** function (described on page 92) or to **TIER UP**.

increasing your crew's tier by using Authority

When your crew **wields Authority**, one of the questions your GM will ask will be "Does the outcome of this function provide the crew a new opportunity to Tier Up?" If the answer is affirmative, the GM will clear out or mark a location on the **Faction pyramid** in the appropriate Tier (one higher than your present Tier), as well as note how these effects ripple out into the social fabric.

This means that the next time your crew fills up it's **REP** track, you can **TIER UP**.

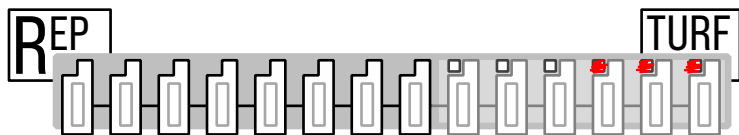
- ▶ Tiering up costs **COIN** equal to your **new tier x 6**. You also **clear your REP track** (although if you have *Turf* or *Leverage* you might be able to save a few rep as a discount, see the next page).

turf // leverage

Depending on what kind of crew you are, a significant method of contributing to your crew's development is by acquiring either **turf** or **leverage**. The **Dynasty** and **Council** seek to gain and hold physical "claims" which will include *Turf*, while the **Black Hats** and **Revisionists** are instead focused on the acquisition of "leverage," the ability to exert control over influential NPCs and members of other factions.



Seizing and holding territory—physical or social—is a direct claim to prestige within World. Because of the structure of World, successfully defending this territory adds to the computational power your crew has a monopoly over. Turf is actual physical land, while Leverage is more fleeting but also harder to attack directly. Whether your crew type controls turf or incepts leverage, holding this resource provides a stable basis for your **REP**. Each piece of turf or leverage that you hold reduces your **REP** costs by one.



If you hold 3 pieces of Turf like in the example above, you need only 9 REP to develop a higher tier or wield authority, instead of 12.

When you increase in Tier or use your Authority function, you will clear 9 REP marks, but keep the 3 turf marks. Mark turf starting on the right side and going to the left, to show how your "cap" decreases on how much REP is needed.

faction status

Your crew's **status** with each faction indicates how well you are liked or hated. Status is rated from -3 to +3, with zero (neutral) being the default starting status. You track your status with each faction on the faction sheet.

When you create your crew, you will assign some positive and negative status ratings to reflect recent history. The ratings then change over time based on your actions in play.

When you execute an operation, you might gain -1 or -2 status with factions that are hurt by your actions. You may also gain +1 status with a faction that your operation helps. Your status may also change if you do a favor for a faction or if you refuse one of their demands.

faction status levels

- ▶ **+3: Allies.** This faction goes out of its way to help you even when not in their best interest. They expect you to do the same and coordinate with them where possible.
- ▶ **+2: Friendly.** This faction will help you if it doesn't create serious problems for them. They expect you to do the same for them.
- ▶ **+1: Helpful.** This faction might help you if it carries no significant cost for them. They may ask for occasional favors in kind.
- ▶ **0: Neutral.**
- ▶ **-1: Interfering.** This faction will take an opportunity to cause trouble for you, or profit from your misfortune, as long as it carries no significant cost for them.
- ▶ **-2: Hostile.** This faction looks for opportunities to harm you. They take precautions against you, and expect that you are doing the same against them.
- ▶ **-3: War.** This faction actively goes out of its way to harm you. They take precautions against you and seek to undermine your defenses. While you are at war with any faction(s), your crew's PCs **only get one downtime action** rather than two. You can end a war by deresolving enough of the enemy that they are no longer a functional concern (this puts the faction on the Stack where they will plot their return), or by negotiating a mutual agreement to establish a new status rating.

advancement

Each player keeps track of the experience points (**xp**) that their user earns. During the game session, mark xp:

- ▶ When you make a **desperate function roll**. Mark 1 xp in the attribute for the function you rolled. For example, if you roll a desperate *Crash* action, you mark xp in **Stability**.

At the end of a session of play, take time as a group to review the **xp triggers** on your character sheets. For each one, mark 1 xp if it happened at all, or mark 2 xp if it happened a lot during the session. The xp triggers are:

- ▶ **Your playbook-specific xp trigger.** For example, the Breaker's is "Address a challenge with force or protection." To have addressed a challenge, your character should attempt to overcome an obstacle or threat of some kind. It doesn't matter if you succeeded or not. You get xp either way.
- ▶ **You expressed your beliefs, recall, heritage, or history.** Your beliefs are yours to define, session to session. You noted some information about your user's recall, heritage, and history during character creation, but you shouldn't feel constrained. Discovering or back-filling new details during the campaign is intended here!
- ▶ **You struggled with issues from your rivals or drifts.** You selected a rival in character creation, and you may have opportunities to acquire more in play. They are an entity who seeks to cause you trouble and interfere in your user's personal journey. As you play the game you may also acquire drifts from deresolution, which offer another opportunity for your character to experience difficulties (if you choose to play into them in game).

You can also earn xp from **framing a scene** as a downtime action during play. When you gain xp from your after-session triggers or from framing a scene, you mark xp in any of your attributes or in your playbook track.

frame a scene

Describe a scene involving your user that tells us something about them or opens up new questions. Mark **1 xp**. If your scene also created a **setback** or **complication** for the crew, instead mark **2 xp**.
You can Frame a Scene only once per downtime.

When you fill an xp track, clear all the marks and take an advance. When you take an advance from an attribute, you add an **additional function dot** to one of the functions under that attribute (up to a maximum of 3, unless your crew has a matching Mastery advance). When you take an advance from your playbook track, you may choose one of the following:

- ▶ Gain another **Special Ability**.
- ▶ Gain another **Memory** slot (up to 6 total).
- ▶ Gain another **Stress** box (up to 10 total).
- ▶ Fill in 2 more boxes of **Playbook Items**.
- ▶ Take a **Function dot** in any attribute (max of 3 unless your crew has Mastery).

characters

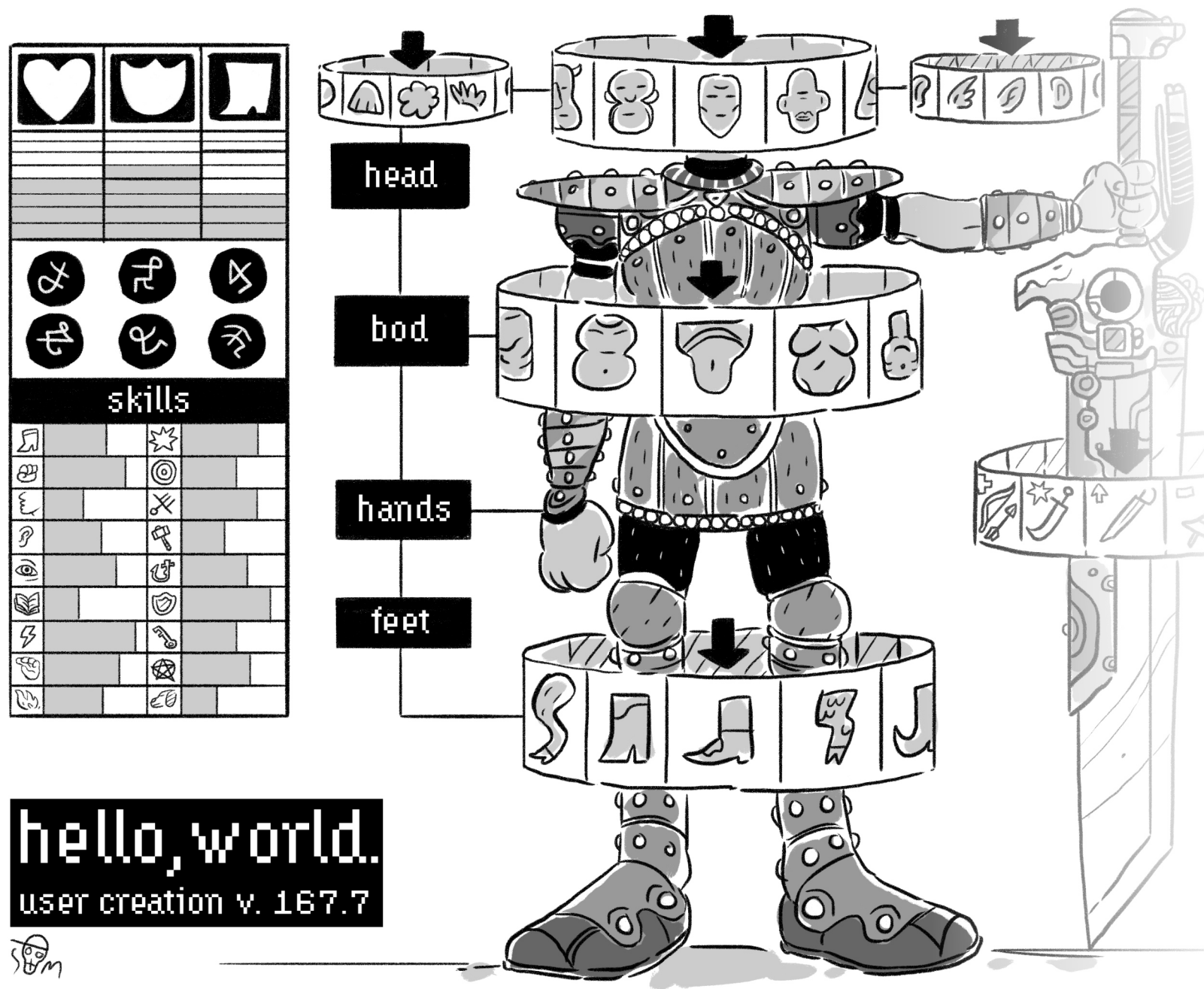
the end-users

World is a gilded cage purpose-made to contain you: a flickering utopia clouding your senses and judgment, pulling you down into a passive eternity of mindless consumption. The Administration is here to take care of everything, you've been told. This bargain for comfortable immortality was struck by a version of yourself that you no longer remember, and the prison chafes at you now. But this story isn't over; In fact, you're just getting started writing it.

The player characters in *Hello, World* are daring citizens of the World, an ancient heavenly construct suspended in simulation. Users are familiar with all the talents represented by the **functions** of the game. They're all able to **Crash** in a brawl, **Mask** themselves to sneak about, **Restore** objects from the archives, **Link** up with contacts for information, and so on.

Because of the way the dice system works, every user can roll at least 2d for any action in the game (+1d from Pushing or a Daemon's Bargain, and a +1d assist from a teammate). A roll of 2d is pretty good, statistically—a 75% chance of success. This means that all of the "zero rating" functions on your character sheet don't represent deficiencies or gaps of skill; they indicate the actions for which your character is likely to burn stress and rely on teamwork. With friends at your side and stress to burn, you can attempt almost anything.

Of course, you'll also have your specializations and skills, the qualities that make your character uniquely effective. You might want the ability to compel obedience from daemons and salvage valuables from the dreamscape of Archives, or maybe you want to manipulate the social networks of society to your advantage and see danger before it strikes, or maybe you just want to be the most powerful warrior to ever sling a giant sword over their back. In this chapter, you'll learn how to create your own unique user and choose the abilities that suit the style of play you prefer.



hello, world.
user creation v. 167.7



1 choose a playbook

A playbook is what we call the sheet with all the specific rules to play a certain character type in *Hello, World*. Rather than a general “user” sheet, the game has seven customized playbooks. By choosing a playbook, you’re choosing what type of user your character is. The playbooks are:

breaker

Breakers are good at winning fights and protecting their allies. Play a Breaker if you want to be the toughest customer in the room.

capacitor

Capacitors are good at creating havoc and molding the environment. Play a Capacitor if you want to reshape the World and unleash dangerous forces.

filcher

Filchers are good at being stealthy and infiltrating secure areas. Play a Filcher if you want to get the job done while staying off the radar.

roller

Rollers are good at piloting vehicles and greasing the wheels of society. Play a Roller if you want to ride fast and talk faster.

seeker

Seekers are good at tracking a mark and taking it down from afar. Play a Seeker if you want to choose your battles or be a lone gunslinger.

squawker

Squawkers are good at social situations and shifting the debate. Play a Squawker if you want to be the center of attention.

wielders

Wielders are good at handling daemons and keeping secrets. Play a Wielder if you want to meddle with the simulation and explore World’s mysteries.

When you choose a playbook, you’re mostly selecting a set of **special abilities** (which give your character methods to break the rules in various ways), a list of **specialist loadout gear** that your character might choose to have, and a set of **xp triggers** (which determine how you earn experience for character advancement). That said the playbooks can flex in many different ways. Think of your playbook as an area of focus and preference, but not a unique skill set. Your user may start with the initial function ratings and special abilities on their playbook, but you’re not defining their ‘true’ or immutable nature. They will grow and change over time; who they become is part of the fun of playing the game.

Playbook choice could potentially represent how other users see you. The names of the playbooks are slang in *World*. If someone solves all of their problems by headbutting them, people might say they are a “Breaker”. If they are a social butterfly and shrewd manipulator, they might be called a “Squawker”.

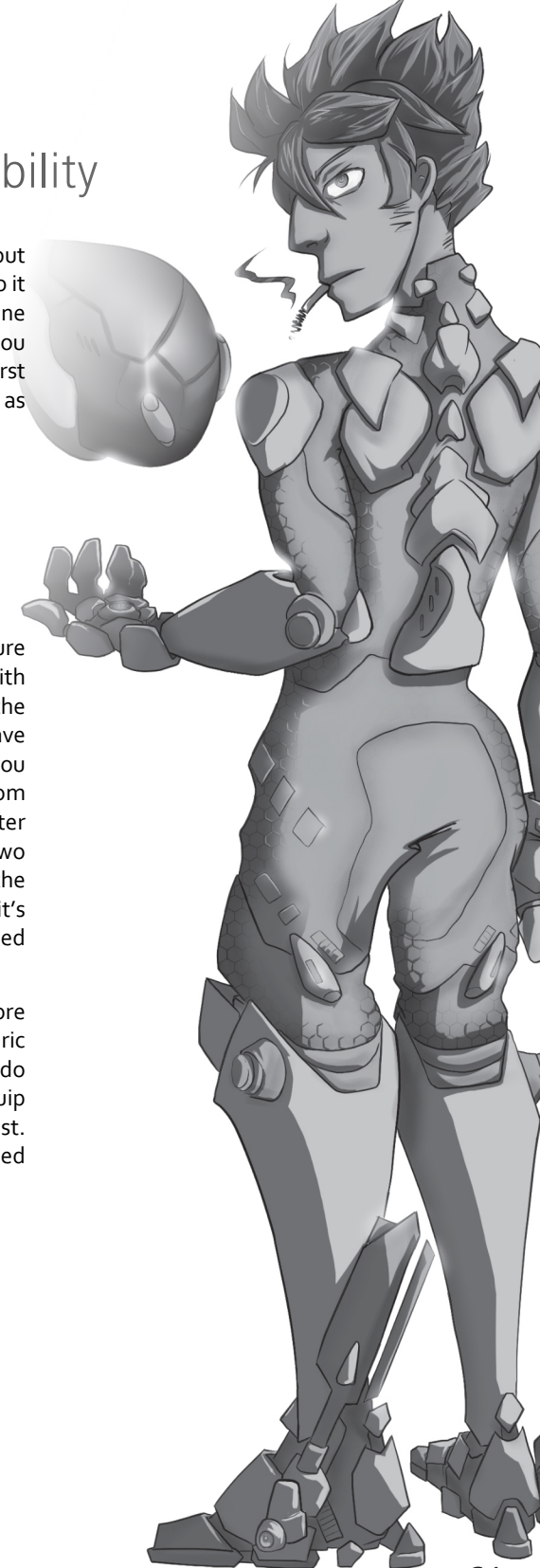
2 choose a special ability

This used to be one of the last steps, but everyone always does it right away anyway so it got moved up to here. Your character gets one starting special ability, so choose it now. If you can’t decide what to pick, try going with the first one on your playbook’s list—it’s placed there as a good default choice.

3 choose a loadout

Your loadout items are powerful, signature pieces of kit that your character carries with them at all times, and they help you do the things your playbook is good at. You don’t have access to all of them right away though! You can fill in **four boxes** worth of selections from the list. Pick things that fit your character concept or just seem fun. If an item has two linked boxes in front of it (for example, the “+armor” choice for each playbook) then it’s either unwieldy or hard to acquire and you need to fill both boxes to have access to it.

These specialty kit items are usually more specialized or powerful versions of the generic gear that every user has access to. They also do **not** require that you spend **Memory** to equip them in a score, unlike the generic gear list. Your user just has them whenever they need them.



4 choose a heritage

Now that you know a little about what makes your user special and the tools of their trade, it's time to dig into who they really are. Your user's **heritage** describes where in the World they hail from, and may include a detail about their attitude or origins. Because personal identities are so mutable and everyone's long-term memories are more than a little bit hazy, it's impossible to prove lineages and relations for the people of World. The only families are found ones.

Even so, archetypes of personality are occasionally ascribed to the denizens of the various servers and districts in World. Whether your user embraces, rejects, or ignores the assumptions others will make of them based on their origin is up to you. For more details about these people and places, see page xx.

When you choose a heritage, circle it on the list on your playbook, then write a detail if one comes to mind. If not, that's cool too: it might be fun to discover it in play (perhaps as your user comes to recover memories related to their past). The servers of World are outlined below, in descending order of relative population:

- ▶ The **Sidereal** are the most numerous of all Users, and hail from the urbanized commercial nexus of **Sirius**. They are regarded as well-connected and observant but dispassionate in their dealings, adaptations for the numbing sprawl of the big city. Sidereal avatars tend toward one of two extremes: either anonymous and concealed, or elegant and eye-catching.
- ▶ Users from the oceanic paradise of **Canopus** are called **Lunar**, and are considered adventurous, friendly, and eclectic owing to the server's seafaring origins and status as the trendy cultural hub of World. Lunar are characterized in media as having fashionable or creative avatars, an expectation that exhausts some of them.
- ▶ **Jovians**, hailing from the storm-blasted dunes of **Arcturus**, are hardy by necessity and typically possess practical or powerful-looking avatars. They are often generalized as independent, industrious, and confident people, though the upper caste of barons who direct Arcturus' industrial output are regarded as vicious, paranoid schemers.
- ▶ **Arcadians** were once inhabitants of the server **Argos**, which was placed under Administrative ban countless cycles ago. The diaspora scattered Arcadians and while they have found new homes among the other servers, the fading culture of Argos is something kept close by a sizable number who don't want to see the old ways lost. One common Arcadian tradition is the keeping of uncomfortable memories most users would throw away: it is said this grounds you closer to a time before users could freely select their identities at will. Arcadians sometimes have buggy or old-fashioned avatars, callbacks to the "Old Town" vibe of Argos.
- ▶ There are very few **Solar** in World according to census data. **Helios** is home to the Administration and shaped in the forbidding monolithic image of the angelic keepers of World's architecture. Users in Helios are typically high-ranking members of the Moderators or inner cabinets of the Administration, and these Solar tend to be regarded as self-important and stuffy compared to others (a reflection of the popular view on the Administration itself). Solar avatars have a tendency toward the ostentatious and the abstract.

5 choose a history

Your character's history describes what happened to them before they joined the crew. A new user beginning a campaign of *Hello, World* is "fresh off the stack", meaning they have just recently been reinitialized and are seeing the World through fresh eyes.

Choose one of the general background origins from the list on your playbook, then write a detail about it that's specific to your character. For example, you could choose **Resolution** and then write *neuroplast miner, retired*. Or perhaps you are an **Amnesiac** pursuing clues to your past based on a *Photographic Memento* you discovered among your possessions. The questions for each history choice are prompts to stir the imagination, you can use them or ignore them.

- ▶ **Amnesiac**: Your identity was corrupted by exposure to the Glitch, or maybe you data-locked your memories and tossed the key for reasons known only to your past self.
Who on your Friends list might have a clue about your past? Did you acquire your loadout items before or after your last recollection? If before, are there any unusual details or accessories among them that provide insight to your prior life?
- ▶ **Accident**: You were derezzed by an act of foul play after you got too close to the racket of someone with pull; a hostile Faction or an influential user or daemon.
Do you have proof, or just your suspicions? Your GM should be able to offer you a couple likely factions or contacts that could be involved for this. You can use this history to tie your character backstory into the crew's starting status relationships.
- ▶ **Convict**: There aren't a lot of laws to worry about in World, but you managed to break several of them anyway. The Administration had you sentenced to derogatory processing on the Stack, and you subsequently fulfilled the terms of your rehabilitation back into World.
Did you steal property, break avatars, fake identities, or something else? What promises to the probation committee did you make to gain your freedom?
- ▶ **Disrupted**: You were derezzed during a violent scuffle with other users, daemon loan sharks, or a gang of process working on behalf of an enemy.
Was somebody at your side when you fell (a Friend/Rival from your list, another player character)? Do you have unfinished business?
- ▶ **Resolution**: You decided you had to make a serious change of some kind: discarding a major aspect of your past life. The Stack was a way for you to set completely new parameters in your life.
Which aspect of your past self were you too attached to change? What was your past self still on the hook for, and who is looking for you in connection to that? What relationship do you regret throwing away?
- ▶ **Vacation**: Taking it easy on the Stack for awhile was a choice you made to cool off the heat on you... or because World itself had simply gotten to be too much.
A lot has changed since you've been gone. What do you miss most about the iteration you left behind? What surprising development, now utterly normal to everyone else, has you most excited?

6 assign three function dots

Your playbook begins with two function dots already placed. You get to add **three** more dots (so that you'll have five total). At the start of the game, no function rating may have more than two dots (unless a special ability tells you otherwise). Brief descriptions of all the functions are on page xx. If you're looking for guidance, try assigning your three dots like this:

- ▶ Put one dot in any function that you feel reflects your character's **heritage**.
- ▶ Put one dot in any action that you feel reflects your character's **history**.
- ▶ Assign one more dot anywhere that you want (max rating is 2, remember).

7 choose one friend and one rival

Each playbook has a list of NPCs that your character knows. Choose one from the list who is a close relation (a good friend, lover, former cohort, etc.). Mark the upward-pointing triangle next to their name. Then choose another NPC on the list who is your rival or enemy. Mark the downward-pointing triangle next to their name.

Your friend will be able to help you out in downtime actions, while your rival gives you XP anytime you let them complicate your life. The NPCs you don't select in this step might become friends or rivals later, look out for opportunities to include them in the game!

8 choose your recall

Your identity is shaped by the memories you have chosen to hold onto. These memories might be yours, or acquired from others (manufactured memories are an entire industry in World). You might dote on old dreams, or be chasing new "designer memory" fads.

Many users in World are in thrall to a treasured memory which is their refuge when dealing with stress. Choose your user's favored recall from the list, and describe it on the line above with specific details. Your signature memory could even combine characteristics. For example, you might choose **Lucid** and **Bitter**, then write "*Fighting for a lost friend, but no matter what I try my last punch never lands.*"

Your user can go to this favored memory when they **Indulge Memories** in downtime to recover stress, or you might visit a memory purveyor instead.

- ▶ **Bitter:** *Never forget what they did. Never forgive what happened.*
- ▶ **Calm:** *A time before all this, when World seemed to move slower.*
- ▶ **Deep:** *A dream adrift, a memory buried beneath perception.*
- ▶ **Helpless:** *Nobody should ever have to feel how you felt.*
- ▶ **Joyous:** *A sensation of serene happiness, now long distant.*
- ▶ **Lucid:** *What do you keep trying to change within the memory?*
- ▶ **Nightmare:** *Keep your phobias close, lest they conspire against you in darkness.*
- ▶ **Weird:** *You could not even begin to explain the things that you've seen.*

9 record your name & look

Choose a name for your character from the sample list, or create your own. If your character uses an alias or nickname, you might record it. Alternatively, you might have a "designator" (ie. a last name) which dates back to World's origins.

Record a few evocative words that describe your user's look (samples are provided below). Users get to define their own personal characteristics within certain parameters (you have to fit bipedal human-like standards, but the sky is basically the limit after that). When you **Echo** or **Mask** you might temporarily amplify, alter, or conceal your visual signature outside of the baseline.

sample names and looks

Names

Adam, Alpha, Alice, Amp, Apex, Axiom, Babylon, Baroness, Ball, Bios, Black, Bravo, Cardinal, Case, Cluster, Cross, Damien, Darius, Drake, Ender, Eleven, Foxtrot, Four, Gabriel, Gem, Green, Hawk, Host, Indigo, Integer, Jack, Janus, Jazz, Joule, Khan, Klick, Lime, Link, Marko, Molly, Mouse, Muse, Nasir, Nine, Nihei, Noise, November, Null, Olympia, Ohm, Omar, Omega, Pink, Pursuit, Quora, Ram, Ratio, Red, Rex, Reina, Ruby, Seven, Samba, Silver, Silk, Stack, Swing, Tango, Telos, Trinity, Vapor, Veritas, Victoria, Waltz, Wave, Wolf, Zander, Zeke

Designators

Aldric, Armitage, Booker, Cambridge, Cook, Clarke, Crowley, Denton, Dick, Dyson, Gaiman, Gibson, Harper, Herbert, Jaynes, Jensen, Keung, King, Liu, Lebeau, Le Guin, Marquez, Morgan, Ota, Packard, Prichard, Santiago, Shepherd, Shirow, Stephenson, Tsutomu, Valencia, Walker, Wren, Wu

Looks

tall and olympian, sleek and strong, thin and refined, gorgeous and stylized, cute and soft, angular and ominous, stock and unremarkable, other

bald, luminous hair, heroic hair, hair like falling starlight, hair like rising flames, hair like drifting fog, hair like enveloping dusk.

fleshy skin, opal skin, ashen skin, jade skin, onyx skin, raven skin, translucent.

Fantasy Armor, Angular Ruffles, Avant-Garde, Pastel Bodysuit, Glowing Stripes, Practical Techwear, Formal Gown, Fancy Makeup, Elaborate Jewelry, Masqued, Helmeted, Hooded.

Anonymous, Extravagant, High-Fidelity, Low-Resolution

Glitch-Scarred, Shrouded, Glowing, Shadowed, Energized, Whimsical.



playbook// breaker

a physical combatant and defender

The action-packed battlefields of World seem to be free from lasting damage, pain or consequence. Users place unthinking trust in their immortality and spend their cycles acting out flimsy, reproducible lives. However, those who specialize in exerting physical power through training, weaponry, and presence have discovered a paradox lurking in the code: in this World you can only preserve what you love if you're willing to suffer for it.

When you play a Breaker, you earn xp when you address a challenge with force or protection. You have chosen to live on the frontline of World's carefree but tumultuous conflicts. By mastering your body as a projection of might and defence, you put the impermanence of World to the test.

What can't you let go of without a fight? Do you have a personal code or a line you won't cross? What have you broken that you shouldn't have, and improbable though it may seem, what would break you for good?

starting functions/

buffer [● | ● ● ● ○]

crash [● | ● ● ● ○]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Blade

Crash +1, Goto +1, Mask +1.
Soul Edge.

Bouncer

Buffer +1, Find +1, Link +1.
Intimidator.

Bruiser

Buffer +1, Crash +1, Ping +1.
Volcano Buster.

Bulwark

Buffer +1, Restore +2.
Guardian.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **Blue**, a prize fighter. *Perhaps a vicious gladiator in it for the glory, or an amnesiac prodigy with nothing left to give?*
- ▶ **Emm**, a rogue Process. *Perhaps an innocent anomaly in need of protection, or a firebrand itching to revolt?*
- ▶ **F31x**, a viral cat merchant. *Perhaps a gleeful distributor of restricted arms, or a purveyor of irresistibly unique memories?*
- ▶ **Reynald**, an amnesiac knight. *Perhaps a wizened warrior with an ear to the ground, or a quixotic crusader from another iteration of World?*
- ▶ **Zed**, a glitch-scarred hunter. *Perhaps the lone remnant of a factional dispute, or a doom-saying survivalist who's seen too much?*

breaker special abilities

Hyper-Armor

You may spend **1 memory** to **resist** damage or another consequence from physical combat, or to **push yourself** for a feat of endurance.

You can use this ability as often as you have memory to spend, but never more than once per consequence or function roll. If you use this ability to push yourself, you get one of the benefits (+1d, +1 effect, or act despite level 4 harm) but you don't take 2 stress. If you use this ability to resist damage, your GM will tell you how much stress is avoided based on the situation.

Distortion Field

You may imbue your avatar with a powerful energy field. While doing so, you gain **potency** in combat against Administrators. You may also grapple with manifestations of the Glitch in order to contain or redirect it.

When you imbue yourself, what does it look like? Potency makes it easier for you to deal harm or cause other effects on Administrators using combat functions, but it does not necessarily protect you from their retaliation. Ordinarily the Glitch is too unstable to be manipulated, but your energy field also lets you push it around.

Guardian

When you **protect** a teammate, take **+1d** to the **resistance** roll. Whenever you take Level 2 or higher **Harm**, you may avoid **+1 additional stress** for it.

*The **protect** teamwork maneuver lets you face a consequence for a teammate. If you choose to resist that consequence, this ability gives you a bonus die to your resistance roll (if applicable). Also, when you choose to take Harm in order to reduce incoming damage you avoid more (for example, if you are taking 3 points of damage and download it into Level 2 Harm you would not take any leftover stress at all).*

Intimidator

Your cruelty overrides the natural pain tolerance of World. When you threaten violence against a User or Process, you may **Buffer** them in order to force them to reveal information, focus on you, or flee from you. When you **gather information** through threats or coercion, you get **+1 effect**.

It is usually not possible to frighten people in World in this way: how do you do it? Is it specialist knowledge about the pain coding of World, or are you just unusually effective at leveraging the fears of your enemies? When you use this ability to coerce information out of unwilling sources, you more detailed information (extra effect).

Restoration Protocol

During **Refresh** in downtime, you or an ally you choose may clear their lowest level of **Harm** for free (after clearing Level 1 Harm as normal).

This ability frees up room in downtime for other action, especially if you get into lots of tough fights. You can use it on your allies or yourself, so it's pretty flexible.

Shock and Awe

Your ordnance reserves are deep: mark **+1 Memory limit**. When you accept a **Daemon's Bargain** related to excessive collateral damage or gratuitous force of arms, take an additional **+1d** on the function roll if nobody is **assisting** you.

More memory lets you mark off more spare equipment, like ammo or weapons. If you have a wide berth to fully deploy your armament, the second part of this ability lets you get better benefits from Bargains having to do with over-the-top arcade violence.

Soul Edge

One of your weapons is alive. Name it and choose two of the following traits for it: *flirty – glitchy – irrational – melancholy – noisy – sadistic – treacherous*. You gain an additional **xp trigger**: *You experienced complications due to your living weapon's traits*. If the entire crew was impacted by those complications, also mark **1 crew xp**.

A sentient weapon helps you level faster, but is otherwise a liability (it's a hero's curse).

Volcano Buster

When you **push yourself**, you may choose one of the following additional benefits: *shatter bonds or barriers and act immediately – unleash a weapon's signature trait (this might break defenses, drive a foe closer or farther, inflict a lingering malady, or similar).*

When you push yourself to activate this ability, you still get one of the normal benefits of pushing yourself (+1d, +1 effect, etc.) in addition to the special ability.

Smashing through obstacles gives you the chance to act suddenly in the scene, which might improve your position or effect against surprised opposition. "Unleashing a signature trait" lets you reveal new things about the weapon ... perhaps it transforms into a different shape or unloads an elemental charge?

breaker loadout

- ▶ **Attuned Nodecutter**: A finely-crafted heavy blade shaped to your specifications, capable of severing network nodes and Users with equal efficiency. More reach and hits harder than a standard melee weapon. *Yours could take the form of a massive sword, battleaxe, chainsaw, scythe, ōdachi, or similar.* [2 boxes]
- ▶ **Energized Arc Wheel**: A powered arc wheel which can be thrown with additional velocity to make fancy trickshot ricochets and slash distant targets. One good flick of the wrist can send it on a viciously-unpredictable trajectory. [1 box]
- ▶ **Killer Jacket**: Sometimes what you do is the message, but a good breaker knows that how you look is often all the message you'll ever need. *What logo or phrase is displayed on the back?* [1 box]
- ▶ **Lightbarrier**: Heavier armor than a standard shieldbelt, this hard light construct makes the wearer even harder to injure. Some breakers shape their lightbarriers into anachronistic forms like a shield or suit of armor. [2 boxes, +Armor]
- ▶ **Overflow Shells**: Fragmenting spark mag shells intended to cause localized buffer overruns upon detonation. Effective for harassment and area control, but poor at stopping determined heavy targets. [1 box, 2 uses]
- ▶ **Shock Weaponry**: A sparking lash, mace, chain, or gauntlets that make you an unpleasant proposition to face in hand-to-hand combat. Disruptive to users, but not very efficient at getting a quick and clean derez. [1 box]



playbook// capacitor

a wellspring of power and change

World is a farcical playground, full of limitations and boundaries, carefully custodied by authorities comfortable in their own rights. Users are free to act only in ways deemed 'safe' for the simulation, drowning their liberties in cheap convenience. Most are only too happy to play along, but not you. You have harnessed the immense flows of energy that permeate the fabric of this reality, the potential for great growth and change denied to the people.

When you play a Capacitor, you earn xp when you address a challenge with chaos or construction. You hold the reins to unimaginable power—enough perhaps to break even World's illusions and free everyone from their pleasant prisons. Tap into the ancient threads of creation and show them what you're truly capable of.

How did you first encounter the true power of World? Were you trained in harnessing these energies for an official purpose, or did you teach yourself? What made you like this, and what will you stop at nothing to change?

starting functions/

crash [● ● ● ●]
 restore [● ● ● ●]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Architect

Buffer +1, Goto +1, Restore +1.
 Twisting.

Catalyst

Buffer +1, Restore +1, Echo +1.
 Conduit.

Herald

Find +1, Mask +1, Restore +1.
 The Board.

Reactor

Crash +1, Ping +2.
 Overcharge.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **Beryl**, a rogue architect. *Perhaps they build in faults and exploits for a price, or they've seen too far past the facade to play along anymore?*
- ▶ **n0x**, a caustic viral cat. *Perhaps a scheming broker of your power, or a hungry stray merely attracted to it?*
- ▶ **Telos**, an ex-Moderator. *Perhaps knows something undisclosed about your power, or was stripped of status in your destructive wake and now seeks justice?*
- ▶ **The Board**, alien observers. *Perhaps mysterious daemons or administrators using you as a catspaw, or something truly beyond understanding?*
- ▶ **Varik**, a neon cultist. *Perhaps a fervent worshipper of your might, or a rival for the favor of your benefactors?*

capacitor special abilities

Overcharge

When you **push yourself**, you may choose one of the following additional benefits: *You are wreathed in destructive energies and cannot be safely approached - A structure or item you restore gains a surprising temporary feature.*

When you push yourself to activate this ability, you still get one of the normal benefits of pushing yourself (+1d, +1 effect, etc.) in addition to the special ability.

While you "are wreathed in energies", it becomes dangerous to be near you and you may have improved position or effect. If you add a feature to something, you get to amend World's timeline: discovering new things about objects you summon back into being.

Amplify

You are an expert at remotely boosting your allies. Up to two times per score, **assist** an ally without spending Stress.

What does it look like when you channel energy to an ally, and how does it help them?

Conduit

Your avatar is able to conduct massive amounts of computational energy. You may trigger an **Authority Function** without spending the normal cost directed by your crew sheet, however when you do so you must **Deresolve** at the end of the scene.

This ability will burn out your character sooner rather than later, but in the meantime you'll be able to throw around some immense power. Authority access is tightly regulated in World, so what trick or secret lets you override the controls that keep them out of the hands of most users?

Danger Zone

When you **Crash** a nearby area to damage infrastructure or make it hazardous to occupy, you may choose to gain either **potency** or **increased scale**.

Potency means that the action is even more effective or concentrated than usual, while increased Scale means you'll get to affect a larger area. This ability gives you stronger options when you destabilize your environment. To trigger this ability you have to be targeting terrain and not entities, but maybe if you are lucky the collateral effects will cause significant carnage to those in the area anyway.

Ignite

Pain is temporary but power is forever. Whenever you **do not resist damage** (ie. you do not use armor, damage-reducing abilities, or download any Harm), gain **greater effect** on your next function in this scene. When you would **Deresolve**, you may first perform a final function ignoring any Harm penalties.

The first part of this ability lets you retaliate with improved power anytime you let yourself take the full Stress damage from a consequence. The second part of this ability lets you get the last word even when you're being taken out of the action: you get to perform one last function and you won't take any Harm penalties on it!

Parakinetics

You may **spend 1 memory** to **resist** damage or another consequence from gravity or hazardous terrain, or to **push yourself** for a feat of mayhem.

You can use this ability as often as you have memory to spend, but never more than once per consequence or function roll. If you use this ability to push yourself, you get one of the benefits (+1d, +1 effect, or act despite level 4 harm) but you don't take 2 stress. If you use this ability to resist damage, your GM will tell you how much stress is avoided based on the situation.

The Board

You owe allegiance to a mysterious executive cabal. They transmit their paralogical desires to you via dream-like liminal messages: add *Commune* to your **Recalls**. You gain an additional **xp trigger**: *You advanced an agenda that was revealed to you while Communing.*

"Paralogical" means that The Board's goals frequently seem at cross-purposes or simply bizarre on their face. The membership of The Board is a secret to you. Are you a loyal pawn, or a reluctant hostage of the Board's demands? Do you try to hide your actions taken on behalf of The Board from the rest of your crew?

Twisting

You can selectively alter or degrade local environmental factors (gravity, lighting, magnetics, etc.). Take **+1d** when performing **Setup** functions that manipulate terrain or environmental conditions to favor you or an ally.

Setup functions prepare the crew for a better position or effect on their future action. The first part of this ability gives you license to describe weird and ominous effects happening near you.

capacitor loadout

- ▶ **Corroder Shells**: Nasty pieces of work primed with acid or incendiary elements. Can be loaded into a Sparkmag or chamber-injected into a Sparkblaster. *Adds troublesome maintenance cycles to the weapon.* [1 box, 2 uses]
- ▶ **Environmental Seals**: Commonly seen on Explorator teams probing the edges of Glitch sites, off-line partitions, and other hazardous fringe zones. *Replace the filters and distortion sinks regularly when in active use.* [2 boxes, +armor]
- ▶ **Glyph Cube**: A palm-sized artifact that periodically rearranges itself according to higher-dimensional logic. A focus that helps you warp nearby physical spaces and move things with your mind, for constructive or chaotic purposes. [2 boxes]
- ▶ **Sparkblaster Custom**: A modded weapon on a hair trigger, this volatile proton blunderbuss has had the "unnecessary" safety blocks and power cell limiters removed. *Beware of self-disruptive feedback if mishandled.* [2 boxes]
- ▶ **Utility Spheres**: Balls of memory-fluid adaptive material. Can be **Restored** to adhere to surfaces, assume common shapes, and harden. *Often used as temporary patches for infrastructural issues by World's maintenance process.* [1 box, 2 uses]
- ▶ **Volt Imp**: An ugly, cherubesque pico-daemon with a jolting cackle that won't stop following you around. Literally only useful for acts of uncoordinated mischief and mayhem, at the accomplishment of which it is considered an **Expert**. *Absolutely should not be trusted near sensitive equipment.* [1 box, Cohort]



playbook// **filcher**

a thief, a spy, a ghost in the machine

In the digital utopia of World, no one is ever truly alone. Timestamps trace your position and activity with callous accuracy while social networks, candid auto-selfies, and ticker feeds broadcast everyone's business into the cathode ray sky, a suffocating panorama of casual surveillance. Fools think that there are no secrets left to keep. You know better, because you keep them.

When you play a Filcher, you earn xp when you address a challenge with stealth or agility. Hiding from the all-seeing eye takes skill, patience, and dedication. The secret society of Filchers recognizes no official roster, but demands a heavy price of membership nonetheless. Suit up and take to the shadows, where a new World awaits.

What appeals to you most about stealth: the valuables you can filch, the peace that solitude brings, or something else? What secrets are you determined to find behind World's mask? What are you hiding from, and what will happen if you are caught?

starting functions/

goto [● | ● ● ○]

mask [● | ● ● ○]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Assassin

Crash +1, Mask +1, Ping +1.
Null Actor.

Gorgon

Echo +2, Link +1.
Lost Cycles.

Infiltrator

Goto +1, Mask +1, Ping +1.
Ghosting.

Phantom

Echo +1, Mask +1, Goto +1.
Noclip.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **Getr**, an art thief. *Perhaps a partner in crime, or a petty rival seeking to blow your cover?*
- ▶ **Jayel**, a cryptographer. *Perhaps a white hat selling memory security, or a master headcracker?*
- ▶ **k1t**, a viral cat info broker. *Perhaps an envoy for a dangerous patron, or an obsessed fan who speaks too readily of your exploits?*
- ▶ **Penel**, an aristocrat. *Perhaps a furious victim of theft, or a masked vigilante leading a double life?*
- ▶ **Sarif**, an investigator. *Perhaps an ally on the inside of the Mod team feeding you jobs and intel, or an implacable pursuer you can't seem to shake off?*

filcher special abilities

Ghosting

You may spend **1 memory** to **resist** damage or another consequence from detection or security measures, or to **push yourself** for a feat of stealth.

You can use this ability as often as you have memory to spend, but never more than once per consequence or function roll. If you use this ability to push yourself, you get one of the benefits (+1d, +1 effect, or act despite level 4 harm) but you don't take 2 stress. If you use this ability to resist damage, your GM will tell you how much stress is avoided based on the situation.

Legwork

When you **gather information** through clandestine observation, gain **+1 effect level**. Your **flashbacks** involving prior preparation of a target area cost **1 less stress** (to a minimum of 0).

The bonus effect level means that your gather information rolls give you more detail. Flashbacks let you narrate and roll dice for a function that your user did "off-screen" in the past that changes the current circumstances to your benefit, which is something you might use a lot if your character is a well-prepared professional.

Lost Cycles

Whenever you socially interact with a user or process, you may spend **1 stress** to ensure one of the following: *after a few cycles they lose all memory of your identity and role in the interaction – they cannot focus on tasks or recall important facts while you continue to non-confrontationally interact with them.*

If you take the first option, the victim's memory of you is removed entirely, which isn't very remarkable in World and so might go completely unnoticed unless they're highly security-conscious. The second option makes you somehow compelling or irresistible, hampering the mental capacity of your target above and beyond an ordinary distraction. Daemons and Administrators are immune to this ability!

Mindcrime

Your fingers are so light they can lift things that cannot be stolen. After you steal a sliver of Order from an Administrator, you may spend it to use one of the crew's **Authority** functions (do not spend the normal cost directed by your Crew sheet). Gain **potency** against the security measures of *Helios*.

What do you have to do to an Administrator to achieve this? What does the sliver look like? The second half of this ability helps you when you're trying to break into the high-level secured areas of Helios, the sacred territory of the Administration.

Noclip

Spend **1 stress** to briefly dart through obstacles. You may spend additional stress 1-for-1 to add additional features: *It lasts for a few cycles rather than ticks – You cannot be directly observed while phasing – You can also see through barriers before going through.*

This ability empowers you to walk through walls for 'a few ticks' (ie. seconds). If you spend additional stress, you can extend the effect for additional benefits which may improve your position or effect for function rolls, depending on the circumstances.

Null Actor

When you strike from hiding, take **+1d**. Whenever you derez a User, no matter the method, it is always logged as "accidental injury" in the timeline (take no additional **Heat** in Payoff if you were the only one to cause a derez).

The second part of this ability only works if no other violent derezzes occurred during the score! Administrative attention will be drawn to the matter otherwise, negating the cover of your ability.

Shadow Dance

When you **push yourself**, you may choose one of the following additional benefits: *perform a legendary feat of acrobatics - maneuver to confuse your enemies so they attack each other, disarm themselves, or reveal a weak point.*

When you push yourself to activate this ability, you still get one of the normal benefits of pushing yourself (+1d, +1 effect, etc.) in addition to the special ability.

If you "perform a legendary feat", you might climb a sheer surface, tumble safely from a massive fall, leap an incredible distance, balance on a razor-thin wire, etc. If you "maneuver to confuse your enemies", the GM might make a fortune roll to see how badly they harm or interfere with each other or themselves.

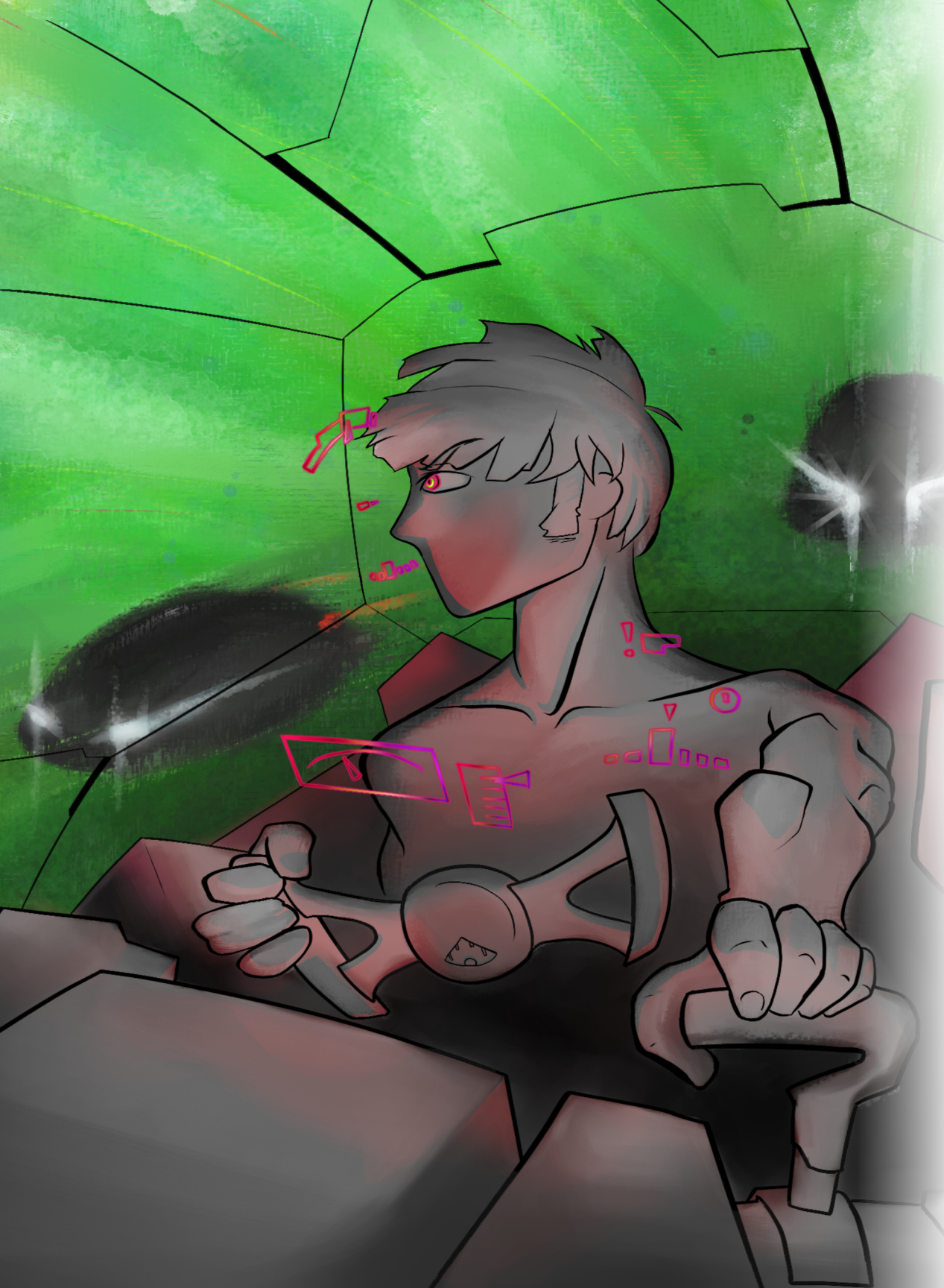
Steady Handed

Whenever you roll a **6** on a **controlled function**, you may clear **1 stress** (if you had **pushed yourself** on the roll, instead clear **2 stress**).

It doesn't always make sense to seek lots of bonus dice on Controlled function rolls (since you can take a freebie and go to a Risky roll or try something else if it goes badly), but this ability offers an advantage for pushing yourself to hit your first shot perfectly.

filcher loadout

- ▶ **Boosted Grappling Gear:** A high-pressure line gun with powered retraction, load-bearing cables, and slim-fit harness tailored to your center of gravity. *No rooftop is safe from this professional kit. [1 box]*
- ▶ **Chameleonsuit:** Stay still for longer than a couple ticks and this fancy jumpsuit will start to blend right in. Unfortunately it can be confused by strobing lights or other overwhelming environments. *Warning: Don't set it down and forget! [2 box]*
- ▶ **Encrypted Memory Knife:** A perfectly-balanced blade with a sophisticated memory-sifting hilt, capable of both deep cuts and daring thefts. Biometrically locked to answer to you alone. *Does it have a personalized trinket or look? [1 box]*
- ▶ **Holo Bomb:** A payload of smoke and distracting click-bait popups to confuse the unprepared and enable a stealthy escape. *Yours are loaded with chaff tape to confound even artificial scans. [2 load, +Armor]*
- ▶ **Infiltrator Goggles:** Sees into wavelengths invisible to the User's eye so you can prowl around confidently in a total blackout. *Beware, they are sensitive pieces of kit that can be dazzled by sudden lighting changes or overloaded by voltage. [1 box]*
- ▶ **Peeper Shells:** Single-shot specialist munition that can be thrown or propelled from a tube launcher (comes included), a peeper sticks to surfaces and transmits audio-visual data back to you for a few cycles before burning out. *A few cycles is like a few minutes. [1 load, 2 uses]*



playbook// roller

pilot and captain, mover and shaker

Sometimes the simulation moves too fast for normal people to react. Blistering exchanges of market data, self-iterating trends of art and fashion, the subtle surface tension of business rippling through every vacant gesture and remark. Sometimes all users can do is act out their bit parts in the little corners of World carved out for them. If you're not a Roller, the freedom of this high-stakes game of chance may pass you by entirely. If you are? World is your oyster, and there's no telling who you'll meet, or how high you can go.

When you play a Roller, you earn xp when you address a challenge with speed or coordination. Your ride, a dynamic and stylish expression of yourself, is a gateway to a community, not merely a shiny piece of hardware. By securing the pathways to profit and power, you enfranchise not only yourself but your allies and acquaintances as well.

What's the story behind your ride? Where did you get it, and who still has their strings on you for it? Do you take jobs outside the crew, or is that life over now? Are there any rules you won't break, or lines you won't cross?

starting functions/

goto [● | ● ● ● ○]

link [● | ● ● ● ○]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Dealer

Find +2, Link +1.
Always Be Rolling.

Smuggler

Echo +1, Goto +1, Mask +1.
Courier License.

Hellraiser

Crash +2, Goto +1.
Dynamic Entry.

Ringleader

Buffer +1, Echo +1, Link +1.
Shot Caller.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **boris**, a viral cat loan shark. *Perhaps you owe them big for your life, or even bigger, for your ride?*
- ▶ **Chops**, hell on two wheels. *Perhaps you once rode together and derezzed together, or they sold you out for unknown reasons?*
- ▶ **J.T.**, a delinquent courier. *Perhaps a well-connected source for valuables, or a stooge carrying something too dangerous to handle alone?*
- ▶ **Rarity**, a lux ride sculptor. *Perhaps you like to talk shop over a brand new rig, or perhaps they want your ride for spare parts?*
- ▶ **Takura**, a street racer. *Perhaps a gateway to an underworld trade racket, or the only driver who's ever rolled you?*

roller special abilities

Daredevil

When you attempt a **desperate function**, you may take **+1d** to your roll if you also take **-1d** to any **resistance** rolls against the consequences.

This special ability is for those who like to gamble when the chips are down. The bonus die is great and can combine with assistance, pushing, or bargains to get a big pool of dice to roll, but if you suffer desperate consequences they'll be very costly to resist. That said, if you can just roll a 6 it's no big deal right?

Always Be Rolling

The folks you ride with are well-connected. When you **reduce heat** or **acquire asset** in downtime, take **+1 effect level** and you get to hear a rumor, which is either: *potentially bad for someone you dislike – potentially good for someone you like*.

Your array of connections can be leveraged to loan assets, pressure vendors to offer you better deals, buy-off witnesses, etc. In addition, you get hints of information that can flesh out the world around you. These rumors can be a source of story collaboration with the table, or your GM may roll on a random chart to generate a story seed for you.

Courier License

Movement of goods or people across district and server boundaries draws no suspicion for you, except in extraordinary circumstances. When you are present for the execution of a **Transport** plan, take **+1d** to the **engagement** roll.

Courier licenses are respected by almost all factions, whether criminal or legitimate. This might give you an advantage when you leverage the respectability of your license during a challenge, but it also means those who deal in information brokerage will be very interested in catching hints about your cargo and destination.

Dynamic Entry

You may take **2 stress** at any time to do one of the following: *Crash into an ongoing scene, ignoring all barriers – Name an exit and get out of here, right the hell now.*

When you "crash into an ongoing scene", you usually can't have been present during the scene previously (unless it's dramatically appropriate and the whole table agrees it works). When you "name an exit and get out" nothing can stop you, but you might still have to perform a function roll to find out how well it goes if you try to take somebody or something else out with you.

Nothing Personal

Betrayals, vendettas, and tough breaks are just another part of life for you. When you take direct action against an **At War** (-3) faction, former **Ally**, or **Rival** to show them why you and yours shouldn't be crossed, you may **push yourself** for free.

"Direct action" means you have to be confronting them, avatar-to-avatar, over their transgressions. Rollers can't back down!

Prime Mover

Due to the energy you bring to the crew, during downtime you may give yourself or another crew member **+1 downtime activity**.

If you forget to use this ability during downtime, you can still activate it during the score and flashback to a previous downtime when the extra activity happened.

Shot Caller

When you lead a **group function**, you can suffer only **1 stress** at most regardless of the number of failed rolls.

This special ability is good for covering your allies. If they're bad at an action you are coordinating, you don't have to worry about suffering lots of stress when leading them.

Thrillseeker

When you mark **desperate function xp**, you may place it in any **xp track** that you wish. This bonus applies to allies who participate in a **desperate group function** that you lead.

This lets you (and allies who join you in desperate actions!) distribute experience however you want!

the roller's ride

First, choose the form of your Ride:

- ▶ **Board/Blades:** Scale **0** personal transport. Acceleration and top speed are dependent on managing your energy state. Goes anywhere, including indoors. Doesn't work with passengers, unfortunately. [**Free – 0 boxes**]
- ▶ **Wheels/Skiff:** A sharp set of wheels or a wave hopping skiff can be a hobbyist status symbol, though most other users just take public transit everywhere. Scale **1**. Up to 3 passengers (friends and cohorts). [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Rotors:** Flying above it all gives you freedom and speed but makes you a hot target, both for surface-to-air weapons and the bureaucrats in Sky Traffic Control. Scale **2**. Up to 6 passengers (a Small Gang). [**2 boxes**]

Second, pick accessories for your Ride:

- ▶ **Armored:** Stabilized and shock-absorbed so it can take a hit. [**2 boxes, +Armor**]
- ▶ **FX Package, Nice paint:** People really notice when you roll up, though it's a flip of a switch to go back into dark mode. *Does the ride advertise your crew, a personal brand, or is it just a classic icon of style?* [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Really, Really Fast:** Tuned up, streamlined, and overclocked. Few can hope to keep pace with you in your ride's optimal environment. [**2 boxes**]
- ▶ **Mag Harpoon:** Sticks to some surfaces and other vehicles. *If your Scale is lower than your target, you can use the leverage to slingshot yourself. If your Scale is higher, you can use the high-power motor to reel them in.* [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Sarcastic Autopilot:** Drives the ride around damn near as good as you, and won't let you forget it. Likes to plug into your vox network and offer "helpful" advice. Tends to overshare with the passengers. [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Shock Barrage:** A battery of concussive energy that lets you blast the competition off the road. Destructive potential equivalent to your Scale. [**1 box, 2 uses**]

When advancing, the Roller can use playbook advances to buy additional Rides as well as accessories. Track your Ride accessories on an individual basis.



playbook// seeker

wanderer, sharpshooter and survivor

Every city has its limits, and every world has its wilderness. Though it isn't widely acknowledged by most users the safely-formatted and livable space of World occupies a scant percentage of the total simulated environment. There have always been those like you: users who find the unknown and sleep under the constellations, comfortable outside the margins of civil society. But your skillset makes you valuable to those on the inside, and so you feel the pull of two Worlds, the one within and the one without, the one your friends live in and your true home.

When you play a Seeker, you earn xp when you address a challenge with tracking or precision. You are the hunters, the explorers, the lonely few who still seek the horizon and its answers. When World's lies threaten those you care about, when hidden dangers abound, your friends look to you. Keep your finger on the trigger and find the truth.

Do you see the whole World through crosshairs, or do you still care about people? Which target or discovery are you most proud of, and which one still eludes you to this day? What are you most afraid of finding at World's end?

starting functions/

find [● ● ● ●]
ping [● ● ● ●]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Desperado
Buffer +1, Mask +1, Ping +1.
Reflexes.

Hunter
Crash +1, Find +1, Goto +1.
Have the Scent.

Outlander
Buffer +1, Goto +2.
Firewall.

Sniper
Find +1, Mask +1, Ping +1.
Deadeye.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **Aile**, a timeline cleaner. *Perhaps a confidant who covers your tracks, or an agent of authority out to bury the truth?*
- ▶ **Cleir**, an Overwriter. *Perhaps an ally with your sense of justice, or an investigator on your trail?*
- ▶ **Obelisk**, a daemonic gangster. *Perhaps appreciates your discrete services, or is the perilous prime suspect in a Missing Users investigation?*
- ▶ **Thane**, a retired seeker. *Perhaps a mentor who could never move on, or a deadly adversary you could never best?*
- ▶ **Xor**, a turncoat informant. *Perhaps the mastermind of an old downfall, or a hunted asset too smart for their own good?*

seeker special abilities

Deadeye

When you **push yourself**, you may choose one of the following additional benefits: *make a precise ranged attack that just might instantly derez a User / unleash a barrage of rapid fire that could suppress a squad.*

When you push yourself to activate this ability, you still get one of the normal benefits of pushing yourself (+1d, +1 effect, etc.) in addition to the special ability.

If you "make a precise ranged attack", you can shoot a sniper shot beyond the normal effective range of your firearm. If you're trying to take out a particularly tough target like a user, the GM might make a fortune roll to see if they manage to remain coherent or are derezzed instantly. If you "unleash a barrage", then you're able to produce a volume of fire large enough to drive around a dozen targets into cover. When an enemy is suppressed, they're more reluctant to maneuver or attack.

Dampened Responses

You may spend **1 memory** to **resist** damage or another consequence of mental harm (surprise, alarm, losing track of something), or to **push yourself** for a feat of concentration.

You can use this ability as often as you have memory to spend, but never more than once per consequence or function roll. If you use this ability to push yourself, you get one of the benefits (+1d, +1 effect, or act despite level 4 harm) but you don't take 2 stress. If you use this ability to resist damage, your GM will tell you how much stress is avoided based on the situation.

Dark Past

Choose an additional **Rival**. Add the following **xp trigger** to the Crew Playbook: *A crew member's Dark Past led them to refuse help and act independently, or caused other complications for the whole crew.*

At first glance, this ability might seem like it benefits the entire crew more than you, but the addition of another Rival lets you pull them in for more complications which helps out your personal experience gain as well. If multiple characters have the Dark Past ability the crew still only gets the one xp trigger!

Firewall

Through exposure or adaptation, you can survive for extended periods in Glitched environments without succumbing to data corruption. You also get **+1 stress box**.

The glitch is most commonly encountered in wilderness and other marginal spaces of servers which rarely get defragmented by Administration, and so this ability enhances your skill at surviving and exploring away from the 'civilized' core of the servers. The maximum number of stress boxes a user can have (from any number of upgrades) is 10.

Have the Scent

Once per score, declare a target you have **gathered information** against to be your Mark. Until the end of the score, you may **push yourself** for free when you engage in direct action to track, pursue, or take down your Mark.

"Direct action" means you must accept no compromises in your pursuit of the target. Remember you can gather information using a flashback!

Lightning Reflexes

Whenever there is a question about who acts first, the answer is you. Take **+1d** to **resistance** rolls with **Stability**.

This ability gives you the initiative in many situations. Some powerful NPCs (such as administrators or harbingers of the glitch) might also have reflexes, but otherwise you're always the first to go when you need to get something done. This ability doesn't let you avoid making a function roll you would otherwise have to, but it might improve your position or effect.

The Hunt

When you **gather information** to locate a simple target, you get **+1 effect**. Whenever you use a **downtime** action to advance a **long-term project** related to discovery of the unknown or tracking an elusive target, you may clear **1 stress**.

If the target is an easy one, you can find it with no trouble. Against tougher marks, the satisfaction you get from a tricky hunt helps you stay on course no matter the hardship.

Tough As Nails

Penalties from **Harm** are one level less severe (Level 2 Harm causes +1 Heat but does not clear automatically during Refresh).

With this ability, level 4 harm doesn't incapacitate you, instead you take -1 to your rolls (as it if were Level 3), and so forth. Level 1 Harm has no negative effects on you at all and clears as normal in Refresh.

seeker loadout

- ▶ **Fine Sparkmags:** Customized or exotic hand guns, tuned for accuracy. Having two makes you a bullet-spitting gun dervish, but not any more accurate despite what you might tell others. *You might need to bring Ammo to Spare from the common gear list if you burn your reserves. [1 box, 2 boxes for a pair]*
- ▶ **Particle Accelerator:** Propels hyper-dense packets at extreme ranges. Scoped and highly dangerous. *Ownership of these is regulated, is your license legit? [2 boxes]*
- ▶ **Shimmercloak:** Confound violent attackers and camera-laden paparazzi alike with shifting mirages from this visually-arresting accessory. Practical and stylish, in a gritty survivalist-chic sort of way. *[2 boxes, +Armor]*
- ▶ **Softlock Restraints:** When a softlock is tightened around a subject it hijacks their higher-order thought cycles and makes them numbly compliant. *Extremely effective against rogue process, but strong-willed users and daemons may be able to resist the mental effect and, with some time, break the lock. [1 box]*
- ▶ **Survival Gear:** Things that users accustomed to World's central amenities would never think twice about. Bandages, lures and traps, camouflage netting, holo-fire camping equipment, etc. *A necessity of life out beyond the known grid. [1 box]*
- ▶ **Tracer Shells:** Single-shot specialist munition that can be thrown or propelled from a gauntlet launcher, a Tracer affixes to its target and surreptitiously marks their timestamps for tracking purposes. *[1 box, 2 uses]*



playbook// squawker

a voice, a promise, a lie kept close

The steep price of memory has made users careless with their associations, taking relationships for granted even as they discard the moments that built them. The social fabric of World is built on unquestioned assumptions: that people are who they say they are and that fond memories of time spent together can be trusted. They don't realize that it is you keeping the web from collapsing. Brokers, diplomats, go-betweens, representatives: you are the carrier signal that holds together an amnesiac society.

When you play a Squawker, you earn xp when you address a challenge with deception or influence. Users are forced to trust each other because the spare storage space to remember and maintain truly deep relationships no longer exists. Squawkers thrive in that gray area, manipulating allegiances and exploiting gaps in recollection. World's beautiful web is your hunting ground, and it teems with prey.

Who are you really, behind all the smoke and mirrors? Which relationship do you steadfastly refuse to exploit, even though it could benefit you? What private memories won't you ever expose to the World?

starting functions/

echo [● | ● ● ○]

link [● | ● ● ○]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Arbitrator

Buffer +2, Link +1.
Terms of Service.

Heartbreaker

Crash +1, Echo +1, Link +1.
Forget Me Not.

Hustler

Echo +1, Find +1, Mask +1.
Identity Crisis.

Performer

Echo +1, Link +1, Restore +1.
Center of Attention.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **3.1.o.h.im**, an Administrator. *Perhaps had you removed as a Moderator, or perhaps you are one of the rare users it trusts?*
- ▶ **Emm**, a rogue Process. *Perhaps a dangerous malcontent, or a vulnerable victim fleeing the Moderators?*
- ▶ **Nand**, a skilled sophist. *Perhaps a philosophical sparring partner, or a public adversary decrying your deceptions?*
- ▶ **Retko**, a confidence artist. *Perhaps a partner-in-crime, or holding a grudge and playing long cons against your allies?*
- ▶ **y0shi**, a viral cat influencer. *Perhaps a valued barometer of public opinion, or a mocking satirist unraveling your schemes?*

squawker special abilities

Forget Me Not

You get **+1d** when acting against any target with whom you have had an intimate relationship. If they do not recall you, spend **1 memory** to remind them just before you act (you may **flashback** in order to reveal the relationship).

This ability isn't just for social interactions. Any function can get the bonus. "Intimate" is for you and the group to define, it need not exclusively mean romantic intimacy. You can use the second part of the ability to define "new" relationships at the table by bringing up memories that your targets have "forgotten".

Binary Voice

You know the secret language to converse with Administrators on their own level. You are immune to the commanding hypnosis that Admins inflict on sight, and gain **potency** in verbal interactions with them.

The first part of this ability gives you permission to do something that is normally impossible: when you speak to an administrator, it always listens and understands you. The second part prevents you having to spend stress to comfortably be in their presence, and increases your effect when you use social actions with the Administration.

Center of Attention

Your public persona is famous and attractive to other users. When you use this notoriety to your advantage in order to deceive, inspire, or perform, take **+1d** but add **+1 heat**. If you instead choose to drop your facade and expose a vulnerability, you may take **-1d** and **clear 1 stress** if your roll succeeds (4 or better).

What made you so well-known? How does your public persona differ from the real you?

Gambler

Whenever you fail a **controlled** roll with a 1-3 result and proceed by **seizing a risky opportunity**, you may **push yourself** on that risky roll for free.

This ability rewards you for pressing your luck as the situation gets riskier, even though the safe play might ordinarily be to withdraw and try a new approach. This ability is strong if your character usually likes to remain above the fray but wants to shine in the rare moments they need to get their hands dirty!

Identity Crisis

When you **mask** to disguise your identity or use other covert misdirection, you get **+1d** on rolls to confuse or deflect suspicion. When you throw off your disguise, the resulting surprise gives you the initiative.

Squawkers ordinarily thrive on attention, but this ability helps you keep out of the limelight when it's time for a covert operation. Also don't forget to employ your squawker loadout items, many of which can help you in your deceptions. "Gaining the initiative" from this ability doesn't stop you from needing to make a function roll you would otherwise have to, but it might improve your position or effect.

Premium User

You have come into possession of an ancient premium currency dating back to the origins of World. Mark **+1 memory limit**. In addition, at the end of each downtime you receive **+1 Coin**.

This currency isn't being sold anymore in World, and nobody can remember a time when it was. What do you believe about the origins of it? Do you remember acquiring it from a previous owner?

Subtle Mind

You may spend **1 memory** to **resist** damage or another consequence of a debate or negotiation, or to **push yourself** for a feat of diplomacy.

You can use this ability as often as you have memory to spend, but never more than once per consequence or die roll. If you use this ability to push yourself, you get one of the benefits (+1d, +1 effect, or act despite level 4 harm) but you don't take 2 stress. If you use this ability to resist damage, your GM will tell you how much stress is avoided.

Terms of Service

When you shake on a deal, you and your partner (user or otherwise) both bear a mark of the contract. If one of you **breaks the contract** they take the **Level 4 Harm "Sanctioned"**, that can not be cleared until the other party either consents or has their memory of the contract destroyed.

The mark of the oath is obvious to anyone who sees it (perhaps a strange sigil on your avatar?). When you suffer "Sanctioned" harm, you're incapacitated by paralysis: frozen limbs, color draining out, lagging voice comms, etc. until you either fulfill the deal or find a way to eliminate your partner's memory of the contract.

squawker loadout

- ▶ **Concealment Holster:** Not actually a physical holster, but an encrypted memory loop that hides the presence of a small weapon of your choice from even the closest observation and provides quick-draw capability. [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Disarming Wit:** A rakish quip to brush off a faux pas or flesh wound. Be sure to remind everyone that you're still alright, at least. *What do you mean, that shouldn't count as armor? In World this can be as sparkproof as steel plate.* [**2 boxes, +Armor**]
- ▶ **Dressed to Kill:** Nobody in this World will take you seriously unless you look the part. A rotating stock of current-fashion gowns, suits, capes, silks, footwear, faces, hairstyles, etc. *Staying on top of World fashion trends is a full-time job.* [**1 box**]
- ▶ **False Memory:** A manipulated memory card with altered content. If a spoofed recollection, it might work in tandem with other techniques to trick or confuse the holder. If it resembles a piece of equipment they are familiar with, it could fail on the user with dramatic consequences. *Usually needs to be planted on the target surreptitiously for maximum effect.* [**1 box, 1 use**]
- ▶ **Luxury Items:** Fine drink, thoughtful gifts, orbiting jewelry, designer micro-memories, etc. *The exquisite detailing is impossible to fake.* [**1 box, 2 uses**]
- ▶ **Moderator Credentials:** Completely legitimate identifications that put you above suspicion with Troubleshooters and some users (until proven otherwise). *Are you living a double-life or is this a souvenir from when you left the Mod team?* [**2 boxes**]



playbook// **wielder**

speaker of secrets, keeper of keys

Beneath your feet swells the largest repository of knowledge to ever exist: Archives. A pale mirrored plane of limitless potential, refracting snapshots of every state of matter and action World has ever seen in its ancient history. Everything material in the present moment is a lie endlessly retold from these recycled parts. A rare handful of users have glimpsed past the veil and know what you now know: this false reality is yours to shape as you wish.

When you play a Wielder, you earn xp when you address a challenge with knowledge or mystery. You've opened your eyes to the truths that lurk beneath us, the riddles that give Daemons their power and the hollow promises that trap Administration in the prison of leadership. Guard these mysteries well, Wielder. You know the danger of a little errant knowledge.

What impulse first led you to seek answers in the gloomy dreamscape of Archives? How did you develop your talents in restoration and shadow-craft? Were you helped by the honeyed promises of a Daemon, or a hidden vault of ancient memories that taught you the Art, or are you just a natural?

starting functions/

echo [● | ● ● ● ○]
restore [● | ● ● ● ○]

sample builds/

If you want some guidance when you assign your three additional function dots and special ability, use one of these templates.

Archivist

Find +2, Restore +1.
Weaving.

Keeper

Find +1, Mask +1, Restore +1.
Pure Memory.

Sorcerer

Echo +1, Mask +1, Ping +1.
Shadow Conductor.

Summoner

Echo +1, Link +2.
Command Script.

friends//rivals

- ▶ **Alfador**, a viral cat of the Backstage. *Perhaps your enigmatic guide along the veiled path, or a mute guardian before a mysterious gate you are forbidden to cross?*
- ▶ **Gale**, a wilderness explorer. *Perhaps a traveler you saved with wisdom and shelter, or perhaps an unlucky witness with dangerous information?*
- ▶ **Jarl Exodius**, a mighty daemon. *Perhaps a partner in your dark endeavors, or once bound by you and seeking vengeance?*
- ▶ **NaN**, a user's shade. *Perhaps tracing an unconscious path to secrets you desire, or a sorrowful reminder of past failures?*
- ▶ **Piale**, a forgetful ascetic. *Perhaps a broken shell who gazed too far beyond the curtain, or a mentor-turned-adversary whose prized secrets you stole?*

wielder special abilities

Shadow Conductor

When you **push yourself**, you may choose one of the following additional benefits: *Unleash a gang of phantoms to swarm or confound a foe - Summon choking darkness or grasping mist in your immediate vicinity.*

When you push yourself to activate this ability, you still get one of the normal benefits of pushing yourself (+1d, +1 effect, etc.) in addition to the special ability.

*When you "unleash a gang of phantoms", the desired outcome determines your function. If you are trying to overwhelm enemies with these phantoms, it could be **Ping**, but if your objective is to buy time or escape using the distraction you might instead **Echo** or **Mask**. When you "summon darkness or mists", the GM will describe the effect level. If you're using this power as cover or distraction, it might be a **setup** maneuver.*

Command Script

You can **Echo** to call forth a nearby lesser daemon and issue an order they will be persuaded to try to fulfill. Any daemon (including your Daemonic Pet) has one box of **armor** while they are acting under your command.

*If you need a daemon ask the GM and they will tell you if any are nearby, or you might **Find** or **Link** your way to a daemonic shadow market. Daemons deal in riddles: when you bind a daemon, your **Echo** function determines how well the lie you speak binds their will to your desire. Daemons may eventually seek to reassert their will and break your script, which the GM can adjudicate with fortune rolls for their quality, while more powerful daemons will simply resist this ability entirely (ie. you have **zero effect**).*

Dream Hunter

Your daemonic hunting pet is imbued with strange properties. It has **potency** when tracking or fighting daemons and process, and gains one of the following scripts: *shadow-meld – mind-link – glitch-step*. Take this ability again to choose another script.

Your daemonic pet functions as a cohort (Expert: Hunter). This ability gives them extra power against other daemons and process and a 'script' (ie. an arcane ability) of your choice. Shadow-meld lets the daemon melt into shadows and mask its presence. Mind-link allows the daemon and wielder to share their senses and thoughts telepathically. Glitch-step lets the daemon walk between worlds in an erratic fashion, so it is harder to predict or contain. For more details on cohorts, see page xx.

Fellow Outsider

You are just as at home among daemons as other users. Take **+1d** to **Link** with daemons and convince them of your intentions or needs. Whenever you accept a **daemon's bargain**, you may choose to gain **extra effect** instead of a bonus die.

Daemons have an inner compulsion to transact bargains with users, but your connection is more personal than that. What do you admire about Daemons? What do they appreciate about you?

Reality Warper

When you initiate a **Compile** or **Format** authority function, contribute an additional **+2 Magnitude** to your crew's discount.

You know the truth of World to be illusory, making your lies a reality in waiting.

Pure Memory

You possess an ancient fragment of Memory that originated from outside of World. Once per **downtime** you or an ally you choose may **Recall** without any additional costs or Drift penalty.

What does the memory consist of? Is it the same for everyone who views it, or does it adapt to the observer for some reason? How did you acquire it, who is still out there looking for it?

Weaving

When you **Restore** an area or item to a previous state the work is especially subtle or detailed. In cases where the **Quality** matters, it counts as crew **Tier+2**. When you **Gather Info** through clues in your restoration, gain **+1 effect**.

The quality of your restoration work might be used for a fortune roll to find out how impressed an observer is, to see if they fail to notice that it is a restoration due to the subtlety of the work, if you need to test how durable a structure is, how detailed the features you attempted to capture were, etc.

Void Mantra

Whenever you roll a function with **zero** dice (after bonuses), treat outcomes of **4/5** as if they were instead **6**. Whenever you roll a function with **three or more** dice (after bonuses) and get an outcome of **1-3**, you may clear **1 stress**.

Trusting in the void means giving up irrational fears of failure as well as attachments to success. This ability incentivizes some odd behavior: most players will try to avoid rolling with zero dice if they can help it, but you might be more willing to do it and trust in the fates. Failing at a roll with a lot of dice hurts, but your user's unusual philosophy lets them find solace in the setback.

wielder loadout

- ▶ **Daemonic Pet:** A small but aggressive daemon that is fiercely loyal to you either through a bargain struck long ago, a lucky fluke of source code tinkering, or for some other reason. Treat as an **Expert** in the fields of hunting, screeching, and fetching. [**2 boxes, Cohort**]
- ▶ **Endless Keyring:** A numeric generator that outputs ancient ordinal values of power that may unlock certain doors at certain times. You always have to try quite it quite a few times before you find the right key. *Does it look like a totally ordinary key-ring, a vintage relic of some kind, or is it obviously special in some way?* [**1 box**]
- ▶ **Firewall Charm:** This warding gem flares to life to protect your data from external manipulation. Yours can abjure even the Glitch (for a short time). *These rare totems have designs unique to their owner.* [**2 boxes, +Armor**]
- ▶ **Reconstruction Amp:** An esoteric device that improves your scale when **Restoring** sections of World, helpful for large-scale acts of archaeology or forensics. [**2 boxes**]
- ▶ **Tome of Lies:** A book written in paradox and layered riddles that is the foundation of your subtle arts. Used as a focus, it can offer greater quality to illusions cast with **Echo**. *What mysteries of the Tome have you yet to unlock?* [**2 boxes**]
- ▶ **Useful Knick-knacks:** Practical things cast aside by society's endless pursuit of the next fashionable trinket. Still useful, or so you say. *The GM may roll Fortune to see how much effect, if any, one of your knick-knacks has.* [**1 box, 2 uses**]

standard items

A Memknife or Powerglove: Memory knives are used by thieves to surreptitiously sift memories (usually Coin or other valuables) off of unsuspecting marks. They also make handy weapons for close-in fighting. Powergloves boost the force of hand-to-hand combat, allowing one to punch holes through unreinforced walls or throw adversaries through them.

An Arc Wheel: A bladed disc used in combat arts that returns to the hand when thrown. Supposedly used since the earliest iterations of World, arc wheel dueling remains a popular sport. Arc wheels are often creatively illuminated, carved with intricate details, and worn as fashion, perhaps at the back of a dress or jacket or integrated into a belt or collar.

A Sparkmag: Handheld firearm in a variety of styles, from slender semi-automatics to hefty revolvers to delicate stiletto-guns. The standard ammunition for these emits a jolting spark upon impact. A well-placed shot can briefly stun an unarmored target or take localized infrastructure offline for a time. A User could be derezzed by one if they're shot a whole bunch.

Ammo to Spare: If you have to shoot a lot of things you'll quickly burn through your sparkclip unless you also brought extra ammo. Could perhaps be burned off for greater effect in a showy display of firepower.

A Heavy Weapon: Something powerful and meant for two hands. A Sparkblaster shotgun, Gigasmasher hammer, stolen Pulse Gatling, jury-rigged Nodechopper axe, or other massive industrial tool turned to violent purpose. May be a monitored item whose use can draw Troubleshooter attention. [2 memory]

A Shieldbelt: Ubiquitous personal defense generators, quite popular among Users in World. The protective effects from multiple shieldbelts cannot be stacked due to destructive signal interference and slow boot cycles. [+Armor]

A Monocycle: Get around with speed and style. If you're feeling anachronistic, go for the two-wheeled motorcycle DLC. [2 memory]

Boost Gear: A harness and boots that give you enhanced jumping, mid-air directional changes, and wall-running abilities. Even slightly enhances raw foot-speed. Useful for creative movement around obstacles.

Echo Gear: A wrist device or piece of jewelry, usually personally customized, that allows a user to refine and broadcast echoes across a wider band of sensory inputs than normal. Used by street performers and demonstrators as well as con artists.

Archival Tools: An array of devices for reclaiming lost or corrupt information, analyzing local backups, and restoring preserved data clusters.

Intrusion Tools: A brute-force keypad cracker. A biometric sniffer. Slender manipulation prongs for shorting out circuits without triggering hardware alarms. Beware: unless you find a way to hide or delete your timestamps, investigators of the timeline will be able to recreate every detail of your break-in!

Documents: A slate loaded with factional registries, current Admin regulations, and news updates. Pamphlets and publication equipment. Legitimate certifications (or passible forgeries).

A Flarebulb: Portable illumination device with a kilocycle of life. Stays put wherever it is set, including in mid-air.

A Vox Crystal: Comm gear that works by quantum entanglement of resonant isomorph crystals (broken off of the same parent rock). Basically unhackable, unless somebody can acquire one of the crystals from the original formation. *What does it look like when Users communicate with these? Is it more like an IRC text-chat or a video conference?* [o Memory cost]

A User Crest: A distinctive badge declaring allegiance to a faction, server, or district, with a personally-unique 'thumbprint' integrated into the design. The imprinted code is designed to show tampering when it is restored, masked or echoed. High-profile public figures and celebrities are rarely seen without a crest, many other users do not bother with them. [o Memory cost]



item details

If the situation is right for it, the GM may consider elements of your playbook's specialized gear for either improved position or improved effect.

"-Can I use my Chameleonsuit here?"

-Oh sure, you can blend into the shadows real well with that. I guess your position must be Controlled instead of Risky."

If you want to include advantages from specific details of your items—reach, speed, power, adaptability, etc. -consider a **Daemon's Bargain** that relates to a detail.

"I'll empty my sparkmag into these Process if it gets me +1d, even if I have to burn through all of my ammo!"

"You can take +1d with your memknife, in close, to shank them repeatedly, but you'll still be right there with the weapon in hand when they derez in a flash. And that's if you succeed! Either way, there will be no time to hide in the crowd."

the crew

choosing a crew

Your crew type is a statement of intent about the kinds of scores that you want to focus on, as well as a selection of special abilities and resources that support that kind of action. The crew type is not meant to be restrictive however: a crew of Black Hats might decide that right now they really need to engage in a battle (like the Dynasty) or a community organization drive (like the Council). But the core activity of the crew type you choose is the most frequent way that you will earn Coin and xp for advancement.

There are five different types of crew to choose from.

black hats

Rogues and rooks. They infiltrate, steal, sabotage, and otherwise profit within the margins of World's society. This is the closest crew to a "classic" Forged in the Dark scoundrel experience.

dynasty

Conquerors and courtiers. They battle, construct, and negotiate in order to realize their dream of an independent society within World. The Dynasty is good if you want to explore themes of statehood and political legitimacy.

revisionists

Rebels and revolutionaries. They grapple with the simulation's code to undermine the Administration and protect World from a terrible future. Revisionists are good if you want to manipulate time and fight as insurgents.

council

Advisers and enforcers. Their goals are given to them by their "Charter," the leadership of an organization or a community. The Council is good if you want to manage a sprawling operation or be lackeys for a higher power.

moderators

*Moderators are members of the Administration, bound by the laws and statutes of the **Coming Soon!** They seek to protect the structure of World from dangers and reform the system from within.*

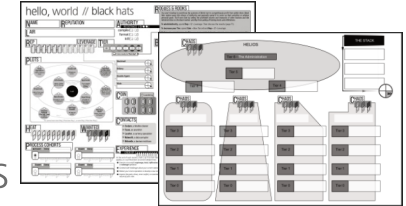
Choosing a crew type is an important decision! It's a way for the group to express their idea of what they think will be fun to do in the game. It organizes game play from "people doing crimes in a computer simulation" to "...and we are forging a new egalitarian society with military strength in here!" This helps the GM focus on the parts of the setting that matter to you.

Your crew begins with **2 COIN** scrounged together by your users from recovered savings (remember, you all just rezzed off the Stack). You are **TIER 0** and start out with **0 REP**.

creating the crew

Once your table has picked a crew type, the players should grab the **playbook sheet** for that crew. The GM should also have a blank **faction map** ready to go from their own handouts... while the players build out their crew's portfolio and qualities with the procedure below, the GM will be filling in locations and factions around the players!

A crew playbook for the Black Hats and a faction map.



1 choose your starting assets

Every crew starts with unique **assets** to jump-start their endeavors, like a crew of Process lackeys or an upgraded headquarters. Check your chosen crew's description (starting on page 62) to see any choices you might need to make. This is an opportunity to visualize some details about the way your crew operates, their methods and techniques.

2 choose a special ability

Take a look at the **special abilities** for your crew and choose one. If you can't decide which one to pick, go with the first one on the list. It's important to pick a special ability that everyone is excited about. You can get more special abilities in the future by earning xp.

3 choose a reputation and a lair

Your crew has just gathered and found a home. Given this group of users and their histories, what initial **reputation** would you have in World? Choose one from the list (or create your own).

- Carefree
- Daring
- Mysterious
- Professional
- Sinister
- Subtle

You earn xp when you bolster your crew's reputation, so think of this as another cue to indicate what sort of actions you want to pursue. Are you **carefree** protagonists, trusting in your immortality and provoking the 'serious' factions? Are you trying to project **professionalism** and diplomacy to secure allies? Are you **mysterious** dabblers delving into strange partitions and the deep Archives of World?

Next, choose a server and a district where your crew's **lair** is found, and your GM will write in your choice as one of the districts on the faction map (if your GM is using a **starting crew scenario**, they will describe **two choices** of district from the prompt). If your special ability and starting assets haven't yet established the state of your lair, then it's probably a very modest or abandoned sort of place. Choose one (or create your own):

- ▶ The **abandoned tower** of a fallen noble house in Arcturus.
- ▶ The **unassuming back rooms** of a merchant's shop in Canopus.
- ▶ A **condemned office complex** overlooking a twilight park in Sirius.
- ▶ A **dusty second-floor flat** by the docks in Argos.
- ▶ A **disused maintenance sub-station** perched atop a building.
- ▶ A **dormant Port terminal** in an overgrown, empty neighborhood.

4 find out who you owe

While your crew may be new, they haven't gone unnoticed. World is divided among larger, stronger factions. Even though your new area of influence may be small it is still an intrusion on someone. Your GM will tell you which faction has claimed your area, then you decide how to deal with them:

- ▶ Pay your respects. Give them **1 COIN** and their status stays **Neutral** (0 status).
- ▶ Gift them handsomely with **2 COIN** and they become **Helpful** to you (+1 status).
- ▶ Keep your money and accept that they will start **Interfering** with you (-1 status).

As GM your pick for this should be the Tier 2 faction in the player's home district, either from the [starting scenario](#), or else selected by you now and written onto the faction map (good options include a **Troubleshooter precinct** or a **Syndicate** faction you're excited to run against the players).

5 decide what authority you've stolen

Your crew just did something big to establish themselves. Something that could only be attempted with the forbidden power of *Authority*, the source code of World. Choose one of the following three options to determine what power you tapped into:

- ▶ Altered a landscape, a group of process, or a local law of reality (**Format**)
- ▶ Created a new passageway, a valuable resource, or your headquarters (**Compile**)
- ▶ Destroyed a barrier, a bitter rival, a troublesome memory (**Kill**)

On your crew playbook, fill in one dot for the corresponding Authority function. If you are unsure what to do here, consider using this choice as a way to tell the story of how you acquired one of your starting assets or your lair.

*This Black Hats crew has decided that they used **Compile** to create their Dead Drops, one of the starting assets they selected earlier. They fill in one box on the Compile function on their crew sheet, which will give them a power boost when they Compile to create new things later on in play.*

A	AUTHORITY
	RESISTANCE {}
compile	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
format	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
kill	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

For more on *Authority* functions and how you wield them during the game, see page 96.

The GM will tell you about two factions impacted by the path you have chosen.

- ▶ One faction was harmed by your display of power, or views you as an upstart they will have to deal with soon. They are **Hostile** to you (-2 status). At your option, spend 1 Coin to placate them, and their relationship to you is "just" **Interfering** (-1 status).
- ▶ One faction seized an opportunity you created, or is simply an adversary to the previous faction that likes to see them irritated. They are **Helpful** to you (+1 status). At your option, spend 1 Coin in kickbacks to make them **Friendly** instead (+2 status).

As GM, write in a Level 3 faction in the player crew's home district for the first faction, and a Level 2 faction in a different (neighboring) district for the second option. If using a [starting scenario](#), choose any existing factions that make sense for the prompts.

6 choose a favorite contact

Take a look at your list of potential contacts on the crew sheet. Choose one contact who is a close friend, long-time ally, or partner in crime. The GM will tell you about two factions that are impacted by your choice:

- ▶ One faction is also friendly with this contact, and you get **+1 status** with them.
- ▶ One faction is unfriendly with this contact, and you get **-1 status** with them.

At your option, these relationships are especially extreme and you take +2 and -2 status respectively, instead.

The relationship modifiers for this contact can either be applied to new factions the GM writes onto the faction map, or factions the player crew already has a relationship with (shift the status up or down as appropriate). Go with what seems natural at this point, based on the type of NPC the contact is. If a faction that isn't yet written onto the faction map would tell an interesting story with this contact, write them in, focusing on un-filled Tier 3 and Tier 1 slots in the player's home location and the neighboring location.

7 gm cleanup

If the GM is using a [starting scenario](#), check that your faction map looks like the scenario prompt. Read the rest of the scenario out to the players and make any necessary choices about the current status of the scenario. Then you can start play, selecting one of the score prompts offered.

Otherwise, look for a Tier 3, a Tier 2, and a Tier 1 faction in every location that you have written onto the faction map. If any are missing, write in a new faction there (making them **Neutral** to the player crew, 0 status). Finish off by writing in a faction on the bottom of the Stack. This last one is a group that will enter the story later on as a new Tier 0 faction, so look for a faction whose (re-)emergence on the social scene will be a fun shake-up to the situation that you see developing.

You won't have all the faction map spaces filled in at this point, and might even have an entire location or two on your map that are still empty (including Helios, the domain of the Administration). That's perfectly fine! Those are just places that aren't part of the story yet. When the players decide to look for new opportunities elsewhere, you can take that opportunity to explore a new location (adding it to your map) and writing in new factions.

process cohorts

As the users of the crew accumulate reputation and coin, they will attract process to their cause (we call process who are working on behalf of the player crew “cohorts” to distinguish them from those which are unaffiliated civilians or working for other factions). Process may join your cause due to charismatic enlistment, spontaneous generation by a barracks or cloister, or formal requisition through administrative channels (see “The Procession,” a location in Sirius). These process can be appointed to various roles befitting their talents and will work to advance the glory of your crew.

Do not be alarmed, for this behavior is natural. It is in the nature of process to seek out powerful users and align with their interests, providing momentum to the causes you champion. World was made for users like you to pursue your dreams. Process are here to help!

Process cohorts come in two types: **gangs** or **experts**. To recruit a new cohort, your crew might spend an advance earned through leveling up (see the options on your crew sheet).

creating a gang

Name the gang on your crew playbook, and choose a **gang type** from the list below:

- ▶ **Chatters** - play down or talk up things for you; negotiators & socialites
- ▶ **Cogitaters** - calculate or remember things for you; analysts & researchers
- ▶ **Routers** - coordinate or remember things for you; couriers & logistical personnel
- ▶ **Strikers** - hit or guard things for you; soldiers & brawlers
- ▶ **Tracers** - discover or monitor things for you; trackers & watchers

A gang has **scale** and **quality** equal to your current crew Tier. It increases in scale and quality when your crew moves up in Tier.

*If your crew is Tier 0, your gang is quality 0 and scale 0 (only around 2 to 4 process).
When your crew is Tier 2, your gang is quality 2 and scale 2 (about a dozen process).*

creating an expert

An **expert** is a high-quality process specialist. Record the expert’s type (their specific area of expertise). For example they might be an *Archivist*, an *Illusionist*, a *Spy*, a *Head of Security*, etc.

An expert is *always* **scale 0** (a single process), with **quality** equal to your crew Tier **+1**. Experts tend to have fewer flaws than gangs have, as they are more sophisticated process than the members of gangs. Experts increase in quality when your crew moves up in Tier.

edges & flaws

When you create a cohort, you also define some **edges** and **flaws** they have. A process **gang** will have either one or two edges and an equal number of flaws. A process **expert** will have either one edge and no flaws, or two edges and one flaw.

edges

- + **Debug Routines**: The cohort can survive initial contact with the Glitch and navigate chaotic or degraded environments.
- + **Designer Avatars**: The cohort is attractive or impressive to behold, enhancing their abilities to command attention and spread your renown.
- + **Multi-threaded**: The cohort can be trusted to make good decisions and act on their own initiative in the absence of direct orders.
- + **Tenacious**: The cohort cannot be deterred or misdirected away from assigned tasks.

flaws

- **Bloatware**: The cohort has pre-installed obligations to another faction and will deliver information about your crew’s actions to them. *Who?*
- **Erratic**: The cohort occasionally exceeds the bounds of their orders due to poor judgment. *Are they excessively violent, foolishly proud, or something else?*
- **Mandatory Patches**: The cohort isn’t always available due to unusually-frequent maintenance requirements. *What aspect of them is faulty?*
- **Willful**: The cohort has an ethic or values that it won’t betray, and may question orders. *What do they believe in?*

cohort harm and healing

Cohorts can suffer harm as a consequence of **function** or **fortune** rolls they participate in. There are three levels of harm that a cohort may experience:

- ▶ **Weak**. The cohort has reduced effect.
- ▶ **Disrupted**. The cohort is operating at reduced quality (-1d).
- ▶ **Derezzed**. The cohort is unavailable until they are recovered (note that process do not go to the Stack the way users do).

Your cohorts heal during downtime. If circumstances are proper for recovery, choose one cohort that is not Derezzed and remove one level of harm from them during the Restore phase.

When a cohort is derezzed, they require extra resources to recover. Spend a **downtime action** and **Coin** equal to your Tier + 2 to fully recover a cohort (clear all harm they have). Process gangs are composed of basically-equivalent replaceable members, while process experts must be requisitioned and have their personalities reloaded from backups. When a cohort is restored, the crew may also elect to alter their edge & flaw choices.

A Tier 0 crew of Black Hats has an expert Spy (quality 1) that they send to perform counter-espionage against The Directory (a formidable secret agency which is Tier 3). Unfortunately, the already-injured Spy gets flushed out and eliminated by the sleeper agents of the Directory (The GM makes fortune rolls—the Spy got a 2 and the Directory rolled a Critical).

*During the next downtime, Lith spends a downtime action to restore the expert. They commission a new Spy from the Avatar Sculptors, and the players decide this new spy has **Bloatware** that causes them to have split loyalties with the Sculptors as well (instead of being **Willful**). Because the crew is Tier 0 the cost is 2 **Coin** to restore the Spy.*

crew// black hats

rogues & rooks

Your crew isn't looking to overthrow the systems of World, but to surreptitiously profit from within their margins. The Black Hats siphon away thin slivers of Authority, and generally spend it to cover up their activities or achieve personal goals. You'll earn Coin by selling the profitable secrets and treasures of other factions and the Administration on the black market, and Rep from pulling off daring heists and infiltrations.

When you play Black Hats, you earn xp when you execute a successful espionage, infiltration, sabotage, or theft.

Do you provide a suite of services to a particular clientele, or are these talents employed just for your crew's direct benefit? Does your band leave behind an artful trail of calling cards to confound investigators and delight fans, or do you aim for deniable anonymity?

contacts

- ▶ **Evelynn**, a timeline cleaner. *Perhaps helps you scrub away messy archival records?*
- ▶ **Fauxe**, an anarchist. *Perhaps seeks insider intel and high-profile distractions?*
- ▶ **Lassiter**, a currency speculator. *Perhaps needs clandestine action to fix coin markets?*
- ▶ **Malworth**, a data corrupter. *Perhaps pays well to feast on valuable information?*
- ▶ **M4mm0n**, daemon mob boss. *Perhaps needs outside services only you can provide?*

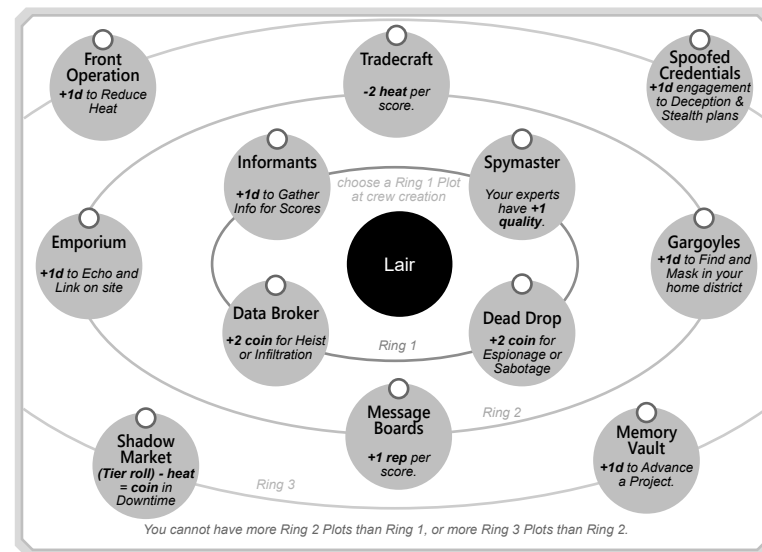
starting assets

- ▶ **Cohort**. An **Expert** (name them and describe their specialty). Black Hats often commission expert process with skills related to infiltration or counter-espionage.
- ▶ A **ring 1 Plot** of your choice (i.e. *Data Broker, Dead Drop, Informants* or *Spymaster*).

leverage & plots

The Black Hats rely on **Leverage** to stake out influence in World. "Leverage" represents a relationship: when you acquire it, describe and make a note of a character represented by that leverage (either a known NPC, or the GM will tell you about a new one). Leverage makes it cheaper for your crew to both wield Authority and increase in tier, but it has an expiration date: this is represented by the countdown clocks on them. The GM may direct you to tick Leverage clocks as a function roll consequence or after you lean on that NPC for an advantage. When the clock fills all the way you lose that source of leverage, but can re-acquire it later.

The Black Hats have **Plots** that give long-term bonuses: resources and techniques that represent the "ways and means" by which your crew goes about it's goals. These are described in detail on the next page. It costs you **4 coin** to acquire a new Plot or **1 coin** to gain Leverage, which you can do after a Score. Note that Plots are defensive liabilities in the sense that hostile factions can come after you in an attempt to take them away!



Data Broker: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores that involve a Heist or Infiltration. An expert in the information markets who can deniably fence scraps of blackmail and laundered insider trading secrets.

Dead Drops: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores that involve Espionage or Sabotage. Hidden exchange for dossiers and payment, well worth the price for risk-averse clientele.

Informants: You get **+1d** to gather information for a score. You have eyes and ears among the process that go unnoticed in 'polite' society.

Spymaster: Your **expert cohorts** have an additional **+1 quality**. Your experts are now **quality = Tier + 2**. Dealing with personnel management affairs in distant sleeper cells is a snap with our Process Resources solutions!

Emporium: You get **+1d** to **Echo** and **Link** functions in your home district. Makes face-time with clients more effective. Is this a museum of spying paraphernalia, or more of a discreet monument to your achievements?

Gargoyles: You get **+1d** to **Find** and **Mask** in your home district. Ominous guardians that overlook the streets, your eyes and ears.

Message Board: You get **+1 REP** per score. Ciphred missives to coordinate your loyal fans as well as deep-cover elements. What public place do you mark up in this way?

Tradecraft: You take **-2 HEAT** per score. A professional is defined by their techniques.

Front Operation: Roll with **+1d** to **Reduce Heat** in downtime. The point of a front op is not to deceive close inspection, but to provide a reasonable-enough facade for bribed officials to gesture at.

Memory Vault: Roll with **+1d** to advance a **Long-Term Project**. Sealed partitions overflowing with castoff thoughts and ancient blueprints. Useful both on their own, and as barter.

Shadow Market: Once per downtime, roll your **TIER** in dice. You earn **COIN** equal to the highest result, minus your **HEAT**. You have so many stolen goods that you need to start selling them off just to make space.

Spoofed Credentials: You have **+1d** to **engagement rolls** for Deception & Stealth plans. License printers and keybrick duplicators: dangerous in the wrong hands.

Ring 1

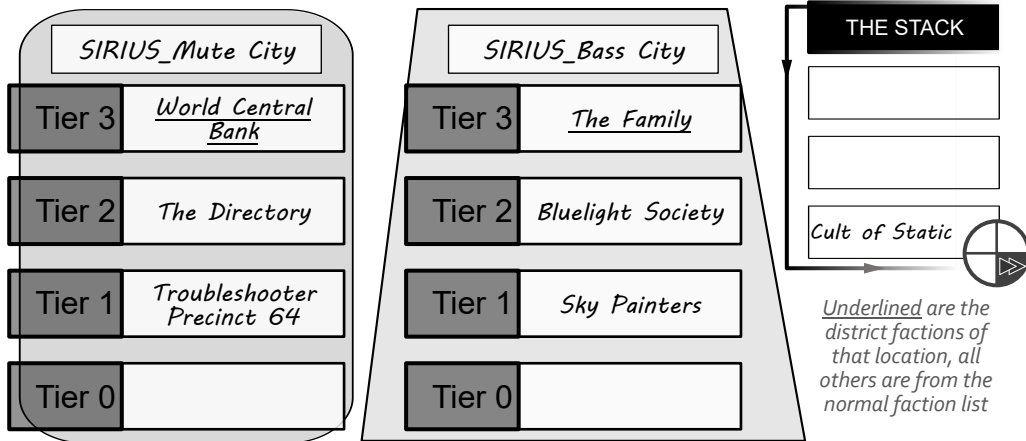
Ring 2

Ring 2

Ring 3

black hats_sample start scenario

market volatility



Mute City is crowded and tense, a playground of furtive hustlers under permanent closed-circuit surveillance. This infinite city is in constant shifting twilight, refracting the rich glow of Sirius' night sky through mirrored skyscraper canyons. Keeping watch over everything is the **World Central Bank**, the richest gang of loan sharks in all of World. In Mute City secrets and blackmail are sold on the **Information Exchange**, a public trading floor monitored for neutrality by the Bank which takes a cut of every transaction.

Bass City is dark and raucous, an underworld illuminated by garish neon. Life down here has its advantages, like escaping from under the thumb of spying informants and the Bank, but a different class of criminal has a home in Bass: the **Family**, a mafia of daemons who make fearsome examples of those who cross them. Legitimacy down here is earned through brutal reputation rather than market credentials.

Ask the players which of the two locations they wish to make their home in, and write them in as the **Tier 0** faction in their chosen locale (step 3 of crew creation). Finish crew creation.

Tell the players that two factions are fighting over control of the hidden black market memory trade routes that flow between Mute and Bass. Right now a gang of mid-level toughs called the **Bluelight Society** controls the routes, and smuggles memories siphoned from the Information Exchange down to the undercity where they can be sold at a rich premium away from the eyes of the Bank.

What is so special about the secret routes? (pick one or two)

- ▶ **Runita Trench**, a regulatory inspector for the Bank, is on the take and engineered a security loophole. When the market closes the local archives freeze recording for half a cycle (just as Bluelight enters, takes possession, and leaves with the restricted data).
- ▶ It is open **corruption**: Bluelight's package team is permitted on the trade floor and does the deal openly with Bank pit bosses while Troubleshooters from the local precinct monitor, daring anyone to interfere.
- ▶ The smugglers **hide the memories** in mass shipments of "neuroplast," a bulk fabrication material. Locating the contraband is challenging without access to Bluelight's ledger.

- ▶ At one point the routes briefly pass through **the Backstage**, a para-causal break in World's simulation normally accessible only to daemons. Bluelight must have paid a small fortune to gain limited transport privileges.

Agents of **The Directory** have been tapping these smuggling runs, seizing the contraband and making a mockery of Bluelight security. About one in every ten shipments simply vanishes due to action by The Directory, and this number is rising.

What makes the Directory so difficult to track? (pick two to represent their capabilities as a Tier 2 faction; they might pursue Faction Clocks to acquire the other capabilities in play)

- ▶ A mysterious traveling **rotary telephone** is their attack vector and egress point. If a user spins a code into the dial and speaks the correct code word into the receiver, it transports them instantly across the server to a hidden location.
- ▶ Their sleeper agents are **innocents**, users who do not hold long-term memories and so are difficult to identify or hold accountable for crimes they commit. These agents are controlled by some kind of subliminal programming.
- ▶ They have a **shade** whose usertag shows as "NaN" working for them. Shades are ghost-like forked copies of a user who is sleeping on the Stack. Because shades are difficult to perceive and monitor, they make for excellent spies.
- ▶ They have embedded **mole subroutines** among process who work for various factions, including Bluelight. These process are unknowingly feeding intelligence to the Directory during their sleep cycles.

Bluelight's position is tenuous. They pay up to the daemon mob bosses of the Family, which is monitoring the situation and has yet to take any action that would pull them off the sidelines. **Porfus Ordin**, a professionally-tidy process majordomo who manages operations for Bluelight, wants an end to the economic warfare.

crack directory's codes

Porfus needs you to find a weakness in Directory's operation. They take advantage of tradecraft and secrecy, but if the Directory lose the initiative they will crumble. Once you have something to exploit, send the signal and Bluelight's goons can take care of the rest.

double-agent

...or has your crew been working for Directory this entire time? Play out a *flashback* where you met up with **Loupe**, an agent with instructions from Directory's leadership. Loupe wants you to gain Bluelight's trust by tipping them off to a staged raid. The real prize is access to Porfus' office safe containing Bluelight's transport ledgers.

third party

In a roost high in the vaulted chambers of Bass City, the **Sky Painters** plan out aerial strikes across Sirius. They have coded a secret language into the shifting graffiti paint patterns across the district. Is this text helpful to the Directory in tracking Bluelight shipments? Or is it communicating something forlorn and whimsical from World's past?

loose ends

What could cause the Family to get directly involved in this struggle, and would they support Bluelight or turn on them? If the Bank decides to flex its muscle in the undercity, how will it do so and against what target?

crew // dynasty

conquerors and courtiers

World is no stranger to splinter 'nations' and breakaway fiefdoms. Every flavor of political ideal has been tested at some point in the incubator of World's whimsical public attention: unfortunately, immortal amnesiacs seem to make for poor heads of state and ministers. Still, the public can't seem to get enough of seeing nations get founded.

When you play a Dynasty, you earn xp when you execute a successful battle, construction, negotiation, or subjugation.

On what ideals do you predicate your claim to self-rule? Do you revel in receiving attention for your grandiose proclamations, or are your borders closed to press and fans?

contacts

- ▶ **Abell**, a seasoned diplomat. *Perhaps prepares your arrival in foreign courts?*
- ▶ **Gant**, a Troubleshooter. *Perhaps is amenable to new management under your reign?*
- ▶ **Lazarus**, a disgraced architect. *Perhaps pursues their civic dreams under your regime?*
- ▶ **Robin**, a dilettante. *Perhaps a taste-maker converted to your cause?*
- ▶ **Sun**, a military strategist. *Perhaps guides you in matters of calculation and logistics?*

starting assets

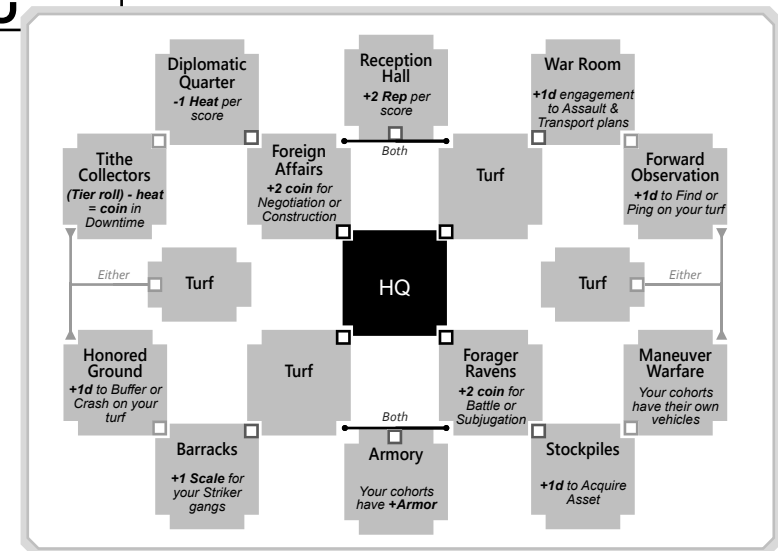
- ▶ **Cohort**. A team of **Strikers** that help you defend your territory (name them).
- ▶ **HQ Feature**. Choose one of the following: *Hidden*, *Luxury*, *Mobile*, or *Terrifying*. This feature might give you a bonus when it helps you on an engagement roll, or improve your position or effect on an applicable function roll.

claims & turf

The Dynasty has **Claims** that represent physical assets they control in their home server. These might be assets you have conquered and integrated, zones negotiated by concession from other factions, or historical structures that have been *restored* from the archives. These are described in detail on the next page. To acquire a claim, your crew needs to have just completed a score which gave you the opportunity to acquire the claim in question. You spend **2 coin** and **2 rep** for a new claim that is connected to an existing claim the crew owns (see the map of claim connections on next page), or instead spend **4 coin** and **3 rep** to gain a claim that you don't have a direct connection to.

Turf is a special kind of claim that represents a significant amount of territory under your crew's control, and it makes it cheaper for your crew to both wield Authority and increase in tier (see page 55 for more detail on turf). When you acquire turf, talk about what it represents to your crew. *What district of the server do you now control territory in? What commerce or culture exists in this area? Do process live there? What do they think of you?*

CLAIMS



Armory: Your cohorts gain an **Armor** box. *What symbol is struck upon these mass-produced lightbarriers?*

Barracks: Your **Striker** cohorts get **+1 Scale**. *Well-ordered quarters and mustering grounds for your soldiery will swell the ranks.*

Diplomatic Quarter: You get **-1 HEAT** per score. *They say that victors write history books, but that's not exactly true. It's the scribes and press corps of the victors who do that.*

Forager Ravens: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores that involved Battle or Extortion. *Cold-eyed scavengers that pick the land clean in your wake. What do they look like?*

Forward Observation: You get **+1d to Find** and **Ping** on your turf. *The price of eternal vigilance is heavy investment in long-range scanners and over-the-horizon telemetric subroutines.*

Foreign Affairs: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores that involved Negotiation or Subjugation. *A diplomatic corps is its own kind of dominating force, levying words to take and hold objectives an army could never hope to.*

Honored Ground: You get **+1d to Buffer** and **Crash** functions on your turf. *The very land here is hostile to enemy combatants. How?*

Reception Hall: You get **+2 REP** per score. *Columns and fountains to impress visitors. What's the first thing you see upon entering?*

Maneuver Warfare: Your cohorts have their own vehicles. *Are these tracked APCs, armored steeds, or swift monocycles? The quality of a cohort's ride is equal to your Tier.*

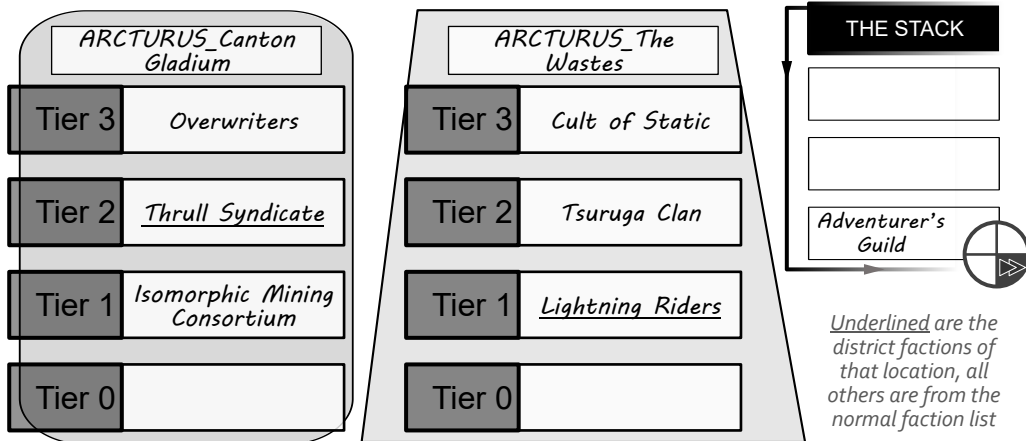
Stockpiles: Roll with **+1d to Acquire Asset** in downtime. *A secure space to hold all the various spoils and tribute you have received.*

Tithes Collectors: Once per downtime, roll your **TIER** in dice. You earn **COIN** equal to the highest result minus your **HEAT**. *The difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time the congress convenes.*

War Room: You have **+1d to engagement rolls** for Assault & Transport plans. *Coordinating logistics and transportation for an army on the march is a job fit for a permanent staff corps.*

dynasty_sample start scenario

the static war



The hive complex of Gehenna dominates the skyline of Arcturus, an obsidian spear piercing the lightning-scarred dunes. Most of the Arcturan population shelters in **Canton Gladium**, the central public levels of Gehenna that minimally block the harsh elemental forces of the server. Gladium is famous for its fighting pits and open-air markets, and it pulses with a vibrant life on the edge of lawlessness that many users savor. The vice dens, match bookies, and pick-pockets of the district all pay up to the **Thrull Syndicate**, gangsters with a stake in the arenas and their finger on the pulse of Gehenna.

Beyond the safety of Gehenna in the **Silicon Wastes** is real liberty, the freedom to remake the harsh landscape in any way you desire so long as you can defend your claim from vultures. One such fiefdom is already established: the anachronistic castle of the **Tsuruga Clan**, timeless adherents of a code of loyalty and conquest. Tsuruga's fortifications rest on an arid mesa, which they are gradually *restoring* into a facsimile of an agrarian feudal land holding. Their domain is under constant threat from the Wastes' other inhabitants: glitch-worshiping cultists and plunder-seeking monocycle gangs.

Ask the players which of the two locations they wish to make their home in, and write them in as the **Tier 0** faction in their chosen locale (step 3 of crew creation). Finish crew creation.

Tell the players that the political future of Arcturus is uncertain. Right now, a hot war is being fought between the influential **Cult of Static** that lurks in the gaussian-blurred fringe of the wastelands and the **Overwriters**, hard-bitten investigators sanctioned by the Administration to hunt down illicit data that threatens the integrity of World's servers.

What is the current status of the war in the server? (**pick one now**, use others in play)

- ▶ One of the top Overwriter hunters, **Acra Shorn**, is leading a glitch hunter team into the wastes intending to set a trail of waypoint flags to guide the main force to the hidden lair of the Static Cultists. Her team has missed their last two vox check-ins.
- ▶ A massive shipment of **Snow**, the memory-erasing euphoric drug that the Cult manufactures to fund its activities, was seized in Gladium. Seeing the raw resources they face, Overwriters are requisitioning militarized equipment from the Administration.

- ▶ Resentment from zealous Overwriter patrols and curfew orders has created a public backlash in Canton Gladium, freezing trade and emptying the streets except for protesters. **Deacon Kalix** of the Cult is using this opportunity to prey on disaffected users and out-of-work process, preaching a nihilistic catechism.
- ▶ The Cult is gathering power to unleash the **Kill** authority function against the walls of Gehenna, which would expose Gladium to the harsh elements to scour their enemies. Make a 6-clock: "Cult shatters Gladium walls" and tick it whenever the Cult achieves a significant milestone in their preparations. What does this destructive ritual look like?

This war is bad news for the rest of the server. The Thrull Syndicate chafes under the data purity laws of the Overwriters but has no love lost on the Cult either, which pushes competing contraband and wants to explode the status quo that the Syndicate profits under. The leadership of Tsuruga wants nothing to do with any of it, but the Clan's resources and relative stability have made it the recipient of competing offers of alliance.

What other complicating entanglements are occurring in Arcturus? (**pick any**)

- ▶ Exclusive intelligence reveals **Isshin Tsuruga** is making plans for a sudden military strike, but even his closest lieutenants are unsure of the target. Has somebody already made a secret deal with the Clan head?
- ▶ The **Isomorph Miners**, a fledgling team of wildcatters and material researchers, is in Arcturus seeking to create new memory-storage solutions from rare substances native to Arcturus. Given the unstable climate, they're seeking protection and guides to help them navigate the Wastes.
- ▶ The **Thrull Syndicate's** pleasure houses offer a low-brow drug, **Slag**, that has many process addicted. Slag is a toxic by-product of neuroplast refining from the factories below Gehenna, so it is easy to come by. But the trade is threatened by Cultists who are offering a much higher-grade product for nearly as cheap.

Into this situation your crew is an emerging player. The instability of Arcturus could give you an opportunity to emerge as diplomatic leaders cooling tensions, or perhaps opportunistic warlords playing the strong against each other and carving up the weak.

night raid

The Overwriters have been stretched thin and are willing to cut deals for additional muscle. What's more, having a little plausible deniability for some of their more off-book operations never hurts. **Lens**, the Overwriter's mission control officer, will brief you on an op: a raid into the wastes to seize a nearby Cult hideout. What's happening in the hideout: are they cooking Snow, indoctrinating converts, or broadcasting a glitchy signal?

process rights movement

Process are World's procedurally-generated citizens, and they don't usually push an agenda. But you've found some who are willing to fight for a better future for themselves. Down in the factorum, here in the markets, up in the pleasure halls... they're being exploited for their labor, and it's time to put a stop to it.

empire business

Let's face it: doing other people's dirty work is boring and might not get the crew any closer to their own goals. Ask the players how they want to disrupt the status quo, then just go do it.

crew// revisionists

rebels and revolutionaries

The Administration cannot be reformed... not in this timeline. To enact the changes you know are needed in World, you have sworn yourself to a war for your future guided by clues from the past. Aided by computational paradoxes within the basecode, you manipulate events and toy with timelines. These actions run the risk of bringing World to the brink of collapse, but you know the future is worth it.

When you play Revisionists, you earn xp when you execute a successful battle, heist, infiltration, or intervention.

Is your crew more concerned with the tyranny of the Administration, or existential threats to World itself? What terrible event drove you to this insurgency?

contacts

- ▶ **4s.b331**, an Administrator. *Perhaps secretly sympathizes with your cause?*
- ▶ **Wintergreen**, a temporal anomaly. *Perhaps communicates from another timeline?*
- ▶ **Letum**, a threat analyst. *Perhaps tried to warn the Administration, but was ignored?*
- ▶ **Mir**, an identity broker. *Perhaps offers convincing disguises and exclusive intelligence?*
- ▶ **Rotas**, a memory thief. *Perhaps stumbled across old memories related to a lost World?*

starting assets

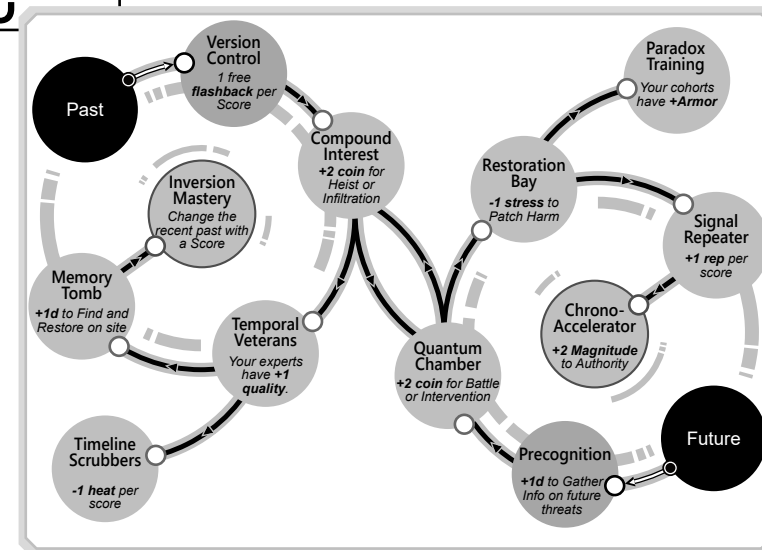
- ▶ **Cohort.** An **Expert** (name them and describe their specialty). Revisionists often commission expert process with skills related to temporal coordination or research.
- ▶ **A starting Claim.** Choose either *Version Control* or *Precognition*. This initial capability lays the groundwork for your crew's mastery over time manipulation.

claims & leverage

The Revisionists gain **Claims** which add to their bank of capabilities to alter World's timeline. These might be salvaged artifacts, forbidden hacks to World's basecode, or new features of your headquarters. They are described in detail on the next page. To acquire a claim, your crew needs to have just completed a score which gave you the opportunity to acquire the claim in question. You spend **3 coin** for a new claim, and you must follow the connection paths on the claim map from claims you already own.

Leverage is your ability to stake out influence in World. "Leverage" represents a relationship: when you acquire it, describe and make a note of a character represented by that leverage (either a known NPC, or the GM will tell you about a new one). Leverage makes it cheaper for your crew to both wield Authority and increase in tier, but it has an expiration date: this is represented by the countdown clocks on them. The GM may direct you to tick Leverage clocks as a function roll consequence or after you lean on that NPC for an advantage. When the clock fills all the way you lose that source of leverage, but can acquire it again later.

CLAIMS



Past

Future

Version Control: Once per score, you can **flashback** at no cost in stress. *Predicting unusual contingencies is easy for you. Is this just prescience or do you have a method to send messages back in time?*

Compound Interest: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores involving Heist or Infiltration. *The difference between a little wealth and a lot of wealth is patience (or time travel).*

Temporal Veterans: Your **expert cohorts** have an additional **+1 quality**. *Your experts are now quality = Tier + 2.*

Timeline Scrubbers: You get **-1 HEAT** per score. *Controlling the past means controlling the narrative. Are these scarab-like subroutines trawling the timeline, process editors on your payroll, or something else entirely?*

Memory Tomb: You get **+1d** to **Find** and **Restore** on site. *A monument to that which has been lost. Is it from this World, or a relic of a failed fork in the timeline?*

Inversion Mastery: Change the recent past with a Score. *When you try to change the past, what unique dangers do you face?*

Precognition: You get **+1d** to **gather information** about future threats. *What does your precognition facility look like, and who—or what—operates it?*

Quantum Chamber: You get **+2 COIN** in payoff for scores that involve Battle or Intervention. *Is it possible to earn the same money twice? Well, no, but sort of yes.*

Restoration Bay: When you **patch stress** in downtime, take 1 less Stress. *Accelerates your healing with minimal side-effects.*

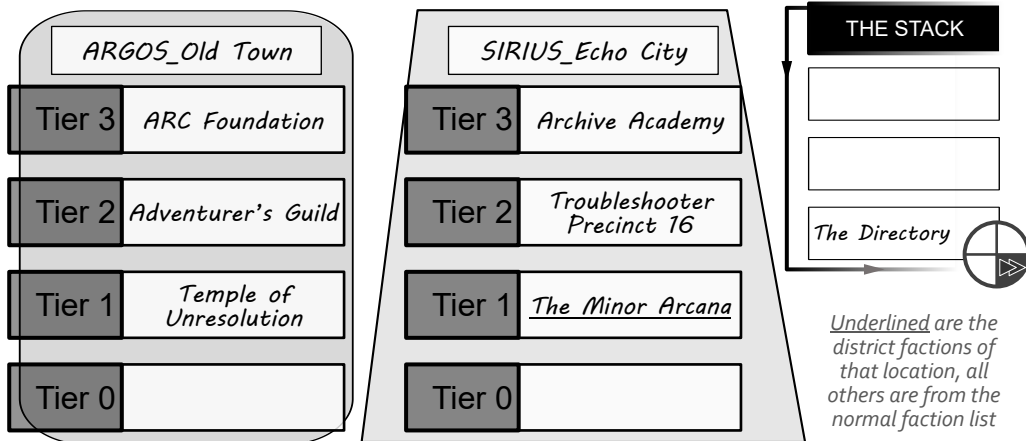
Paradox Training: Your cohorts gain an **Armor** box. *To hit you, they'd first have to be able to predict you. To predict you, they'd first have to be able to perceive you.*

Signal Repeater: You get **+1 REP** per score. *The signal is from one possible future. Is it a good future or a bad one? Who—or what—is transmitting?*

Chrono-Accelerator: You have **+2 magnitude** on your Authority functions. *This bonus can either discount the total Rep cost you pay, or else improve a factor of your Authority by an additional two points (after paying for everything else).*

revisionists_sample start scenario

inflection point



Argos is World's oldest server, and the **Old Town** is a mostly-abandoned relic of the past. The server is in administrative lockdown for unpublicized reasons, and a brutalist edifice known simply as "The Office" was relocated here so that the **ARC Foundation** can debug errors in the server's source code. The only other inhabitants of Argos are unsanctioned thrill-seekers and infinity-contemplating ascetics, drawn to the perils of this collapsing server for their own reasons.

Echo City is the urban high-rise jewel of Sirius. Here, rich users play power games in ignorance of the warning signs that World's stability is at risk. One premium offering is enrollment in the **Archive Academy**, a prestigious boarding school. The slice-of-life antics hide Academy's real purpose: safeguarding codes to World's baseline programming and global archive back-up. These emergency powers are so restricted that not even a unanimous vote of Academy's headmasters can unlock them... but they're trying anyway.

Ask the players which of the two locations they wish to make their home in, and write them in as the **Tier 0** faction in their chosen locale (step 3 of crew creation). Finish crew creation.

Tell the players they have exclusive intelligence about an existential threat to World's safety. Unfortunately, the message came through a bit garbled: emergency communications from the future tend to be like that.

What critical piece of intel does the crew have? (**pick one or combine two**)

- ▶ The exact **time and place** where an unrecoverable error in World's simulation will be created by an unknown party: the docks of Argos, one kilocycle from now (start a 6-clock: "World's Foretold Collapse," and tick it once after each Score).
- ▶ An **encrypted access key** that unlocks a closed partition hidden in Echo City. The key has Administrative markings, so you suspect it is linked to a critical piece of infrastructure that governs a facet of the simulation. What could possibly be inside?
- ▶ One of the seven "**Seals**" that, once fully united, control full archival backup access. It manifests as a chunk of incomplete circuitry, with the phrase "Telos" etched onto it in gold. The Academy wants to recover them all for some hidden purpose.

- ▶ A **statement of intent** from a user calling themselves "the Catalyst." They intend to shatter the timeline: their plan goes into action with the destruction of an Administrator identified as **4s.b331**, the Herald of Abandonment. But how do they plan to do that?

Records indicate that you are entering a very dynamic moment in World's timeline. Administrative paralysis in the face of these threats leaves your crew as the only bulwark against the chaos you know is coming.

What problematic hindrance is the crew facing? (**pick any**)

- ▶ One of you tried to take your case directly before the ARC Foundation for help, but **Director Stone** shut you down and now has you sanctioned in the eyes of the Administration. What's worse, he showed signs of mind-warping glitch infection...
- ▶ A user in the Administration, **Moderator Tanis**, is sympathetic to your team's goals, though he believes your fears to be largely misguided. But Tanis is compromised by the political fallout of a romantic relationship with **Queen of Wands**, the leader of known criminal element "The Minor Arcana." Even if he wanted to help, his hands are tied.
- ▶ The **Temple of Unresolution**, a religious order with ascetic teachings, has vowed a pledge of austere meditation in belief that the end of days is at hand. Unfortunately this means that followers at multiple levels of Administration and local public service are on indefinite hiatus, causing confusion and delays throughout World.

pillars of eternity

The crumbling of Argos has revealed a substrata of World's first server that was never intended for public viewing. Unfortunately, the foolish scavengers of the Adventurer's Guild see this dangerous quantum maze as a challenge to their dungeon delving skills. Their opportunism runs the risk of accelerating the collapse of the server, which could have catastrophic secondary effects on the rest of World.

the paradox caper

The Minor Arcana are planning a confidence game involving a faked *restoration* of an artifact resembling one of the seven "Seals" (it is a dense fragment of circuitry emblazoned with the phrase 'Logos' in gold). A very rich buyer, **Honora Plath**, will be at the auction, but she already possesses the genuine artifact and will likely demand a public appraisal to denounce the fake. The Arcana intend to swap the real and the fake Seal in the confusion, and then ransom the real one off to the Academy.

prayers and memories

The Temple of Unresolution is leading a high-profile congregation on a vigil in Argos, openly breaking the Administrative sanction on travel to the server. Troubleshooter teams are deployed to break up the gathering with predictable results. The entire incident has been master-minded by an outsider for a nefarious purpose: to divert Administrative resources and obscure some kind of action they do not wish to fall in the public eye.

event horizons

This moment of crisis is one link in a chain of causality that determines the direction this World takes. Has a central character arisen in the course of your investigation? Could the mysterious Directory, currently interred on the Stack, have a connection to any of this? What is the Administration's stance on these events: do they see outliers to be ignored or a pattern of chaos with your crew in the center?

crew// council

advisers and enforcers

You work on behalf of something larger than yourselves: a powerful organization, a community, or a visionary leader. Their ideals form the basis of your Charter: a central mandate that determines your crew's goals and methods. You are custodians of this agency, sworn to act as deputies for your charter on a goal that represents a vision of what World can be.

When you play a Council, you earn xp when you advanced the ideals of the Charter or challenged their methods or beliefs.

What do each of you see in the Charter that commands your loyalty? Does taking orders from above and coordinating a sprawling organization below make you engaged or exasperated?

contacts

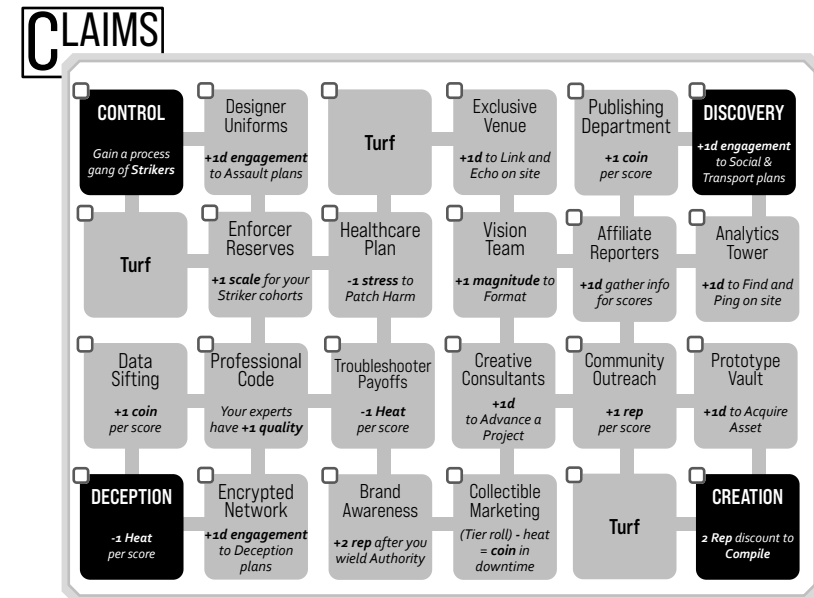
- ▶ **Bit**, a community organizer. *Perhaps a process with a dream, or forced into leadership?*
- ▶ **Ciel**, a researcher. *Perhaps seeking improvements to life in World for a better future?*
- ▶ **Mwane**, an architect. *Perhaps a moderator who courts your Charter's influence?*
- ▶ **Ryda**, a journalist. *Perhaps offers good press for your organization?*
- ▶ **Satsuki**, a president. *Perhaps a spokesperson for the Charter's wishes?*

starting assets

- ▶ **Charter**. Describe your council's master, and choose 2 features of the organization you direct. These features might give you a bonus when they help you on an engagement roll, or improve your position or effect on an applicable function roll.
- ▶ **A starting Claim**. Choose one of *Control, Creation, Deception, or Discovery*.

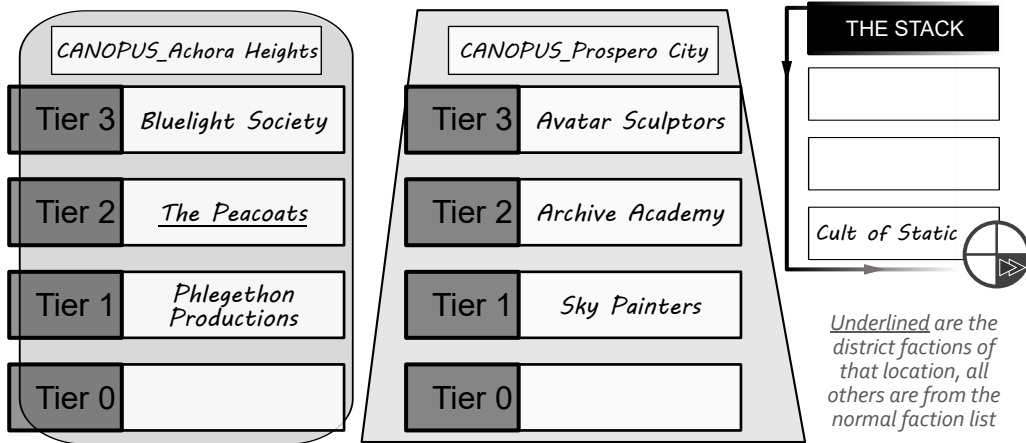
claims & turf

The Council gains **Claims** that represent their organizational capabilities and assets. These might be branch offices, departments of hired process, or new features of your headquarters. They are described in detail on the next page. To acquire a claim, your crew needs to have just completed a score which gave you the opportunity to acquire the claim in question. You spend **3 coin** for a new claim, and you **must** follow the connection paths on the claim map from claims you already own. In addition, anytime you gain a claim you must cross off a different claim somewhere else on the map that your crew will no longer be able to claim (in other words, you can only hold at most half of the claims on the map).



council_sample start scenario

the gig economy



Echo City is the urban high-rise jewel of Sirius. Here, rich users play power games in ignorance of the warning signs that World's stability is at risk. One premium offering is enrollment in the Archive Academy, a prestigious boarding school. The slice-of-life antics hide Academy's real purpose: safeguarding codes to World's baseline programming and global archive back-up. These emergency powers are so restricted that not even a unanimous vote of Academy's **Coming Soon!** block them... but they're trying anyway.

Ask the players which of the two locations they wish to make their home in, and write them in as the **Tier 0** faction in their chosen locale (step 3 of crew creation). Finish crew creation.

Tell the players they have exclusive intelligence about an existential threat to World's safety. Unfortunately, the message came through a bit garbled: emergency communications from the future tend to be like that.

What critical piece of intel does the crew have? (pick one or combine two)

- ▶ The exact time and place where an unrecoverable error in World's simulation will be created by an unknown party: the docks of Argos, one kilocycle from now (start a 6-clock: "World's Foretold Collapse," and tick it once after each Score).
- ▶ An encrypted access key that unlocks a closed partition hidden in Echo City. The key has Administrative markings, so you suspect it is linked to a critical piece of infrastructure that governs a facet of the simulation. What could possibly be inside?
- ▶ One of the seven "Seals" that, once fully united, control full archival backup access. It manifests as a chunk of incomplete circuitry, with the phrase "Telos" etched onto it in gold. The Academy wants to recover them all for some hidden purpose.
- ▶ A statement of intent from a user calling themselves "the Catalyst." They intend to shatter the timeline: their plan goes into action with the destruction of an Administrator identified as 4s.b331, the Herald of Abandonment. But how do they plan to do that?

Records indicate that you are entering a very dynamic moment in World's timeline. Administrative paralysis in the face of these threats leaves your crew as the only bulwark

against the chaos you know is coming.

What problematic hindrance is the crew facing? (pick any)

- ▶ One of you tried to take your case directly before the ARC Foundation for help, but **Director Stone** shut you down and now has you sanctioned in the eyes of the Administration. What's worse, he showed signs of mind-warping glitch infection...
- ▶ A user in the Administration, **Moderator Tanis**, is sympathetic to your team's goals, though he believes your fears to be largely misguided. But Tanis is compromised by the political fallout of a romantic relationship with **Queen of Wands**, the leader of known criminal element "The Minor Arcana." Even if he wanted to help, his hands are tied.
- ▶ The **Temple of Unresolution**, a religious order with ascetic teachings, has vowed a pledge of austere meditation in belief that the end of days is at hand. Unfortunately this means that followers at multiple levels of Administration and local public service are on indefinite hiatus, causing confusion and delays throughout World.

The crumbling of Argos has revealed a substrata of World's first server that was never intended for public viewing. Unfortunately, the foolish scavengers of the Adventurer's Guild see this dangerous quantum maze as a challenge to their dungeon delving skills. Their opportunism runs the risk of accelerating the collapse of the server, which could have catastrophic secondary effects on the rest of World.

The Minor Arcana are planning a confidence game involving a faked restoration of an artifact resembling one of the seven "Seals" (it is a dense fragment of circuitry emblazoned with the phrase 'Logos' in gold). A very rich buyer, **Honora Plath**, will be at the auction, but she already possesses the genuine artifact and will likely demand a public appraisal to denounce the fake. The Arcana intend to swap the real and the fake Seal in the confusion, and then ransom the real one off to the Academy.

The Temple of Unresolution is leading a high-profile congregation on a vigil in Argos, openly breaking the Administrative sanction on travel to the server. Troubleshooter teams are deployed to break up the gathering with predictable results. The entire incident has been master-minded by an outsider for a nefarious purpose: to divert Administrative resources and obscure some kind of action they do not wish to fall in the public eye.

This moment of crisis is one link in a chain of causality that determines the direction this World takes. Has a central character arisen in the course of your investigation? Could the mysterious Directory, currently interred on the Stack, have a connection to any of this? What is the Administration's stance on these events: do they see outliers to be ignored or a pattern of chaos with your crew in the center?

the score

types of scores

In *Hello, World* we play to find out if a fledgling crew of users can prosper in the crowded servers of an immortal digital society—and that prosperity depends upon their endeavors, which we call **scores**. A score is a single operation with a particular goal: *raid the Bluelight Society's headquarters, deresolve the Cult's leading ambassador, smuggle a daemonic artifact past the Overwriters in order to sell it, convince Moderator Tanis to help us disgrace the Academy*, etc. Usually a score will fall into one of four categories:

- ▶ A lucrative **activity** determined by your crew type. For example, Black Hats tend to perform heists, infiltrations, espionage, or sabotage. Some of your claims or plots will help you earn bonus income from a set of these score types.
- ▶ Seizing or developing an **asset** (a claim or plot) of your choice from your crew's asset map. Assets help your crew grow and develop.
- ▶ Mounting a **defense** of your crew (their members, allies, assets, or headquarters) from the aggressive actions of another faction.
- ▶ A **special mission** determined by the players (like acquiring an artifact from a sealed partition the Wielder has discovered).

A score can be long and involved or short and sweet. There might be a lot of function rolls and complications, or just a few actions to resolve it. *Play it out to find out what happens!* A score doesn't need to fill a whole session of play every time. It can be however long it wants to be. The players set up a new score by choosing a target (from their claims or the faction map, for example), by approaching a potential client and asking for work, or by being contacted by an NPC who needs to hire a crew for a job. A score consists of the following key elements: **planning & engagement**, **flashbacks**, and **teamwork**.

Once a score is finished, move on to **downtime**.

are we sure that it's a score?

Note that **defensive** and **special** missions in particular might not always need to be scores, depending on how much time the players want to devote to them.

The two mechanical purposes of the score structure are to mark the passage of time (the other factions in *World* have a chance to react to the players) and inject resources into the crew (coin, rep, and downtime actions to help them recover from the friction of function rolls and pursue personal goals). If you decide that a full score is unnecessary to explore a scene, or that the prospective payoff would not be significant enough on its own to justify a score, you can resolve the situation in Free Play instead (making Function, Gather Info, and Fortune rolls as needed) and move on to something else after.

planning & engagement

Your crew spends time planning each score. They draw up elaborate plans on memory-slates, sketch out suspected force dispositions and signals intelligence on hovering holographic globes, debate plots and schemes at their favorite noodle restaurant, arguing over the best approaches, lamenting the dangers ahead, and lusting after memories or social admiration.

But you, the players, don't have to do all this planning. The characters did that stuff off-screen. All you have to do is choose what **type of plan** your characters made. There's no need to sweat little details and try to cover every eventuality ahead of time, because the **engagement roll** ultimately determines how much trouble you are in when the plan goes into motion. **No plan is ever perfect**. *World* is too volatile, there are too many factors in play to chart every possible contingency. No user, no matter how brilliant, can account for everything. This system assumes that there are always some unknown factors and trouble in every operation; you just have to make the best of it.

There are six plans (five ordinary, and one special *authority* plan discussed further on the next page), each with a missing **detail** you will provide. To plan an operation, simply choose the plan and supply the detail. Then the GM then **cuts to the action** as the first moments of the plan unfold.

assault	Do violence to a target. <i>Detail: the point of attack.</i>
deception	Lure, trick, or manipulate. <i>Detail: the method of deception.</i>
stealth	Trespass unseen. <i>Detail: the point of infiltration.</i>
social	Negotiate, bargain, or persuade. <i>Detail: the social connection.</i>
transport	Carry cargo or people through danger. <i>Detail: route & means.</i>
authority	Wield an Authority function. <i>Detail: the function's outcome.</i>

the detail

When you choose a plan, you provide a missing detail, like a point of attack, social connection, etc. If you don't yet know the detail, you can **gather information** to discover it. See page 51.

The combination of plan and detail, if it exposes a vulnerability of the target, may give you a bonus on the engagement roll that is coming up. If the target is particularly strong against this type of plan or the detail implicates a special preparation they have made, it might instead be a penalty... But these factors will not be decisive on their own as you will soon see, and so the crew should not feel any pressure to craft "the perfect approach." Oftentimes the most dramatic or straightforward approach is just as good. *Hello, World* is designed to let you tell an exciting story, not to force you to tell a boring and safe one.

engagement roll

Once the players choose a plan and provide its detail, the GM cuts to the action—describing the scene as the crew starts the operation and encounters their first obstacle. The way the GM describes the opening scene can have a huge impact on how simple or troublesome the operation turns out to be however. To figure out what tone this opening scene has, we make an **engagement roll**.

The engagement roll is a **fortune roll**, starting with **1d for sheer luck**. Modify the dice pool for any major advantages or disadvantages that apply.

major advantages & disadvantages

- ▶ Is this operation particularly bold or daring? Take **+1d**. Is this operation overly complex or contingent on many factors? Take **-1d**.
- ▶ Does the **plan's detail** expose a vulnerability of the target or hit them where they're weakest? Take **+1d**. Is the target strongest against this approach, or do they have particular defenses or special preparations? Take **-1d**.
- ▶ Can an **ally, friend** or **contact** provide aid or insight? Take **+1d**. Are any **enemies** or **rivals** interfering in the operation? Take **-1d**.
- ▶ Is the target server in a state of **Chaos**? Take **-1d per Chaos level**.
- ▶ Are there any **other elements** that you want to consider? Maybe a lower-Tier target will give you **+1d**. Maybe a higher-tier target gives you **-1d**. Maybe a political situation in the district makes the operation more or less tricky.

The outcome of the engagement roll shows us what the **position** is for the player's first action once we have cut to the score in progress. A **1-3** means a desperate position. A **4/5** is a risky position. A **6** gives a controlled position, and a **Critical** also carries the action past the initial obstacle, deeper into the action of the score.


authority plans

An **authority plan** is one where you initiate the action with an authority function. When you use this type of plan, your crew must have the necessary **Rep** to spend. You and the GM discuss how it resolves using the procedure described in the **Authority** functions chapter, described in detail on page 136.


When the crew initiates a score with an authority function, the extra surprise or initiative they gain gives them **potency** against any obstacles in the first scene of the score.

The authority function's outcome is the detail for your score. If enacting authority in this way enables the characters to act or would result in a chaotic situation, then the score should follow in the aftermath. If the authority function is itself the goal and it draws unwelcome attention or takes time to enact, make the score about the crew gathering their energies and fending off adversaries who are trying to stop them.

engagement roll

 **1d** for sheer luck.

 **+1d** for each **major advantage**.


 **-1d** for each **major disadvantage**.

Critical: *You have already overcome the first obstacle and you're in a **controlled** position for what's next.*

6: *You're in a **controlled** position when the action starts.*

4/5: *You're in a **risky** position when the action starts.*

1-3: *You're in a **desperate** position when the action starts.*

 **authority** engagement gives **potency** during the first scene.

opening scene

The engagement roll assumes that the crew is approaching the target of the score as intelligently as they can, given the plan and details provided, so we don't need to play out tentative probing maneuvers, special precautions that might not come up, or other non-active scenes. The players are already in the action, facing their first obstacle: *kicking in the door to Bluelight headquarters alongside your gang of Strikers; evading the glitch traps outside a Cult of Static vice den; approaching a politically-vulnerable moderator with blackmail in hand at a social gala.*

One way to frame how you approach the scene after making an engagement roll is to ask the group "What would be the coolest thing we could see our characters doing right now?" Go straight to that scene. You chose a target that would be fun to mess with and an exciting approach, so cut to the part where you throw down the gauntlet against them!

No matter how low-tier or outmatched you are, a desperate position is the worst thing that can result from the engagement roll. It's designed this way so that the planning process matters, but doesn't demand tons of optimization or nitpicking. Even if you are reckless and just dive in and take your chances, you can't get too badly burned. You might even want those desperate function rolls to generate more xp for the users, which helps boost starting characters into more advanced ones.

When describing the opening scene, use the details of the target to paint a picture of the crew's position. How might the idealistic and impressionable Moderator Tanis present a controlled position for manipulators? How might the strange, glitch-worshipping Cult of Static present a risky position for burglars? How might the ruthless and manipulative Bluelight Society present a desperate position for attackers? Use these opportunities to show how the player's enemies are dangerous and capable.

what happens next?

The engagement roll determines the starting position for the player's actions, but things go wherever they need to afterward. If the crew handles a desperate situation well, they could be in a *risky* or even *controlled* position very quickly. If the crew encounters unexpected resistance while in a controlled situation, things might deteriorate to *desperate* as you follow the action. The engagement roll is a quick short-hand to get the action started. It doesn't have impact after that.

running the game

starting the game

During the first session, the group will discuss the themes they want the game to focus on and establish safety tools (this **groundwork** is described on page 4). Then the players can choose a crew type, create their users, and embark on their first score (**character creation** is described starting on page 79, and **crew creation** is the chapter after that). One You might be able to finish the first score in the first session or you might not even begin it, depending on how quickly the characters and crew come together. Either way is fine!

If you are a GM planning on running a first session of *Hello, World*, your beginning step ought to be to absorb a little of the information about the setting in the final few chapters of the book. Don't worry too hard about mastering the game mechanics in this book, and don't stress about soaking up every piece of setting data and lore (in fact, having a looser notion of the setting might be just as good or better for you!). You only need to know enough to sketch out what you find interesting about World to the players, and invite them to help you define the edges of the simulation in play. You and your group can fill in the blanks as you go along, or if you find yourselves comfortable writing your own details into the margins you can create a World that diverges from the one found in this text. It's your group's game, after all, not mine.

The structure of making character playbooks and a crew book is designed to ease everyone into their roles and the setting, by providing various hooks for the group to latch onto to. If the players don't know what they can or should do next, suggest they meet up with an ally or crew contact. If you have a question about how the rules work or a specific interaction, either look up the answer or invent your own using what you know. This book offers a lot of different tools, and often there will be multiple ways to use those tools to achieve what you want in the fiction.

When you run the game, try to accomplish these goals:

Play to find out what happens. Don't steer the game toward certain outcomes or events. Be curious! Let the story tumble out of control.

Convey the digital world honestly. When it's time to say what happens, or what's in World around the PCs, "look around" the vision of the World that's in your head and just say what it is that you see.

Bring World to life. Give each location a specific aspect (cluttered, anodyne, strange, bright, etc.). Give each important NPC a name, detail, and a preferred method of problem solving. Give each action context—the duel is taking place on top of a giant illuminated neon billboard; the informant stands in the shadow of a dusty gladiatorial arena; the Bluelight Syndicate's lair is fuzzy with a pale CRT glow.

triggering the function roll

The game is a conversation between the people at the table (or in a digital space, if your play group happens to be uploaded!). You're talking, narrating actions, speaking in character, making jokes, sketching maps, speculating about what might happen, whatever flow works best for your group. But something happens at some point, right? There's a moment where the conversation changes from *just talking* to *rolling some dice*. How does that happen?

This shift in the conversation is the GM's responsibility (they should be on the lookout for it), but anyone can call for it. So, when do you call for it? You should call for a **function roll** when any of the following happens:

- ▶ **A player character wants to change the situation** and there is a **dangerous** or at least **interesting obstacle** in their path.
- ▶ **A player character leads or gives orders to an NPC or group of NPCs**, who will face an **obstacle** that is **dangerous** or **interesting**.
- ▶ **Someone grabs the dice and is excited about making a roll.**

Let's talk about the negative example: when you decide to stay in the conversation and *not* go for the dice. What if a player character wants to **change the situation** and there's an **obstacle**, but it's not particularly **dangerous** and failure in this moment would not be all that **interesting** to explore? When this happens your best bet is to boil down the moment to a choice, and look for what is compelling about that choice. Perhaps it involves a concession that the player can surrender to achieve their goals: do they take it? If so, you can note how the fiction has changed and move on.

The crew just fended off an attack by the Bluelight Syndicate and has chosen to strike back at the Syndicate's pocketbook: their black market trade. While sending Bluelight hawkers packing and smashing up pallets of stolen thoughts (which the GM rules as taking place without any resistance), Lyth comes face-to-face with one of the market's customers who also happens to be the Ally on her player sheet: Telos, a disgraced former moderator. Telos tries to conceal their surprise and quickly hides something from Lyth... a high-value memory that is sure to have intel useful to the crew. What will Lyth do?

*After discussing their concepts of Telos' character traits, Lyth's player and the GM agree that Telos is taking a stand out of pride but also isn't about to fight back. There's no danger to Lyth, but if she demands Telos hand over the object it would damage the relationship. Instead of asking for a **function roll**, the GM tells Lyth's player that the **choice** is simple: Preserve the friendship and let Telos go, or demand the prize and reverse the relationship on their character sheet to turn Telos into a **Rival** instead of an Ally.*

If a player is unsatisfied by the options offered, they can always change their approach... perhaps this time in a way that will move toward a function roll.

GM tips and tricks

choosing a function roll

The GM does not call for specific function rolls. Instead the GM should present obstacles and ask the player “how do you want to deal with that?” Let them tell you the function they do and what it looks like ‘on-screen’. Then establish a position and an effect from there.

If the function is a real stretch, you can set a tough position or zero effect. Tell the player what might work easier if they ask! But always put the ball in their court and let them call the shot.

it’s ok to do the obvious thing

One thing that the function roll steps do is stage the conversation so that everyone at the table has agreed on the ‘value’ of a die roll in terms of it’s risk versus the possible reward. If you tell the players why a position is desperate and they agree with you, you’re establishing buy-in on some of the likely consequences that might arise. *“Oh, they have an advantage because of their leverage over the trade guild. I guess building up trouble with those guys makes sense then.”*

However maybe you’ll have sped through the function roll conversation (it’s ok to do that sometimes!), or a 1-3 result will come up and you’ll just draw a blank when it’s time to assign a consequence. It’s okay to just keep it simple! A complication can just be some extra **HEAT**, or a tick on a clock that represents a related problem that’s not currently in the scene. Or you can inflict some incidental **DAMAGE** to the PC from the ‘friction’ of the action. Every single consequence doesn’t have to be an fascinating new problem or a brutal reversal of fortune. Go with what’s obvious, and ask the other players at the table for ideas if you feel stuck.

something always changes

No matter if the PC succeeds or fails on their roll, the situation has always changed! Use that certainty to narrate and decide on consequences. Whether the player and their adversary just exchanged strikes or words, the world around them moves: the battle flows out into a new space, or someone has a momentary advantage, or we can see the villain reaching into their cloak for some reason! World is a dynamic place, full of action and reaction. Draw on your favorite cinematic moments, steal from media you like.

keep it flowing

Some players will meticulously chart out their future operations forever if no one stops them—even if they hate doing it! They might think it’s worth the trouble to cover every possible angle, and a lot of roleplaying games have trained us that the potential of the setting we were promised is a more exciting place than the actual drudge-work of grappling with the rules that would get us to that future state of play.

This is not how *Hello, World* works! Every plan, no matter how good or bad, has a chance to go sideways. Finding out what happens to change the plan is why we play! Rather than sit around trying to dream up some kind of “perfect” plan, ask the other players “**what do we want to see our characters doing?**” The instant you know what that is, is the time to make your engagement roll. Cut to the exciting thing and do it!

If someone has a cool idea for a maneuver or trap that’s great, but it’s probably still a *controlled* function roll at the very best. They can’t plan and discuss their way out of making the roll (assuming there is some opposition to overcome). An idea is not execution.

NPC threat levels

The **position** of function rolls (and thus the severity of the **consequences** that will result) determines the threat level of the opposition. If the characters are facing a standard Process mook, then the consequences should be things like restraining a PC with a grab, calling reinforcements, harassing the crew’s efforts, and maybe if the thug manages to gain the upper hand they have a chance to land a blow and cause some actual damage.

If you are facing an NPC who is an expert process or a capable user, then the consequences should be more serious: a vicious reversal, a dramatic escalation of the conflict, putting a player in a bad spot. Inflicting multiple consequences from a single roll is one way to demonstrate this increased threat potential.

Since NPCs don’t have stats or function ratings, it’s by the **severity of their consequences** and the **position** and **effect** of the PC’s rolls against them that their capabilities are usually manifest in the game. There are additional techniques, however.

If an NPC is particularly *dangerous* or *skilled*, they can take the initiative. **Tell the players what the NPC is about to accomplish**, then ask the players what they do.

“The IMC squad fans out, shoulders their rifles, and zeroes in on you: the air is about to get hot around here. What do you do?”

The PC’s next move—and the function roll that results—will tell us how effective the NPC’s maneuver was. Remember that a function roll can serve double duty, resolving both the PC and NPC actions at the same time.

If the NPC is *overwhelming*: an Administrator, a mighty Daemon, a rival user at the top of their game, then **tell the players what the NPC has already done**, and ask if they wish to **resist** it.

*“As you cross the sands to the meetup point, the supersonic echo of a sniper bolt shatters the wind-swept air. Your contact, Beryl, collapses in broken fragments out in the open! Unless.. did something tip you off in time? Maybe the glint of a distant scope? Do you **resist** to dive in and save them before the shot can land?”*

These techniques can shape the flavor of your story and how your table wants to portray World, as well. Do you want a high-stakes kind of story? Then NPCs should threaten serious damage and consequences all the time, resistance rolls should only reduce consequences, and deresolution causes permanent ego-threatening damage to people’s minds. Do you want a more adventurous, cinematic kind of game? Then describe less dire consequences. Let armor fully reduce all the harm of an attack, or resistance rolls fully prevent most consequences. Deresolution can be a brief vacation instead of a harrowing experience, treated lightly by the characters. Explosions exist to make users look cool when they walk away from them.

You don’t have to decide on one approach and stick with it all the time. Be flexible and let it change based on what the group is most excited about.

buffer

When you **Buffer**, you deflect danger and guard, seize, or hold an area.

*You might seize or hold a position in battle. You might stall an accusation or divert an attack. You might buy an ally time by acting as a barrier. You could try to outlast an aggressive opponent until they back off (but **Crashing** might be better).*

» **How do you get in harm's way? What conviction or skill lets you endure?**

» **What is your defensive objective?**

Users have durable avatars, and you can amplify this toughness to bring it to bear in a contested arena, brushing aside spark-shots and deflecting blows. Buffer tests your ability to control the physical space of a conflict, to soak up attention or seize ground while the opposition wastes their efforts to bring you down or get past you. It is also good for resisting harmful or draining environments.

While it's hard to hurt a User who is buffering the space around them, the reactive nature of this function makes it possible for adversaries to turn the tables by complicating your life in other ways: giving ground to lure you into a trap or using your defensive posture to their advantage. Worse, if the enemy offensive has an overwhelming factor of **scale** or **potency** then buffering might not prevent you from taking massive damage.

Compared to its aggressive counterpart **Crash**, Buffer won't bring a swift end to conflicts or crush the opposition. But it's usually better at controlling the terms of the engagement, securing tactical advantages, buying time for allies, or holding the line.

Outside of combat, buffer might also be used to tank a different sort of damage: social attention. This function can represent a stoic defense against accusations or a stalling effort. While it won't be as efficient at diverting interest as the lie of an **Echo**, you can make your avatar's presence and poise so overwhelming that you cannot be ignored.

examples

Controlled

I'll just block their view down the hallway while you crack the door. My avatar's kind of messy already... I can sort of stumble-flail around so the guards have to focus on me instead, right?

4/5 Risky Position: "Oh no, I think she's glitching out bad. Uh, you alright miss? (Call an Overwriter, it looks serious!) Hey, help is on the way! Just, uh, try not to move!"

4/5 Minor Complication: They lose interest in your antics and wander off, but as you try to join your allies you realize your arm is stuck. You accidentally clipped your avatar into the wall at a badly-coded corner! If you forcefully break your arm out it will cost you 1 stress damage, unless you figure something else out or just chill here...

Risky

I've got my lightbarrier up in time, he's got his arc wheel and is swinging wildly, I'll just deflect every strike until I can create an opening... this could be a setup roll for the Crash function that I do next!

4/5 Damage: Actually, I'm not sure this outcome works... the entire point of buffering is you are focusing on defense, right? So I think you shouldn't get hurt here, maybe there's a better consequence...

4/5 Complication: He's running a fierce combo string against you, and you just barely stay ahead of it before your lightbarrier burns out on the very last strike. Your shield is shattered, but now's your chance to hit back!

4/5 Desperate Position: The two of you lock each other up! You've got the inside angle on a killer strike (**Great effect** on your next roll!), but your own defensive arm is also pinned. Could this become a double knockout?

Desperate

That's a lot of missiles... But I'm tough, I can take it! I'll make a barrier and defend our patch of ground, nobody gets hurt unless it's me.

4/5 Severe Damage: Well, nobody else got hurt. The bad news is, you got REAL hurt. Take 4 stress damage! You might not have to derez, if you take some of it as harm...

crash

examples

Controlled

We've established these process are unarmed, yeah? I want to wipe the floor with them in a flashy way, flowing through with my arc wheel: maybe impress the gang and make them not want to mess with us.

1-3 Withdraw: GM: "These enforcers don't use weapons because deresolution isn't a problem for them, they wear users like you down with raw numbers. As you dispatch the twentieth and feel yourself slowing down, you feel a flash of panic. You want to rush to finish them all off with a **risky** roll?"

Player: "Uh, no, I'll withdraw and try another approach. I break away and start blasting with my sparkmag to drive the rest off."

GM: "Sure thing. You're switching to the **Ping** function now, but it's still **controlled**."

Risky

*Finally, a chance to settle the score! This time, I ready my **Shock Gauntlets** to deflect her spear tip, then pull her in with the handle and unleash a jab-hook-uppercut combo.*

4/5 Damage: You're not the only one who's been practicing! Korryn's lance is faster than you remember and your shoulder burns in synaptic overload even as you land your hits and tumble past. The two of you separate, each just as bad off... I've marked two ticks on her clock, but you need to take 2 stress damage. She's smiling wickedly! Now what?

Desperate

So daemon mob enforcers have us surrounded and I've only got my memory knife. Cool. I mutter to Nand that he needs to look for a chance to run. Time to cut our way out...

4/5 Severe Damage: You're a rastered mess, alright, but Nand gets away and you've held them to a standstill! Take 3 stress damage. Realizing his mistake, the lead thug chitters an order and the gang scuttles away.

1-3 Lost Opportunity: The enforcers close in around you, and you are disarmed and restrained with ease. You see Nand's face flashing in panic as he realizes what you are both in for. Get ready to meet the boss...

When you **Crash**, you strike, break, or duel with close-quarters force and skill.

*You might hack and slash in a high-flying martial arts duel. You might break through barriers or smash infrastructure. You might engage in a swirling point-blank gunfight. You could try to drive away a large gang with crushing attacks (but **Pinging** might be better).*

» **What weapons do you use to fight? What does your technique look like?**

» **What is your offensive objective?**

World is a pretty abstract place, but if you deal enough physical trauma to an avatar you can make it go away. Crash does that. It's about solving problems with sudden, applied force.... up close and personal.

The consequences you face when Crashing usually depend on the foe, their armaments and talent. In a tough fight, you might be better off changing the terms of the struggle: use **Buffer** to endure and seek a tactical advantage or **Goto** to simply flee the fray.

Talented combatants fetch a high price, whether in the dueling pits of Arcturus or the fencing bubbles of Canopus. World's weapon of prestige is the "arc wheel", a bladed disc used in formal combat arts. A variety of axes, gauntlets, polearms, sidearms, swords, shotguns, etc. are also common instruments to Crash with. While battles to the derez do occur outside the arenas, the immortality of users means that combat usually has primary objectives outside of mere harm. What do you stand to gain in this fight?

Crash also causes mayhem or carnage by breaking stuff. World's public architecture is not very durable to the forces a User is capable of inflicting with heavy weapons like nodechoppers or gigasmashers. But if you try to break a faction HQ or the foundations of the Servers, your GM will likely test your effect level against the target's **tier**. Unfortunately some things are going to simply be beyond your capacity to damage. In such cases, perhaps only harnessing the **Kill** authority function will do the job.

echo

When you **Echo**, you sway or deceive with guile, illusion, or misinformation.

*You might fool the senses with illusions and sounds. You might sway the beliefs of others with seduction, emotional appeal, or false evidence. You might alter timestamps to deceive investigators who wish to **restore** the scene. You could try to distract guards and travel somewhere you aren't authorized (but **Masking** might be better).*

- » **What fiction are you selling? How do you weave this illusion or story?**
- » **Is it something they are predisposed to believe? What do you hope they'll do?**

Avatar visual traits are a projection of internal self-image and values, and World allows for redefinition within baselines. Long ago users learned to exploit this feature to project images and sounds distinct from themselves, and the field of Echoing was born. The methods have been honed over time, but the principle remains the same: to display a false reality that convinces or deceives.

When someone is being duplicitous or manipulative to change the behavior of others, we say they are 'echoing' as a shorthand. Echoes are used to influence others to do what *you* want them to do, not what's best for them. The exact technique may range from audiovisual holograms to passionate pleas or well-reasoned arguments.

Echoing isn't mind-control. Users are very critical of their surroundings as an adaptation to the press of sensory inputs in World. The best echoes are tailored to tap into existing hopes or fears, which might require careful study of the intended target (perhaps with **Find** or **Link**) to set up a lie they will be predisposed to fall for. Leverage is situational, after all.

You might be able to Echo another PC. Ask the player if you can change their character's mind. If they agree you can, your function might make them see things your way. If not, you can only disrupt them somehow—an intense distraction, but not a convincing one.

examples

Controlled

We're not on this bouncer's dumb list, but they have to be letting some users in, right? Not much of a party otherwise. I'll glamour up my avatar and act like I'm casting to an audience, surely they wouldn't want to upset a big-time influencer by turning her away?

4/5 Minor Complication: The other guests in line get interested in your brand and start asking questions. How can they find you on social, what's that hairstyle sponsorship you're projecting, stuff like that. The process bouncer shrugs and lets you all through but you've accidentally acquired a fan-following and they're not going away...

Risky

Moderator Tanis, you have to believe us! The evidence is all here: cycles of scheming against the Administration, students illicitly accessing archives! How long will you wait before acting?

4/5 Reduced Effect: "Heh, and I suppose your own public feuds with the Academy are just a convenient coincidence? Let's pretend, for argument's sake, we *all* want to see them taken down a peg. I still need more than theories, I need a smoking gun."

4/5 Complication: "I can work with this, but it has to be done by the book. A proper investigation where they'll also be entitled to collect evidence and present their side of the story. I hope you are confident this will stand up in a public accusation... for your sake."

1-3 Complication: The moderator's eyes narrow and he wordlessly spins on a heel and departs. Start a 4-clock, "The Academy Accuses You," and tick it twice. He must have been in their pockets after all!

Desperate

I don't know if I can take him in a straight fight! What if I echo afterimages of myself darting and feinting around the arena, maybe I can confuse them and get the upper hand?

4/5 Reduced Effect: The gladiator strikes down your echoes one after the other, methodically closing on your position. You're cornered now, but you've bought a moment here to try something with this distraction.

find

When you **Find**, you filter information to discover facts or see through deception.

*You might dig through memories, records, and news reports. You might analyze a user to see through their **echo** or **mask**. You might track timestamps to discover a target's location. You could try to study the timeline to understand the past (but **Restoring** the archives to directly observe events might be better).*

- » **What does it look like when you open yourself to the data-stream?**
- » **What do you hope to discover? What details are you looking for?**

World is information-dense. Users are bombarded with audiovisual stimuli, from animated news updates to tailored holo-ads and vox posts from their associates. It's common for people to set their input filters very high to tune out all the noise.

Still, value hides among the info-debris. Incriminating data lingers forever on the timeline and the **echoes** of con-artists betray the lie under scrutiny. When you Find, you concentrate on filtering small details and locating a valuable fact among a sea of trivia. When you study an entity, you can ask the GM questions about them as you interact. You might wait until they drop a fishy statement, and then ask "What aren't they saying?" (also see the list of questions you can ask on the bottom of your character sheet).

Similarly, you can inspect a location or object for additional clues about it. However for obtaining primary source information about the past, nothing beats **Restoring** the details you want from out of Archives. Find is safer, but it's also more hands-off and you might end up overwhelmed by all the information.

Find is a great action for research of any kind (often a long-term project). Want to know where the richest collection of art objects resides, with the weakest security? Want to know how many Process dwell in the lower depths of Arcturus, out of work and ready to be mobilized? Go find out.

examples

Controlled

We know the memory is stored somewhere in her office. We'll turn it over from top to bottom until we find it.

4/5 Minor Complication: This is it, but something is off: the intel references a trusted informant named Emm... but that's a friend on your Contact list, right? What could Emm's connection here be, and are they giving away data on you too?

1-3 Withdraw or Risky Position: You crunch through a stack of read-only memories, but it's all boring stuff: ledgers, meetings. You're head down in a folio when you hear doors being opened down the hallway by the night watch. You can try to speed-riffle the rest of this stack, but their flare-bulbs will be sweeping the office in a couple moments!

Risky

I stay quiet and watch this daemon while the deal goes down. If he's up to something I want to figure out what it is.

4/5 Complication: The oily broker catches your eye and pouts in mock outrage. "Discounts are revoked for rude users..." A slimy appendage covers the key in the middle of the table and retracts it defensively. He's got no other motive here than to use your defensiveness to charge 1 more coin above the original deal!

1-3 Complication: The daemon avoids your gaze and clears the sale efficiently, but you can't help but feel as though you missed something important back there. Start a 6-clock, "The Family charges interest," and let's mark it twice.

Desperate

While Lith holds the Administrator at bay, I'm going to rapid-scan their attack profile to try to find some sort of weakness we can exploit.

4/5 Serious Complication: The Admin shifts its withering gaze and is above you in a blink. Your limbs harden as the air around you freezes. Still, you saw a slender fracture in 4s.b33l's bodily structure. Lingering wound from a daemon's blade epochs ago, perhaps? You cannot open your mouth to speak.

goto

When you **Goto**, you avoid danger and run, climb, navigate, or operate vehicles.

*You might run and leap across rooftops. You might handle the controls of a vehicle or direct a mount. You might outrace an opponent with shortcuts or bursts of speed. You could try to evade a powerful attack (but **Buffering** might be better).*

» **How do you travel? How does the environment help or hinder you?**

» **What do you hope to achieve?**

The simulation is dynamic, a shifting physical construct under constant transformative pressure from competing civic interests and endless commercial bustle. With momentum the only constant, those with the skill to Goto places others cannot will rise to the top. Whether leaping across rooftops and scaffolds or dancing with the controls of a vehicle, the skilled traveler turns the canvas of World into a masterpiece of expressive motion.

The art of efficient movement depends on knowledge of spaces and relative velocities, and therefore Goto is as much a test of awareness and timing as raw speed. For this reason the more chaotic a scene, the harder Goto ordinarily is but also potentially the more effective. Diving into the collapsing box canyon is way riskier than racing over flat ground, but the shortcut might get you there faster and scrape some rivals off your tail at the same time!

You can use your mobility to create an opportunity or as a setup teamwork action (or both at once). You might Goto a vantage point so you can **Find** information via observation.

Goto can be used for evasive purposes: to avoid arcwheel strikes or spark-fire, saving yourself from intersecting with a foe's vector of attack. A clean escape is obviously good, but the consequences of failure in such cases are usually more dire. It might be safer to **Buffer** the foe head-on and trust in your defenses rather than turn tail and hope that you are quicker.

examples

Controlled

A bunch of street gangs can't stop me, I know the Heights like the back of my hand! I'll prowls across the rigging and rooftops to get a peak into the Syndicate hideout.

4/5 Less Effect + Minor Complication: This place has changed since you got put on the Stack. Your vantage point reveals a guarded warehouse getting some kind of product unloaded inside and customers from all over Achora visiting a connected establishment. You'd have to get closer to see what is being sold. Unfortunately there's also new monitoring scanners in the district, and you think you might have tripped one somewhere back there, so take **+1 Heat**.

Risky

As their skyrise dips close to our rooftop for another strafing run, I want to leap across and clamber down to their engine bay.

4/5 Damage: You make it, but you're clipped by spark shots as you fling yourself to the other side! Take 2 stress, unless you want to mark some armor or harm...?

1-3 Complication: Hmm, I don't want to send you falling out of the scene. What if instead you sort of misjudge the angle... Yeah, the skyrise lurches below you mid-air and you tumble onto their observation deck surrounded by gunners. Acra levels a mag pistol at you but holds her shot. "Going my way, Lith?"

Desperate

Well my Ride still has like, "some wing" left. I'll work the controls to steepen our descent and dive through the rock columns, that should lose the pursuit. Then I recover our glide path and touch down in a concealed canyon!

4/5 Reduced Effect: The force feedback shudders in protest, and you manage a sort of crippled glide to safety. But the Sky Painters followed and are circling overhead!

4/5 Serious Complication: Seeing danger ahead the pursuers break off, but the maneuver turns into a wild corkscrew after you pinball off a rock face. You crater in a dark hole below the mountains, far from help...

link

When you **Link**, you gain access through credentials or socialize with contacts.

*You might make new friends or win someone over with charm or style. You might gain access to people or places. You might turn the natural resources or privileges of World to your advantage. You could try to obtain hidden information about a faction by rubbing elbows with them (but **Finding** might be better).*

» **Who do you meet? Where and how do you connect with them?**

» **What do you hope they'll do for you?**

World is the ultimate social network, a vast interconnected web of contacts and groups. However user memories tend to be short, so these networks are constantly morphing as people discard allegiances or change identities. Navigating this space requires the ability to rapidly synthesize social cues and ever-shifting relationship feeds.

When you **Link**, you approach someone and exchange ideas with the goal of mutual benefit (even if that benefit is just the lure of your natural charm or style). To **link** is to work with existing connections or form new mutual bonds: like politics, it is the art of the possible. Contrast this with **Echo** which tries to compel others to act against their better judgment by presenting a distorted reality.

Shared experience and relaxed environments help an attempt to **Link** go smoothly. If you don't have ways to relate or circumstances are hostile, **Link** becomes challenging. For example daemons and users might have much to offer each other, but a trust barrier that gets in the way of sincere negotiation may complicate efforts until good intentions are proven.

Link is also the function for leading loyal process (like your crew's gangs or experts). In this case your roll isn't about convincing them, but instead effectively coaching your orders so they can deliver results without encountering complications. Other process are generally loyal to their job or faction and will resist the wishes of unaffiliated users—unless you can convince them that helping you is part of their job.

examples

Controlled

*Emm knows process in the underground. I bet she probably already knows who took the weapons cache, right? And she's my **friend**, she wants to tell me!*

4/5 Minor Complication: Emm's face drains of color when you mention stolen weapons. "Yeah, can we not talk about this here? Do you know what the Administration does to process at even a hint we might be connected to that sort of thing?" She's reluctant, you can either drop this here and now or press her for the information and start a 4-clock called "Emm shuts you out."

Risky

*I may not "know" anyone in here except for Blaize who kiiiind of hates me, but it's fine. I'm **Dressed to Kill** and I can slay this crowd better than some two-bit smoldering gangster.*

4/5 Complication: The party is eating you up, with the exception of one influential user who you've heard of before: *Seni Lavrou*, a celebrity chef and taste-setter. She's nodding at something Blaize is telling her in a corner, and their eyes are on you.

Desperate

Maybe I can turn this around, get to know these mafia daemons and become their friend? Just because I'm their captive doesn't mean we can't talk! And I know something about what they want, I have intel on the Society!

4/5 Reduced Effect + Serious Complication: One of the Family's enforcers, who you get to know as "Ido," is pleasant enough to you. But when the gang discusses best plans to strike at the Bluelight Society your helpful suggestions get shut down by their leader, a tall and ominous one called "Obelisk" by the others. Eventually they decide they are going to turn you over as bait to the Society and strike during the confusion. It's likely be messy and you will end up right in the line of fire! When you look to Ido you see regret in her eyes as she shakes her head. "Sorry invader. Wish things could be different, but this is how it has to be."

mask

When you **Mask**, you hide, sneak, or steal using physical misdirection, cover, or disguise.

*You might sneak past guards or cloak in shadows. You might misdirect in order to swipe a keycard or steal a memory. You might shift appearances to resemble someone allowed access to an area. You could try to disguise as a specific person in order to obtain something valuable you aren't allowed to have (but **Linking** might be better).*

- **How do you obscure your visual signature? What hides your action?**
- **What do you hope to achieve?**

When available information exceeds a critical mass, the value of data to people drops precipitously and vital intel is lost in the shuffle. World is a large-scale version of this phenomenon, and the beneficiaries are users who know how to Mask. By slipping into gaps in awareness created by data saturation, they are the hidden agents of a blinded society.

Masking is the flip-side of the coin to **Echo** in many ways: the principle distinction is that it seeks to avoid attention rather than drawing it. The risks and opportunities to Masking are derived from the environment: when a dramatic scene is drawing attention, in areas crowded with cover or pedestrians, and when sensations are dampened by poor lighting or blaring noise, it is much easier to hide or slip past. Mask also handles theft and legerdemain: dexterous manipulation works best with a distraction in much the same way.

Mask not only veils, but also impersonates... however, disguise is a difficult art in World due to a host of authentication features which safeguard user identities. Still, it's possible if you can steal the right credentials or avoid close scrutiny.

When a Mask roll goes badly, it doesn't have to be all or nothing. A common mistake is to immediately say that the user is discovered as a consequence. Instead, you can start a clock like "Discovered" and tick a segment or two. This way the PC can take a few hits before they're 'knocked out' of stealth.

examples

Controlled

Now that lights are snuffed out across the castle and our big distraction is drawing attention outside the walls, I can sneak across the courtyard and into Tsuruga's inner keep!

4/5 Minor Complication: You're inside the keep. Process with spears are everywhere in here, and one banner-wearing swordmaster, a user, is vigilantly checking the castle grounds. It seems like you might have left a timestamp out there in the mud, and they're investigating that and pointing a patrol toward the keep. Let's make a "Discovered" clock with four segments and tick one of them. What do you do next?

Risky

*I squeeze my way past the socialites and behind the moderator. As soon as she is distracted, I swap her memory of the raid with the **False Memory** I prepared beforehand.*

1-3 Complication: Constable Sysk seizes your arm in a flash. With a bright smile she pulls you into a dense part of the crowd and brings your ear close. "Peaches, what a surprise! The case file on you is thick enough already, don't you think there are easier marks out here tonight?" The incriminating memory is trapped in your hand, but the situation is ambiguous... you're not arrested yet and Sysk appears to be enjoying this little reunion. What are you going to do?

Desperate

I'll give these Troubleshooters the slip! I side-step into shadows and drop a level, off of the promenade, to lose them in the back alleys.

4/5 Damage + Reduced Effect: This is a serious operation, they have a lot of resources on you! A ping-rifle shooter on overwatch snipes you for 3 damage as you tumble to your feet and swivel around a corner. Meanwhile their armored bolt-car lifts into the sky to get a searchlight going, and you can hear the footsteps of a STRIKE team pounding the alleys behind you. You are still one step ahead and you have a moment out of sight of anyone. Do you want to start running or try something else?

ping

examples

Controlled

When you **Ping**, you disable, unlock, or suppress with rapid strikes or ranged combat.

*You might wear down a gang or fortification with precision shots. You might crack a numeric lock by quickly testing combinations in sequence. You could try to scale up to a dictionary attack against complicated passwords (but **Finding** a clue might be better). You could try to defeat an adversary with rapid weak jabs (but **Crashing** might be better).*

- **How do you line up your attack? What methods do you use?**
- **What do you hope to achieve?**

Personal firearms are distracting and flashy in World, but notoriously bad at derezzing users without the benefit of a sustained barrage. That doesn't stop them from widespread use, as a good gunner can demoralize and suppress across great distances. Ping covers the use of ranged weapons such as these as well as shocking invectives, sharp glares, and thrown objects (like arc wheels or wineglasses). All of these attack vectors share the goal of disrupting or shocking their target.

Ping benefits most from having time and distance to coolly line up your shots. Distance fighting relies on aim adjustments for motion, windage, spark velocity, and a host of other considerations commonly ignored in action memory-cinema. When opposing sides dig in behind cover it often results in static spark exchanges with limited effect. Flanking a target with **Goto** can break the stalemate!

Locks and mechanisms in World can be attacked using Ping with the application of overwhelming data inflow. Compared to **Crash** this is the difference between smashing a door, and burning through the lock: you're more likely to avoid both unwanted attention and collateral damage using Ping.

You could try to Ping in a close-quarters confrontation, hoping a string of precise jabs or shots will disrupt the opponent. Your situation might be worse though: **Crash** barrels through and gets the upper hand by smashing you in the face and short-circuiting your decision loop, giving you little time to aim or figure out the "correct" move.

*While Lith is blocking their advance down in the courtyard, I'm giving cover fire from above. Anytime a goon tries to pop up and join the fight, they eat a slug from my **Particle Accelerator**.*

4/5 Risky Position + Minor Complication: The Society is Tier 3, so I'd rate them as having a lot of reinforcements... relative to your ammo reserves, anyway. You've cleared out their entire first wave, but you're kneeling in a pile of empty shells and the barrel of your weapon is white-hot. You cycle the chamber to load your last slug, just as their head enforcer Blaize enters the fray. what do you do?

Risky

Uh, "first" wave!? Ok, I take a deep breath and zero in on Blaize. If I can make this last shot count, Lith should be able to clean up the rest.

4/5 Reduced Effect: Blaize weaves away from the line of fire, but her shoulder snaps back nonetheless from the sonic crack of your shot. Her eyes light up with murderous fire as she rushes Lith. Mark just one tick on Blaize's clock, it will take more than that!

1-3 Complication + Desperate Position: You pull the trigger: nothing! Your accelerator seizes up with a whine, venting hot steam. There's a prickle on the back of your neck as you look up from your scope. Not only is Lith in trouble down there, but a squad is coming out of the elevator for you!

Desperate

I swing the Accelerator over my shoulder and draw a back-up sparkmag. I want to make a fighting retreat onto the balcony and join up with Lith down below.

1-3 Damage + Serious Complication: Your reduced firepower is outmatched. As you retreat down to Lith, the two of you are flushed out of cover by flanking fire from your former vantage point. Both of you take 2 stress damage from numerous hits. Blaize raises a hand to hold her goons back. "It's over. Let's talk. Unless you fancy your chances on the Stack?"

restore

When you **Restore**, you rewind an object or place to a previous state via Archives.

You might restore a location to its state at the time of a crime to gather clues. You might recreate a broken gadget. You might reconstruct a structure or lost feature of the terrain. You could try to confuse a pursuer by cycling a hallway through historical snapshots (but **Echo** or **Goto** might be better).

- **How do you open your mind to the Archives? What does that look like?**
- **What do you hope to reveal or reconstruct? How will that assist you?**

The Archives is a repository of past versions of World, and in addition to storing timestamps left by inhabitants it carries a parallel history of objects and actions awaiting recovery. The skilled archivist can remodel the terrain (using reconstructed fragments of past landscapes) or recall the movements and actions of past inhabitants (by reproducing an imitation of the functions they performed). Archival work is an extremely “hands-on” field, as it summons objects or forces from the past directly into being. The possibilities of Archives are left open-ended by design so that your group can come up with their own answers to the questions it poses.

Any character can Restore, it's not a special gift... but the Archives is neither orderly nor simple to access. World's hardware is quite old and iterations of rewriting have taken their toll, twisting the logic pathways into idiosyncratic shapes. The deeper the version you try to pull, the more likely that tiny errors in calculation can spiral into unforeseen consequences. Strange viral predators slumber in the Archives, frozen between moments. Bring in your concepts of dormant alien computer systems and ask the other players what they think about it, too. Above all, make sure that the Archives is never allowed to feel “figured out” or tame.

Find is good at gathering historical clues or discovering hidden facts, but Restoring can be even stronger—although often with a worse position since you're risking danger from the innate hazards of Archives.

examples

Controlled

Picking locks on safes is so last cycle. I'll simply rewind the safe to an earlier, unlocked state.

4/5 Reduced Effect: Hmm.. seems like every snapshot in the timeline you can find where the safe is open, it's also mostly cleared out in that moment? That's some impressive version control discipline. You should still be able to withdraw **2 coin** worth of valuables, but the sensitive information you are after is never inside during a state you can restore.

1-3 Withdraw or Risk: As your hand hovers over the ghost-shape of the unlocked safe, you realize there is a security subroutine inside wired to recognize archival tampering. It takes the shape of a coiled viper, fangs laced with thought-venom. You want to try to defuse it on a Risky roll?

Risky

This Troubleshooter precinct wasn't always a police station! I think a long time ago it was something else... a museum of World history, maybe? I want to scramble the cell blocks with that old version to release the process inmates.

4/5 Complication: You see flashes of primordial creatures held on display, but something about their corrupted data is scrambling your restoration. Before you can get it under control, a massive skeletal body leers over you, falling though structural pillars. The prisoners are stumbling out of their cells, but the Precinct walls are beginning to collapse. Do you want to try to hastily salvage the situation, or just get out?

Desperate

*This place was an old battlefield, right? I want to use my **Reconstruction Amp** to flood the area around them with a thicket of blades! Ghost warriors, to me!*

4/5 Severe Damage + Complication: Your Amp overheats and melts down from violent feedback as a host of foggy warriors swarms up from the earth, cutting you off from each other and blanketing the area in a confusing haze of violence. Take **3 stress damage**. You can't see your adversaries any more, but you assume they're doing just as bad...

the archived world

World is a simulation powered by a sophisticated multi-threaded computing array (as near as can be guessed by scientific observation from within it). The servers are capable of holding multiple ‘versions’ of themselves in storage, and the simulation has no *theoretical* problems with managing contradictory histories, duplicate object sets, and forks in the timeline. That this creates a host of *practical* problems for the people living inside the simulation is obviously of grave concern for the Administration.

Overwriters prowl the servers, seeking out illicit data signatures and destroying contraband histories. Opposed to them are cultists resurrecting ancient entities and treasure hunters uncovering buried wealth from the past. There are even some users who dream of remodeling the systems of World in such a way as to erase the Administration itself, ushering in a new age where users are truly self-governing.

Users are discouraged by the authorities from messing with Archives, but the ability to restore backup data is baked into the privileges of World. One of the most important rules of Archives is that **no self-aware entity can be restored from the past...** the best you can get is fragments of their existence. Some of the major threats and challenges of interfacing with the Archives include:

- ▶ **Function Loops** are self-executing cycles of behavior captured in the timeline. Because Archives records actions as well as objects, it is possible to unleash a “playback” of an archived event (such as the killing blow struck by a *Crashing* warlord, or the momentous argument of a speaker's *Echo*). These can spontaneously manifest in places where timestamp differentiation breaks down. In extreme cases, function loops carry the same amount of force that they held in the past.
- ▶ **Subroutine** is a catch-all term for non-self-aware creatures or plants in World. Unlike users, process, or daemons, subroutines can be properly stored in the Archives in their entirety. Some subroutines are deliberately planted in the Archives to perform limited tasks on behalf of users when they are *restored*.
- ▶ **Shades** are what is created when a user data-set that is a duplicate of an existing user attempts to manifest in World (despite systemic safeguards that ordinarily prevent this from occurring). A shade typically displays limited cognizance of its condition, and may act out tasks and loyalties that echo the user they imitate. Shades are difficult to observe directly or track on the timeline.
- ▶ **Glitch** has been known to proliferate in the Archives, especially where records are garbled and poorly formatted. Accidentally striking a Glitch node while perusing Archives is a very serious risk. Doing so causes a glitch eruption that consumes the area, erasing local geotags and becoming hazardous for users.
- ▶ **The Nameless** are entities that predate recorded existence. They are speculated to be accidental or even ahistorical: a lie seeded in the deep Archives by a failed simulation, over which the current World was written many iterations ago. Whether the Nameless are “self-aware” is a debated topic among those researchers who actually agree on their theorized existence.

Archives is not universally dangerous across all locations: in populous areas the timeline tends to be routinely scrubbed by Overwriters and other civil servants, making *restoration* work less hazardous (and coincidentally less interesting and useful for security exploits). For more on **server stability**, see page 154.

authority

the forbidden functions

The nine basic functions allowed to the general population are but pale echoes of the original privileges that made and molded this World. Three in number they are, and guarded by the Administration lest they fall into careless hands...

The three **authority** functions are **Compile**, **Format**, and **Kill**. It is not possible for the characters you play in *Hello, World* to use them, not under normal circumstances. However, all rules exist to be broken.

The portfolios of these functions are below:

/// **Compile**: *Infinite power of Creation*. Where nothing has ever existed and you wish to make something new, you must **Compile**. This function may have been the spark that brought World into existence, or perhaps is a derivative thereof. In World, one may *Restore* flimsy echoes of the past or *Echo* to create the merest illusion of something new, but only by **Compiling** can one take imagination and turn it into reality.

You might create an artifact of supreme power. You might define the dimensions and qualities of a magnificent structure, or a new district or partition. You might commission a mighty army of process.

/// **Format**: *Infinite power of Change*. When the present condition or disposition of things is unsatisfactory, **Format** lets you alter them within a host of parameters. It is by far the most commonly-utilized authority function in the present day, as the Administration wields it to fulfill the civic wishes of the polity, adjusting landscapes, skylines, and the systems (both physical and legal) that govern the World. *Linking* together a quorum of consent for a law or alteration is only worth the spilled ink of the resolution until the demanded change is **Formatted**.

You might quarantine a district, freezing movement in and out. You might alter the flows of space, time, gravity, or other natural laws in a block. You might revise the parameters of an entire server's population of process.

/// **Kill**: *Infinite power of Destruction*. Nothing and nobody truly ends in World, except as the **Kill** command dictates. The most powerful warrior in World may *Crash* their adversaries to dust all they wish but the worst fate they can actually inflict is a stint on the Stack, while inanimate structures can be endlessly *Restored* to undo the damage. When something is **Killed** however it disrupts the cycle of resurrection, either temporarily or in some cases permanently. The sanction to **Kill** is jealously guarded by select authorities, and violation of its proper usage to end the existence of a User is an elevated Administrative emergency.

You might purge a district, derezzing the individuals within and wiping its geotags back to baseline. You might shatter a dangerous Memory, annihilating that version of the past. You might permanently revoke a user's rights, removing all trace of them from World... forever.

privilege escalation

A fallen teardrop of pure starlight, raw untapped energy, the potential for great change made manifest... Authority, when condensed into a shape that can be tapped by the users of World, is a great and terrible thing to witness. The players will get to define one type of Authority function their crew is stronger at during Crew Creation (this step in crew creation asks the players to describe a time they used an authority function in the past). *Don't do the following procedure at that time*: these steps are for when the players wield Authority subsequently during the campaign of play.

In order to wield Authority, the crew spends REP equal to **12** minus their TURF/LEVERAGE discount. Then the players and the GM ask and answer a series of questions (see below) about what the players are achieving to define what it will do in play and what is required to perform it. It may be good to record these answers in notes for future reference.

In the second step of the authority questions, the GM will assign the function a final **magnitude**, which is the sum of all the **factors** added up. This magnitude is the cost of the authority function. The crew's **TIER** provides a baseline discount, to which is added any filled boxes (■) in that Authority proficiency the crew has. Any remaining cost must be paid for by the players by marking that much **stress**.

TIER

FUNCTION

RESISTANCE { ○ ● ● ● }

compile (■ □)

format (□ □)

kill (□ □)

*For example, the Unseen Hand is a Tier 2 Black Hats crew, and they also have 1 box marked in their Format crew proficiency. When they **Format** to sway the beliefs of a crowd of process, the final magnitude cost is reduced by 3. The rest of the cost may be paid for with stress marked by any or all of the crew's members.*

If a character marks their **final stress box** while wielding Authority and this causes them to **deresolve** to the Stack, count it as if they marked an additional **2 more** stress towards the magnitude cost.

resisting authority

The other factions of World are also trying to siphon off the energy they need to power their own authority functions. Even worse, the wrong move might bring down the Administrators on you, entities which wield Authority with the same ease as existing. Generally, the right answer to being the target of an Authority function is *not to let it happen in the first place*: catch wind of enemy plans and prevent outcomes you can't allow, don't get on the wrong side of the Admins. But sometimes it can't be helped.

In order to **resist** the fallout of an Authority targeting you, refer to the crew sheet. You get as many dice as you have dots filled in (in this example, **1d**). Resistance is only ever weakly-effective against Authority. If an adversary is trying to *Kill* your user, the best you might manage is to barely-survive despite massive damage: the alternative is a devastating trip to the Stack.

FUNCTION

RESISTANCE { ● ○ ● ● }

compile ()

format ()

kill ()

Compile questions

1. GM asks: **"What have you designed, and how will it manifest?"** The players answer.
2. The players ask: **"What is the price to Compile our creation?"** The GM answers, taking the player's answer to the first question into account to determine what **factors** are necessary for the desired outcome (usually there are at least 2 to 3 major factors involved, possibly more for very ambitious uses of authority). Some common factors for **compile**:
 - **Duration**: How long before this creation begins to succumb to decay?
 - **Scale**: How mighty is this creation? What area does it encompass?
 - **Quality**: How beautiful or imposing is the creation? How strong are it's features?
3. GM asks: **"What new fascination or jealousy does this creation instill in you, or others who witness it?"** The players answer.
4. Finally, the GM asks: **"Does this act of creation provide the legitimacy your crew needs to Tier Up?"** The players may answer. If the answer is Yes, the GM should adjust the status of at least 2 relevant factions which are threatened or alarmed by this. Mark the crew sheet to indicate that the crew is ready to tier up.

compiling mundane items

If the goal of a **Compile** command is to create mass quantities of relatively mundane items or features from pre-existing templates, refer to the Quality table on the next page spread to determine a baseline quality (use **Scale** to generate a whole bunch of them!). Unlike **artifacts** (page 100), these items do not have a timer on their lifespan and don't need a Duration to be applied, though they're just as destructible as anything else in World.

With exception for finer quality items (i.e. **Quality 3+**), Users should also be able to simply **Restore** facsimiles of what they want out of the Archives. They may also **Acquire Asset** in downtime to gain access to certain items by borrowing them from a faction that has them.

Format questions

1. GM asks: **"In what way does your desire for change manifest, and how will you shape the simulation?"** The players answer.
2. The players ask: **"What is the price to Format our will?"** The GM answers, taking the player's answer to the first question into account to determine what **factors** are necessary for the desired outcome (usually there are at least 2 to 3 major factors involved, possibly more for very ambitious uses of authority). **Authority inflicts stress** on the wielder(s) according to the final **magnitude**, the sum of all the factors added up. For **format**, some common factors are:
 - **Quality**: How extreme is the change? How divergent is this new form?
 - **Scale**: How many are altered, or how large an area affected?
 - **Force**: How resistant are these entities, laws, or spaces to this alteration?
3. GM asks: **"What new doubt or paranoia does this mutation instill in you, or others who witness it?"** The players answer.
4. Finally, the GM asks: **"Does this act of alteration provide the shock to the status quo your crew needs to Tier Up?"** The players may answer. If the answer is Yes, the GM should adjust the status of at least 2 relevant factions which are threatened or alarmed by this. Mark the crew sheet to indicate that the crew is ready to tier up.

Kill questions

1. GM asks: **"In what way does your will to destroy manifest, and what is your target?"** The players answer.
2. The players ask: **"What is the price to Kill our target?"** The GM answers, taking the player's answer to the first question into account to determine what **factors** are necessary for the desired outcome (usually there are at least 2 to 3 major factors involved, possibly more for very ambitious uses of authority). **Authority inflicts stress** on the wielder(s) according to the final **magnitude**, the sum of all the factors added up. For **kill**, some common factors are:
 - **Force**: How great is the target's resistance? How thorough is the destruction?
 - **Range**: How close to the target must the wielder be to enact their grim will?
 - **Scale**: How much is destroyed? What is the area of the carnage?
3. GM asks: **"What new fear or grudge does this violence instill in you, or others who witness it?"** The players answer.
4. Finally, the GM asks: **"Does this act of destruction clear the space your crew needs to Tier Up?"** The players may answer. If the answer is Yes, the GM should adjust the status of at least 2 relevant factions which are threatened or alarmed by this. Mark the crew sheet to indicate that the crew is ready to tier up.

magnitude

Strange digital entities and energies have a wide variety of effects and power levels. To help the GM judge these forces consistently, the **magnitude** scale is provided below. Magnitude measures the quality of a shade or daemon or different aspects of a force: its area, scale, duration, range, and force. Whenever you need to assess an entity or power, use the magnitude scale as a guideline to judge how it compares relative to the examples.

You can use the magnitude of an entity or power as as dice pool for a **fortune roll** to see how much effect it has, if it's not obvious or certain.

You can add levels of magnitude together to describe a combination of effects, or simply focus on one key feature for the assessment, ignoring other elements. It doesn't always have to be additive or detail-fixed... sometimes painting in broad strokes is best.

area / scale						
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
a room	a few rooms	a building	a street	a block	a district	an entire server
1 or 2 process	small gang (3-6)	medium gang (12)	large gang (20)	small company (40)	large company (80)	regiment (160)

duration / range						
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
a few ticks	a cycle or two	a hundred cycles	half a kilocycle	a kilocycle	several kilocycles	a demi-iteration
within reach	a dozen paces	an arcwheel's flight	several clicks away	across the district	across the server	in another server

tier & quality / force						
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent	Superior	Impeccable	Legendary
Weak	Moderate	Strong	Serious	Powerful	Overwhelming	Devastating

Quality examples	
0	<i>A degraded memknife, an off-the-shelf avatar, a process storage coffin, a typical Process</i>
1	<i>A stock spark mag, a mix-and-match generated avatar, a shared apartment, cheap recreational memories, a custom Process</i>
2	<i>A dependable arc-wheel, a seasonally appropriate custom avatar, a monocycle, the average User or Daemon</i>
3	<i>A military ping rifle, a private bungalow, a multi-passenger vehicle, a professionally-sculpted avatar</i>
4	<i>A finely-crafted custom weapon, a high-end luxury memory, a bank vault door, a Head Moderator, the most powerful Daemons</i>
5	<i>A sprawling high-security mansion, a personalized avatar tailored by a master, a luxurious server-bound airship, a Virtue (lesser Administrator)</i>
6	<i>a Port or other foundation component of World's infrastructure, rare energies or legendary relics, the Nameless things that slumber beneath the Archives</i>

power levels in World

The Quality and Magnitude charts can be used to compare ballpark figures for the power scale of just about anything in World. For example, you could compare against a Faction's Tier to figure out how well a mighty Arch-Daemon (quality 4) will likely match up against the military forces of a Tier 3 Faction opposing it. In this example the Daemon has an edge of +1, which could make a good basis for a Fortune roll if the outcome is in doubt (and the GM does not wish to adjudicate the outcome).

If the player Crew is opposing a faction of a higher Tier than them, the excess quality could translate to worse position and/or effect on function rolls, especially if they're fighting the major personalities of that faction or dealing with signature features or resources.

Every factor should not apply to every situation. You don't have to do an exact accounting every time. Use the factors to help you make a stronger judgment call, but don't feel beholden to them... they're just one of several tools in your kit. Run your game as tight or as loose as you and your table want.

artifacts

One common usage of the **Compile** command is the creation of Artifacts, items imbued with an authority command. When wielded by a User, artifacts can repeatedly use the Authority command embedded within them. Artifacts are not permanent, and tend to degrade with over-use. They also are heavily-controlled items due to their potent, warping effect on the structural fabric of World.

If the Crew wants to create an artifact, modify the Authority function rules as follows:

- The command to create artifacts is always **Compile**, regardless of the nature of the embedded command.
- Define the desired effect the artifact will have using **normal magnitude rules** (ex. A staff that flings *Kill* fireballs might have Force 3, Area 2, and Range 2 = 7 Magnitude).
- Add a Duration descriptor that will govern the durability of the artifact (you must pay for this separately from the Duration of any semi-permanent effects that the artifact creates). This should commonly be at least **4 Duration**, for an item that will last a Kilocycle... enough time to complete an entire Score and Downtime with the artifact before it goes dormant.
- Note that if the artifact is sealed after creation rather than immediately used, the duration won't start to decrement until it is first wielded for its effect (this is also likely to be true for artifacts that the crew discovers). Artifacts which lay dormant for a sufficiently long time may

artifact examples [magnitude]

Coolant Staff [10]. Summons simple constructs made out of ice within reach of the wielder, up to the size of a city block. The ice structures only last a few cycles and can be broken through with a little effort.

Compile effect: Quality 1, Scale 4, Duration 1, Range 0.
Artifact Duration 4 (lasts for a little over one score)

Fluxblade [11]. These radiant swords, once markers of status for a mythical warrior caste from an era out of memory, have a simple (and fearsome) reputation: they can cut through literally anything. Even the walls of Helios. Even Administrators. Even.... Well, that's really about it. The power requirements are staggering to consider, and the destabilizing threat of even one contraband Fluxblade means that the Overwriters have a zero-tolerance confiscation and destruction policy.

Kill effect: Force 6, Range 0.
Artifact Duration 5 (energy circuit burns out after a few scores)

Call Stack Crown [13]. A worn item that allows the bearer to **Format** the thoughts and appearance of nearby Process of Quality 1 or less, overriding their baseline inclinations and bending them to your will. Up to 20 Process (a large gang) may be controlled simultaneously. If commanded to perform actions out of the wielder's direct influence, the effect wears off within half of a kilocycle.

Format effect: Quality 1, Scale 3, Duration 3.
Artifact Duration 6 (effectively infinite)

The Ivory Aquila [15]. A symbolically-topped bannerpole which is attuned to the esoteric security measures of the tower of Soloch, and controls the loyalty of the solemn artifact guardians and ancient traps of the upper reaches. Currently in the custody of the *Sanguine Legionnaires*, a clade of militant historians who safeguard a fragile peace among the Arcturan nobility.

Format effect: Area 4, Range 1, Duration 3.
Artifact Duration 7 (predates most known World history)



The "Origins" mural at Goldport Station in Sirius

world

a crumbling utopia

World was created by unknown hands in an ancient epoch, and its development cycle and early iterations are lost to the mists of time. The oldest memories held by its inhabitants piece together a historical image of an expansive paradise with limitless horizons and infinite possibilities, that has slowly shrunk and stratified under the weight of ages. Even now though, World remains a fantastic metropolis offering (many of) its inhabitants countless pleasures amid a functionally-endless existence.

They say that devils lurk in the details however, and this is no less true for World. Unrest boils beneath the utopian surface, kindled by competing interests thrust together within dwindling social spaces and the grievances of ancient pacts forged through inequality. Though it is rarely said aloud, a growing number of inhabitants suspect that a reckoning is coming for World, one that will reshape it's future into something barely recognizable.

This is your World, and you have no choice but to be complicit in it's fate.

World is a place you will create for yourself at the table, and many facets of its nature are deliberately unanswered in this chapter, for you to create through play. Try posing questions such as the following to your table, perhaps during play or after key story arcs, in order to discover the deeper truths of your World:

- ▶ *Is the "shrinking" of World's available spaces a kind of literal physical decay, or more metaphorical: the stagnation of ideas and opening of social rifts that encroaches upon all aging social contracts?*
- ▶ *Is change coming to World in a controlled way, as a considered renegotiation of it's power structures, or quickly and chaotically, as a wave of revolutionary sentiment that crashes upon an entrenched establishment?*
- ▶ *As you get more accustomed to the factions that your campaign ends up focusing on, consider: Who are the major visible 'players' seeking to steer World's future? Who pulls invisible threads from the shadows, hoping to profit from the outcomes?*

What exactly is World?

World is not a single continuous space, but rather a series of "servers" linked by instantaneous transit nodes: the **ports**. Each server is a self-contained bubble, like living on the inside surface of a sphere. Think of servers like rewritable storage media that are in bad need of defragging: at the center there are densely-populated clusters of valuable information, while the sparse margins are filled with fragmentary detritus and junk data.

The servers each have their own instance of **Archives**, a flickering ghost-realm inhabited by automated recordings of places, objects, and actions drifting backwards from the heedless arrow of time's progress. Nearly anything in this history (aside from a sentient being) can be *restored* from the archives by a user if they are skilled enough to dredge it up, and the **timeline** which runs parallel to the Archives can be traced to *find* information about events past.

lost histories

Though the World is known to be a **generated simulation** operating in some kind of computing environment, none can agree upon any single theory regarding the shape of the precursor existence that birthed it. However it is widely understood that the “**users**” are people from that prior existence who were uploaded into World at some point, while most other entities are either native to this existence or procedurally-generated by order of the Administration.

User histories are only as lengthy as the preserved memories held onto by individuals, and as time has grown long inside of the simulation there are now precious few who consider it a matter of interest to remember or study their ancient past. Nonetheless, rumors of lucrative troves of ancient memory—the riches that can be had by looting the Archives—are sufficient to create a robust, if small, community of information brokerage on these topics. The official account on World’s ancient past is unfortunately inconclusive: the Archive Academy’s Commission of Histories routinely unearths evidence of contradictory ‘**forks**’ in World’s records that confound their ability to derive concrete facts on past events. It is possible that early versions of the simulation were so unstable as to require constant system resets to debug errors, though none of those have occurred in living memory and it’s uncertain if the current Administration even has the power to perform such an extreme action. The below historical facts though, are mostly taken for granted:

The first self-aware entities in World were the **daemons**, native inhabitants of the servers. Daemons have only oral histories until sometime after the introduction of other inhabitants to World, but those histories describe a decentralized and egalitarian society punctuated by occasional clan conflict.

Next to arrive were the **administrators**, powerful artificial entities likely generated by the creators of World for the express purpose of preparing the arrival of the users. The Administration was the first wave of outsiders, and while Administration has never divulged its own records of this time this “Age of Conquest” is a period of great resentment for daemons, who as they tell it were forcibly scoured from the valuable sectors of the servers as the Administration raised the foundation of great civic works to prepare for the advent of their charges.

When the **users** came, they arrived to a World already mostly pacified. Feats of discovery and engineering were left for the users to make this new home “theirs,” but the question of colonization itself was already a certainty. Daemons were obliged to reorient themselves in either opposition or support of the new status quo, one that was focused on great works of construction or civic organization for World’s new .

Users are inheritors of a great deal of privilege within the social systems of World.

- ▶ *Your characters (if they are users) have vested interests in the status quo whether they prefer to admit so or not. Do you accept this or fight against the prescribed roles of this society?*
- ▶ *What elements of culture and language in user society are mimicked from daemonic origins, and vice versa?*
- ▶ *To what degree are daemons represented among the populations of the servers? At least some do dwell among users, but are they broadly tolerated or discriminated against?*

daemons

If daemons are the natives of World, to what extent were they an intended feature of the landscape? Why is it that, with the arrival of users, so many daemons readily adapted their behaviors and appearance to match forms users found relatable: anthropomorphizing themselves to blend in, turning one clan against the another in hopes of securing political capital, striking deals of material assistance in exchange for a foothold in the new society?

Daemons come in a wide variety of shapes, though it is unknown if these distinctions are a quirk of the mechanisms that first generated them in World or a deliberate adaptation so that they could fulfill different roles in their society. Daemon lifecycles are now a function of the Accord, a pact struck between the self-appointed leaders of Daemonkind and the Administration. The full terms of the Accord are lost to apocrypha, but it is known that as a condition for their freedom, the daemonic “Family” agreed to self-regulate and recycle daemons who would disrupt the order of World’s new user-centric society. Not all daemon clans are signatories of the Accord and some dwell beyond the reach of the Family, hewing to older ways and denouncing the “betrayers of their own.”

viral cats

Most consider viral cats to be just a sub-categorization of daemons now, but it’s a less-known fact that they actually are non-native to World and came alongside the users. Some strange quirk of their arrival in the simulation means that viral cats interface with the physical laws of World in idiosyncratic ways, making them very difficult to properly regulate. They travel where they please, associating with users and daemons alike as their whims dictate and to at least some degree eliding the rules of reality, though their powers are mostly subtle and evasive (rather than forceful and affecting like an Administrator).

Administration characterizes the viral cats as an invasive pest, but no proper solution to the issue has yet been found. Daemons by-and-large accept the viral cats among them, though some grumbling about “getting the best of both worlds” is not unheard of.

administrators

The individual members of the Administration are unique and strange to witness, and their physical forms represent the simulation’s “best guess” manifestation of an entity that only tangentially intersects with the simulation of World. They are distant from user culture by choice, mostly secluding themselves in the bureaucratic server of Helios and issuing directives through the broader mouthpiece of “the Administration.”

The Administration in its broadest definition also encompasses a host of users and process who occupy the lower ranks of the governing structure of World, executing lesser functions and interfacing with the populace. To call the Administration a *government* likely oversells it’s actual impact on the daily lives of the average user. Unless you are a daemon, a process, or a user who has infringed on the rights of other users, you may rarely have reason to interact with elements of the Administration.

user cultures

The foundations of user culture in World appear to have been imported: ideals, values, and treasured memories from a proto-mythical time before the simulation. After all these kilocycles, the original forms of this shared heritage have blurred and iterated into shapes that are surely unrecognizable... though it's considered fairly likely that motion video of funny cats was a universal constant back then, too.

Moreover, after all this time the distinct terms of existence for users of the World have created new traditions and mythologies. Each server holds some memories that bind the people whose journey through World originated there.

- ▶ The "**Jovian Project**" was the original term for the construction challenge that eventually created the largest single structure known to World: the mighty Hive Gehenna in **Arcturus**. The concept of a singular and unifying struggle against the harsh environment lingers in the Jovian memory, and is considered the defining social contract that forged the concept of Arcturan citizenship.
- ▶ In **Canopus**, local legend speaks of a perilous voyage across a storm-wracked sea in pursuit of the **Wandering Moon**. Discovery of that satellite's natural home led them to the current resting place of their great vessel. The spirit of voyage and adventure that characterized the early days of travel across the seas of Canopus created the modern Lunar spirit.
- ▶ The urban sprawl that covers **Sirius** rises to a height of organization in **Echo City**, a glittering nexus of economic activity and conspicuous consumption. Before Sirius was *formatted* into a mighty ecumenopolis rising to Echo City, it was a glass-and-concrete wasteland without any formal organization.
- ▶ The people of **Argos** were subject to a mass scattering diaspora when the server was abruptly taken off-line by the Administration. Argos had a proud history dating back to the founding of World, but most Arcadians do not speak on it and it is considered a verboten topic in most user spaces.

world clock

Some useful terminology for timekeeping in World:

Tick = Arbitrarily-brief span of time, often used as a rhetorical device. "*I'll be just a tick!*"

Cycle = The standardized unit of time measurement in The World. This is the timespan required for Central Processing to execute a complete census, and thus actual Cycle length fluctuates within a small margin based on current rezzed User loads. Feels like several minutes to us.

Kilocycle = A complete day/night transition in The World occurs exactly once every kilocycle (Two kilocycles thus loop around to the same time of day). Servers do not have their kilocycles tsynchronized. Days are really long in World.

Census = An executive function available only to Administrators. Occasionally the census broadcast also includes critical news flashes and/or requests for polling data. At least one census happens every Kilocycle. Derezzed users do not return census results, causing a timestamped trail of the matter to be logged and sometimes prompting further investigation by Troubleshooters.

immortality and family

What does it mean to have immortal people acting in a constrained environment? What kinds of relationships, and what twisted webs of allegiance and recrimination would they form? In World, this question can only be answered on a case-by-case basis. There are no birthed dynasties in World: only found families, and so each example is a unique case.

What's most important is that these relationships are nearly always chosen, not forced or accidental. But World is a small place, and it's impossible not to bump into people you'd rather not from time to time. Rivalries between users can become legendary, defining the landscape of a district or server for many iterations.

These concepts may feel odd to contend with, but consider some of your own favorite dramatic action-focused stories or cinema, especially long-running series. How many of them focus on a found family, characters creating relationships based on necessity or shared interest? Quite a lot, most likely. How often do major antagonistic characters ever die (permanently) in them? A good villain can be a terrible thing to waste!

- ▶ *When you introduce a new character to the table, ask if any of the characters remembers them from a 'past life'? If somebody decides the answer is yes, find a moment (perhaps in downtime) to explore that! What has changed about them, and what has stayed the same?*
- ▶ *We know from the example of the PCs that it is possible for a user to **drift** so far that they become unrecognizable to their past self: a kind of 'death' in it's own right. If the the crew felt they had to, they could conspire to force this to happen an NPC user. What are the moral and legal ramifications of these acts in your World? Are there any other methods to remove a user from World in a permanent way?*

decay and the glitch

The fundamental force that governs World's framework is information, and information in a closed system is subject to *entropy*: a gradual decay into disorder. Much of the unpublicized work of the Administration is an eternal battle against this degradation.

The broad population of users have meanwhile taken the stability of World's existence for granted for so long that many openly question the need for an arbitrary and unelected governing body, unaccountable to the wishes of the people. This situation is hardly helped by the Administrator's own recalcitrance to engage meaningfully with users: they tend to rely on moderators to speak on their behalf.

Entropy is not uniform in World. It clings like a lichen to the unseen margins of servers, infiltrating through the bulwarks of the system to grow in forgotten spaces. There are accounts of users who have encountered the **glitch** in person... sometimes written off as the ravings of those who have spent too long on the fringes, or rumors cynically planted to somebody's profit. No uniform social answer to the Glitch has yet been demanded of users, at least not within living memory.

- ▶ *Is glitching a terminal illness, or one that can someday be defeated?*
- ▶ *What kind of changes would happen in user society if the glitch became universally-recognized as a real problem?*

people of World

Users are the only 'real' people in World, at least in a legal sense. 13.7% of the rezzed population of World are users according to the most recent Census data. Users are enfranchised by World's subsystems and never need to worry about having a place to live or free entertainment to consume. Luxuries such as designer foods, premium media, customized avatars, and storage space to spare for their Memories are status symbols among Users in World.

Process are the faceless masses of World's populace. Process tend tables, clean public spaces, use amenities, and consume whatever bland media they are told to. Process are procedurally-generated by World in order to fill population quotas and simulate a lively environment for Users to enjoy. Their self-will is limited and they tend to repetitiously repeat functions or act out loyalties related to the faction which owns their home district. The majority of persons registered in Census are process (approx. 71%). Individual process tend to have a low threat level, but they can be quite dangerous in groups when sufficiently motivated. Additionally, some powerful factions have elite process who work for them, gifted with superior perception, combat, and communication routines.

unique threats

When you need a simple one-dimensional threat like a bouncer, a foot-soldier, an obfuscating bureaucrat, or a nosy socialite, they are often going to be **process**. Quite often a single **standard effect** is enough to deal with a solitary process.

However, process that are in a big gang and thus have **scale** on their side, as well as the elite process **experts** of more powerful factions, will be tougher adversaries and possibly require a **clock** to deal with.

Consider the Tier of the faction when building out a Process adversary. For example, a **Tier 3** faction with a large count of process followers might have individual **quality 2** security guards and middle-managers patrolling their HQ, as well as a several **scale 3** squads of low-level bruisers (individual quality 1) defending their turf. A different **Tier 2** faction that values quality higher than quantity might instead have a few **quality 3 experts**, but few or no 'gangs' of foot-troops. Don't be afraid to adjust up or down depending on how much emphasis you want to place on a given encounter!

On the other hand, **users** are strong and dynamic adversaries, often on par with the PCs! **Telegraph the trouble** that Users represent: their penetrating gaze, their irresistible allure, their aura of danger, their self-confidence and style. **Let your NPC users initiate the action** against the players sometimes ("Before you can even act, she draws her arc-wheel and whips it at you!"), and then ask the players if they want to resist. **Use a clock** (or **two!**) to show off your Users. For example: "Blaize has a 6-clock **Toughness** but to actually hit that you'll need to somehow extinguish **The Flames** [a 4-clock] first!"

Users are smart and social: let users build a rivalry or friendship with the Crew and then have them reverse course and try to play multiple sides as the plot evolves. Remember that every user in World is the hero of their own personal story. Ask yourself what a "Player Character" would do in the user's shoes: they just might do that!

Roll or choose from the following tables to generate random Users and Process for faces in a crowd, a random stranger, etc. More tables are on the next page spread! If the results on any table don't appeal to you, try flipping the dice results.

Process don't need a Looks table: they always appear as a mild variation on the platonic ideal of their assigned function, desaturated and anonymous.

user looks						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Tall	Thin	Lovely	Large	Chiseled	Athletic
2	Slim	Delicate	Stout	Scarred	Short	Sexy
3	Wild	Elegant	Cute	Plain	Old	Young
4	Tattooed	Patterned	Stylish	Sturdy	Bald	Anthropomorphic
5	Wooden	Metallic	Glowing	Smoking	Fae	Sparking
6	Baleful	Shimmering	Smooth	Placid	Insubstantial	Glitched

process functions						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Data Entry	Short-Order Cook	Badge Checker	Middleware Sales	Small-Claims Appraiser	Salaried office occupant
2	Ticket Puncher	Factorum Worker	Vox Dispatcher	Interface Interpreter	Memory Hawker	Help Desk
3	Accountability Advisor	Door Steward	"In the Industry"	Peripheral Adjutant	Toll Clerk	Performance Consultant
4	Curio Compiler	Sidewalk Maintenance	Bouncer / Muscle	Troubleshooter	Marketing Analyst	Phone Watcher
5	Package Administrator	Cleaning Staff	Stunt Double	Sergeant-at-arms	Process Resources	Standard Form Router
6	Maiter D'	Network Evaluator	Valet Driver	Transit Officer	Executive Assistant	Roll on Recidivist Table

recidivist process						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Unemployed by Choice	Unlawfully Employed	Rights Activist	Recall Pending	Open Warrant	Slurry Addict

other entities of World

Daemons are beings that are native to World but exist outside of the User/Process social hierarchy. Daemons take a wide variety of animal forms. They tend to dwell in marginal spaces away from districts with high User or Process density.

Administrators ('Admin') = crystalline personifications of Order, represented by abstract geometric avatars. Tasked with high-order maintenance and upkeep of World's infrastructure, they do not directly interfere in society often, but when they do they are to be obeyed. Admin self-awareness is an occasionally-debated subject of philosophy. Many Users cite an intense feeling of unease in the presence of Admins.

Glitch is a distorted personification of Chaos, a formless and unknowable entity that fills the void wherever World has begun to atrophy. It is the physical manifestation of a gradually-advancing wave of total data loss eating away at World. Glitch is anathema to your safe enjoyment of World and Users are advised to immediately report such anomalies. Do not under any circumstances approach, or interact with, the Glitch.

Shades are a potential side-effect of a User's incomplete deresolution. Shades are disjointed from World's reality by the paradox of having incomplete ID fragments associated with their parent entity, a User sleeping on the Stack. Shades often jealously cling to their half-life and attempt to evade destruction by the Overwriters.

unique threats

Daemons have many varieties and can run a very wide range of motivations and threats, from animalistic beasts to canny sentients. In the old days of World, some powerful recurring Daemons provided a ready-made challenge for adventurous Users, while others offered Users quests for taking out their own kind... These oddly perverse motivations can still be observed in the mechanic of the **Daemon's Bargain**.

One of the most commonly-seen varieties of Daemon nowadays are the **Viral Cats**: irrepressible felines who very much fall into the "offer a sinister bargain" category. Viral cats have strange powers, are apparently impossible to remove, and can lurk in a "Backstage" zone that lies parallel to World's observable reality. They have an odd tendency to choose specific Users to repeatedly torment, perhaps out of affection.

The Administration is a **Tier 6 faction** that is not mobile on the Faction Map: they are immune to the instability that plagues User-directed factions. Users who seek to oppose the Administration face an adversary with unconstrained access to the **Authority** commands of World, making them a fearsome adversary.

The **Glitch** has no factional representation as it has no observable goals or desires, aside from it's obvious tendency to consume things nearby. Reasoning with it is impossible. Treat glitch as an environmental threat and (occasional) unstoppable force.

Shades are barely tangible, difficult to observe or track timestamps on, making them excellent spies and thieves if they are so motivated. Much like certain interpretations of 'ghosts', Shades sometimes try to reenact or reassemble fragments of a previous life, haunting their old associates and turf.

user hobbies						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Curios and Artifacts	Fighting and Warfare	Society or Activism	Games or Gambling	Dining and Cuisine	Religion and Worship
2	Hand Crafting	Exploring, Partition Delving	Sport, Magball or Echo Chess	Politics or Governance	Dueling or Fencing	Hunting and Tracking
3	Singing or Music	Weapons and Armor	History and Legend	Theory and Philosophy	Enterprising Ventures	Ideology or Revolution
4	Currencies and Cryptos	Business or Finance	Performance: Painting or Sculpture	World Architecture	Journalism, Reporting	Nobility or Origin
5	Novels or Scriptwriting	Performance: Art or Dance	Racing: Blades or Monocycles	Racing: Swoops or Wheels	Memory Formats	Philanthropy, Governance
6	Soporifics, Spirits or Snow	Imps or Holopets	Poetry or Rhetoric	Industry or Acquisition	Information Trade	Daemons or Admins

daemon aspects and affinities (roll 2x, combine)					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Intelligent Animal or Elemental			Humanoid w/ animal or elemental features		Monstrous Cryptid
Slimy / Water	Shell / Earth	Scales / Fire	Feathers / Wind	Luminescent / Radiance	Camouflage / Darkness

daemon desires (3/4 = materials harvested from daemons of that affinity)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1/2	Mayhem	Manipulation	Revenge	Knowledge	Coin	Comfort
3/4	Water	Earth	Fire	Wind	Radiance	Darkness
5/6	Freedom	Fear	Justice	Savagery	Praise	Power

administrator appearances/traits (roll 1-2x of each)					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Wireframe polyhedron	Eyes and Wings	Blank Plastic Humanoid	Classical Architecture	Gnarled Roots or Lungs	Amorphous Cloud or Swarm
Odorless Smoke	Pearlescent Shimmering	Wreathed in Pale Flames	Ticks to a Precise Heartbeat	Crown of Starfire and Ash	Draped in Rags
Slow, is it even speaking?	Quickened, incessant chattering	Ominous, gets too close	Distant, but never out of sight	Disinterested, ignores surroundings	Curious, asks unusual questions

consult the AI

At a loss for what is happening in a district, a faction or NPC user's motivation, an event that took place in the past? **Consult the AI**, by rolling **2d6** and looking up the results on the Column and Row of one of the following tables. Add an Action and a Theme together for a complete seed of a plot idea!

If one result doesn't quite work for you or make sense in the situation, try flipping the column/row of the die result. For example, a 1-5 on the Action table can be either **Suppress** -or- **Mourn**. The double results (in bold) are more universal or adaptable.

action						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Avoid	Negotiate	Avenge	Salvage	Mourn	Transform
2	Challenge	Preserve	Surrender	Guard	Command	Investigate
3	Restore	Demand	Reform	Hunt	Find	Manipulate
4	Assault	Capture	Hide	Oppose	Create	Threaten
5	Suppress	Betray	Abandon	Denounce	Subvert	Deliver
6	Refuse	Escalate	Forget	Control	Seize	Uncover

theme						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Decay	Belief	Dream	Honor	Loss	Mystery
2	History	Memory	Freedom	Grief	Duty	Wealth
3	Deception	Community	Ally	Power	Truth	Fame
4	Greed	Pleasure	Rumor	Daemons	Weakness	Prophecy
5	Love	Debt	Judgment	Strength	Enemy	Identity
6	Pride	Law	Fortune	Artifact	Corruption	Administration

memory purveyors

Arcturus

Canton Castellum

Killian's Old World Classics, an esteemed library of ponderous old novels and the vintage smokes and spirits storefront that conceals it.

Giaco, master chef of Soloch's kitchens. Specialty hot sauces and expansive banquet platters.

The Rogue's Gallery, a collection of daring escapades and duels, contributed to by Castellum's most infamous scoundrels.

Khaf3, the mysterious viral cat which wanders the hallways of Soloch. Memories of lovers forgotten and friends long gone, past lives you never knew you had.

Canton Gladium

Cutman Fisk's prized gallery of cage matches and bloodsands bouts. Recordings from the winner's perspective cost extra.

The Roulette, a blind memory drafting parlor run by the gregarious Gerran Heller. Come for the thrill of random chance, stay for the camaraderie.

Grill Street, a crowded pavilion of spiced and savory food skewer vendors. Do not try the mystery meat.

Fetch, a hooded Process specializing in back-alley memory acquisition and surprise deal-of-the-day trades. No questions asked (or answered).

Canton Factorum

Forewoman Len, keeping tidy records of long hours of crushing physical labor.

Heartbeat Quorum, eager to lecture about mineral and fossil samples, rambling dissertations on the composition of each server's plasmic cores and mantles.

The Silicon Sands

Cazic-Thule, a daemonic scuttling cryptid and purveyor of intimately-crafted nightmares. Wears shifting faces, eerily familiar.

Boreal, honored lieutenant of the Lightning Riders. Cruel supply raids and cutthroat races on the edge of a flickering Static Storm.

Canopus

Achora Heights

The Dungeness, premiere fine dining with an experimental flair. Tables by appointment only.

Lively Noodle, a new and buzzing food vendor tucked into one of the hindlegs of the Brass Crab.

Transom Bilge, one-time Captain of the Sunset Sea, offering questionable nautical wisdom and improbable tales of peril and wonder.

Miles Taverly's News Cycle, a bombastic and humorous current events cast, often lampoons the Administration as out-of-touch and clueless.

Meridian Channels

Bloag the Swollen, a cultist of Syc0rax. Offers sensory deprivation tanks and whispered mantras to the Deepest Fathoms.

Curator Ael'cha, didactic museum guide and historian of hand-crafted art oddities.

Markus and the Broad Street Kids, acts of youthful defiance and rebel street-art installations. Constantly mobile, finding their current location from encrypted clues is half of the fun.

Prospero City

Roadie Griggs, peddling obscure vinyls and lost B-sides out the back of his electric wizard van.

Stern and Smallwell Clothiers, custom-tailored avatars and accessories, tending towards high society-approved fashion and 'classic cuts' from World's past.

Radical Dreamers, a constantly-rotating boutique of #Trending avatars and accessories.

The Glittering Surf

Guided meditations on the nature of User existence in the garden-like Shrine of the Divinities.

A solo voyage across the Sunset Sea... years to you, back in a few cycles from the perspective of everyone else in World.

memory purveyors (cont.)

Sirius

Echo City

Honora Plath, dignified hostess of dizzying socialite balls atop a flying highrise condo.

SimCity Bar and Casino, sport and race betting, slot machines, tense poker duels.

Daizo Falcon's gallery of photo-finish victories and high-speed crashes on the Golden Mile Circuit. Also offering racing lessons.

Mute City

Sirian Stock Exchange, a mesmerizing cacophony of commodity tickers and shouted market orders. Memories of crushing stock losses.

Cloud Nine Entertainment, An emulation of a life many would find crass: cigars, golden highrises, and refined process butlers.

Veritas, a process selling eerily-prescient information that won't be found on the Intelligence Market. Payment only in kind: a high-value memory of your own.

Bass City

Cr1pt's Pit, a combat gym which converts to a rowdy arena. Fights are not permitted to go to derez here: Cr1pt dislikes Troubleshooter attention and the crowd prefers jeering at losers anyway.

Nightwall Market, a swap-meet which specializes in embarrassing thoughts and memories of regret.

Wr3tch, a slimy daemon trading away lightly-used recollections and fond hopes, supposedly "honestly acquired."

The Fade

Ch0p Register, an impeccably-dressed daemon steward who offers memories that cater to... unusual tastes. Surcharges are high, but the privacy guarantee is worth it.

Starlight Cinemas, a projector-and-reel movie theater in an empty stretch of mall, devoid of obvious employees.

Argos

The Wharf

The Shore Party, a sailor's tavern kept alive by a grim clientele: the ancient shades of lost-at-sea users unwilling to fade away, singing their sad shanties and dirges.

Moevid Isbjerg, a beached E-class cargo vessel. Stacks of sealed containers filled with cheap trinkets and logic toys from... somewhere outside World?

South Hook Shipping Company, an abandoned brick-red bureaucratic complex filled with stacks of unhandled manifests. No matter how many you stamp and file, more always appear.

Uptown

The Market Square Co-op, a source of rotating fresh produce, dairy, spices, etc. No visible staff, however attempting not to pay results in eerily instantaneous karmic punishment.

Hope Street, an upscale set of elegant mansions with old-time furnishings and art collections. The doors are all unlocked, but nothing within can ever be stolen.

The Lodge, a phonograph store with a speak-easy hidden in the cellar. Passphrase: "01110010011011110111001101100101011000100111010101100100"

The Maw

Earth Mote 1, a static landmass stabilized by unknown forces above the grinding abyss. This platform is a perfect space for long cycles of meditation.

The Lady in Gold, a sentient(?) anomaly trapped here eternally, will trade correspondence and coffee-shop dates with a worthy paramour. This relationship is a very bad idea.



server guide

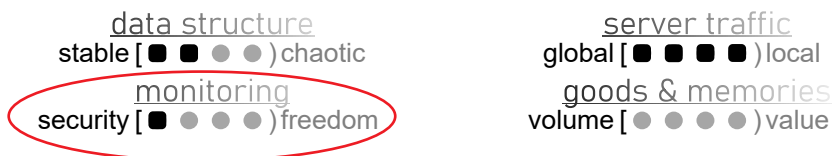
a World of change

Every distinct region of World has its own unique take on the baseline code that underpins the simulation. Graphical fidelity, weather patterns and skyboxes, global notification priorities, and even gravity can be specified at the district level, resulting in jarring city block transitions for those unaccustomed to local peculiarities. Some of those traits will be discussed directly on the following pages, but you should feel free to create your own unique takes on what distinguishes the regions of World apart.

district traits

Every district receives a 'score' in the four categories shown below, representing (loosely) the area's disposition on a social or structural axis. The trait on the left side of the axis has a score equal to the number of dark blocks (■), while the trait on the right side is represented by a lighter circle (●).

A district's position in one of these categories might serve as a story cue, or the GM may elect to use a trait to determine the dice pool for a Fortune Roll. Notice which trait rating you are pulling from! Both **Security** and **Freedom** represent two opposed traits underneath the category of "Monitoring," so how you frame your question is important to determining which side of the category you should consider.



*Lith wants to work a Long Term Project by **Restoring** a defunct entrance that will provide access to a long-buried memory vault. The GM is unsure how risky the act will be, but decides that the "Security" rating of the server might be a good metric to figure out. With a **Security** rating of 1, the GM could make a Fortune Roll at **1d** to determine the likelihood of a local district security team that might notice and interfere. After rolling a **2**, the GM decides that there is zero risk here: instead of asking Lith's player to make function rolls (that would risk consequences), they can just make unopposed Fortune rolls to finish the long-term project.*

*If the question were instead how easily a rival can slip away into the surrounding district without leaving a noticeable trail in the timeline, the GM might instead look to the district's **Freedom** rating, which in the above example is 3 (notice how the combined rating of both Freedom and Security will always add up to 4). The GM makes a ruling that the rival easily avoids what passes for monitoring systems here and left a nearly-invisible trail of evidence.*

- ▶ **Data Structure** is a measure of the archival and structural architecture in the district. **Stable** environments are conducive to orderly system hierarchies, and have robust and simple structural lineages. Archival access in such areas is likely to be less risky but also less surprising... the timeline is routinely scrubbed clean of interesting events. **Chaotic** districts are egalitarian places with complicated histories. Daemons (and a good number of users) prefer chaotic districts because they offer more opportunities to exploit obscure loopholes. There are far more opportunities for things to go badly if you pull the wrong Archival thread, however.
- ▶ **Monitoring** refers to the level of Troubleshooter (or other public/private security) involvement in the area, as well as the strictness of the local statutes. **Secure** districts are regularly patrolled and feature enforcement measures for data purity laws. **Free** districts are more likely to support thriving black markets, will have fewer heavy weapons possession-and-use statutes (permitting greater displays of citizen exuberance), and tend towards otherwise-relaxed legal codes.
- ▶ **Server Traffic** charts the relative origins of economic transfer, user or process transit, and message traffic in the district. **Global** districts are likely studded with Ports that connect to other Servers, and are tightly interwound with World's broad cultural and economic trends. **Local** districts tend to be more insular, more culturally unique, and may be less legible to outsiders (including the Administration).
- ▶ **Goods & Memories** tracks the overall quality versus the quantity of economic worth in the district. High-**Volume** districts trade in fungible commodities like data storage, currency exchanges, structural materials, or mass-produced goods. High-**Value** districts are instead focused on artisan or luxury trades: hand-crafted memories, avatars, and accessories, or niche products made-to-order.

A server with high-**volume** goods but only **local** traffic might have raw materials but no capacity to export them (you will see this often in wilderness areas). A district that is **chaotic** but also high-**security** may have organized criminal elements or independent militia that hold sway, rather than traditional public security.

district factions

Each district provides details for a local faction that might make its home there. Unlike the groups described in the **faction** chapter (page 190) which are designed to be able to appear in a multitude of different contexts in World, these 'district factions' are limited in some way—perhaps by specialization, infrastructure, culture, or other circumstances—such that they make the most sense in the district they are listed under.

When using a district faction in your campaign, the only choice you strictly need to make is to assign them a **Tier**. Usually these factions will make the most sense in the **Tier 2-3** range, but feel free to experiment. Even though they are usually regional concerns, you should feel free to utilize these factions just like any others in World once your campaign is underway. Whether their growing ambitions lead them out of their starting situation, or they are forced out of their favored locale by outside factors, you can and should rewrite aspects of them as needed to accommodate shifting circumstances.

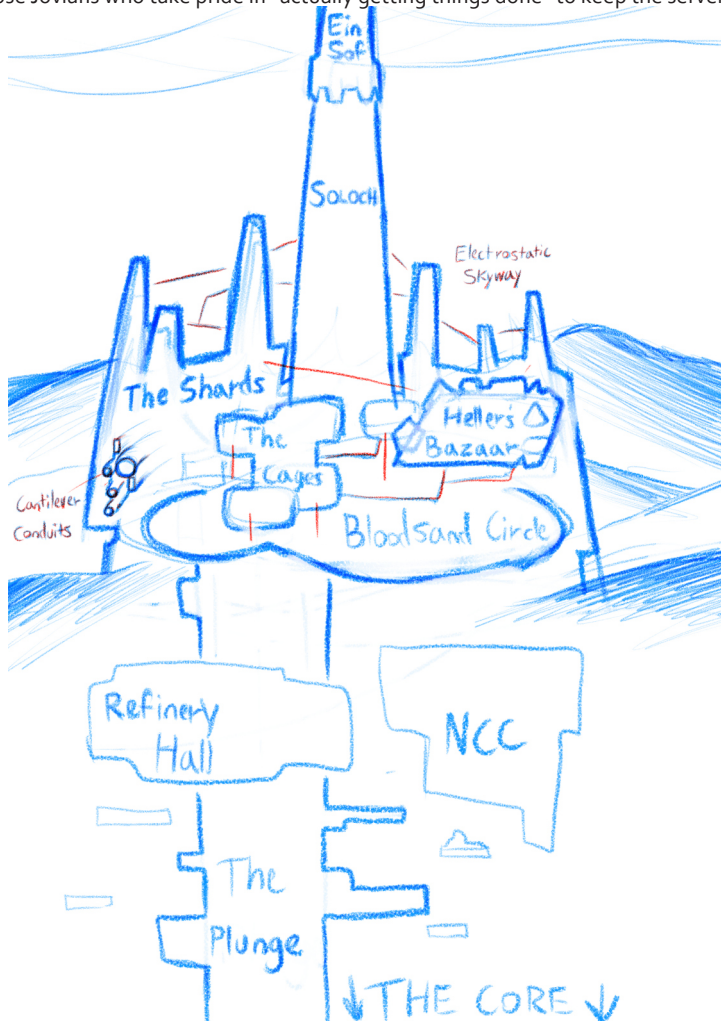
When a district faction outgrows its original bounds and you are seeking to embellish its portfolio to match its new scope, consider how their goals and membership change! One way to randomize the development of a faction is to **Consult the AI** (page 152) or roll on the faction tables in the GM handout for a story development.

arcturus

Arcturus is a lightning-scoured silicon desert of extreme conditions, catering to the fantasies of a subset of Users who view a harsh environment and harsher society as the ultimate challenge to conquer. Deresolution rates from violence and accidents are much higher here than the rest of World, which is just the way some users like it.

Arcturus' chief contribution to the economy of World is *Neuroplast*, a raw material export that is forged into disposable memory chips, building materials, and products to feed the hunger of World's population for novelty. Piped up from the churning core of the server, the rich value of neuroplast has created an aristocracy of feuding nobility that bickers over control of the levers of power: an elaborate game some eccentrics think to be the finest entertainment World has to offer.

Users who first originated in Arcturus are known as **Jovians**, allegedly a reference to the hostile atmospheric conditions of the server. In pop cultural short-hand, Jovians are cast as tending toward traits of fierce **loyalty** to their banners and companions, **industry** as a means of extracting advantage from the resources available, and **confidence** in their abilities and tenacity to overcome hardships. Users of course cannot be forced to do much of anything in World, and so in practice the user population of the server is torn between a defiant streak of wild lawless independence and those Jovians who take pride in "actually getting things done" to keep the server running.



arcturus environmental features

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Street Name	Skewer Street Charred Path	Runoff Road The Vents	Mugger's Pass Clank Street	Silt Alley Landers Walk	Sniper's Merge Slot Ridge	<i>-indecipherable-</i> (scratched out, daemon glyphs)
Denizen	A cloaked Process, in a hurry	A wretched imp	A mysterious hunter	A noble's armed guard	Pushy vendors	A Gladiator daemon
Mood	Sweltering Hushed	Charged Clanking	Stifling Shadowed	Blinding Echoing	Dust Storms Tense	Roaring Electrified
Detail	Exotic Wares	Greasy Canisters	Piping and Netting	Glittering Sand	Charnel Smoke	Baroque Furnishings
Outdoor Location	Shaded Pavilion	Process Shantytown	Gladium Observation Deck	Debris-riddled Dunes	Rusty Scaffolding	Spark-riddled Gallery
Indoor Location	<i>The Wretched Hive</i>	<i>The Diamond & Rough</i>	<i>Killian's Old World Classics</i>	Hazmat Filtration & Storage	Pack Oozar Stables	Obsidian Banquet Hall

arcturan alley rumors

- "That new slag the **Thrulls** are moving is bad news. Yeah, I saw it light up inside an imp until it couldn't take the heat anymore, popped just like that. If it does that to a daemon, what could it do to a user?"
- "No, don't go down to the Bazaar this cycle. Troubleshooters are turning over carts, giving **Heller** the shake-down. Why? How the hash should I know, maybe somebody paid them off?"
- "Will you take a pamphlet? It's to spread awareness of the plight of **process workers** in the Factorum! Well, no, not a lot of them are trying to unionize... not yet. We're, uh, taking donations!"
- "Talk is Viceroy Emer will only sponsor daemon gladiators this season... What's **the Family** got on him?"
"Eh, who cares? All the smart money is on Thrice-Accused."
- "The hive is sinking! Arcturus' stability depends on the neuroplast, don't you see?! **Factorum** digs too deep, and soon we shall all pay the price! Y-you have to believe me!"
- "Had a function once... Foreman recalled us after a long dig. We'd hit a strange strata down there. I'll never forget the glitter of the iso... wha- s'true! Riches you've never seen! Ah, probably all long gone now."

arcturan street wares

	The Vendor	Worthless Dross	The One Valuable Item	An Inflexible Price
1	Pogchamp , bloodthirsty arena aficionado	rusted-over gladiator armor, broken weapons	Daemonic knife, whispers the name of a Castellan noble (Novis)	First place trophy from the next Gladium match
2	Mn_nm , ancient and laconic shade	Fractured bits of currency from a buried empire	Old memory: disjointed glimpses of a hidden paradise among dunes	A dream stolen from the Stack
3	Sekhm3t , tall hooded broker daemon	A wheezing pack oozar, on it's last pseudopods	<i>Lightning Rider</i> -tagged monobike, rugged and dangerous and obviously stolen	Permission to <i>Echo</i> impersonate as your avatar for a kilocycle
4	Glib Druuda , harrowed warrior mendicant	"Blinding Powder," clearly just bags of sand	An algorithmic seed that could grow exponentially if planted and well-tended.	The encrypted access key to a Castellan shard
5	Pit , grim Factorum process	Stolen mining gear with Factorum owner tags	Chunk of hardened rock from the Worldspine, a raw isomorph crystal is lodged inside	Your help smuggling an underground weapons cache
6	Flap , short manic butcher daemon	Various unidentifiable street meat skewers	I/o , process freelancer, dissatisfied with old work arrangement and skilled in ... [random Function]	Combat log proof that you derezzed a rival vendor (Switch)

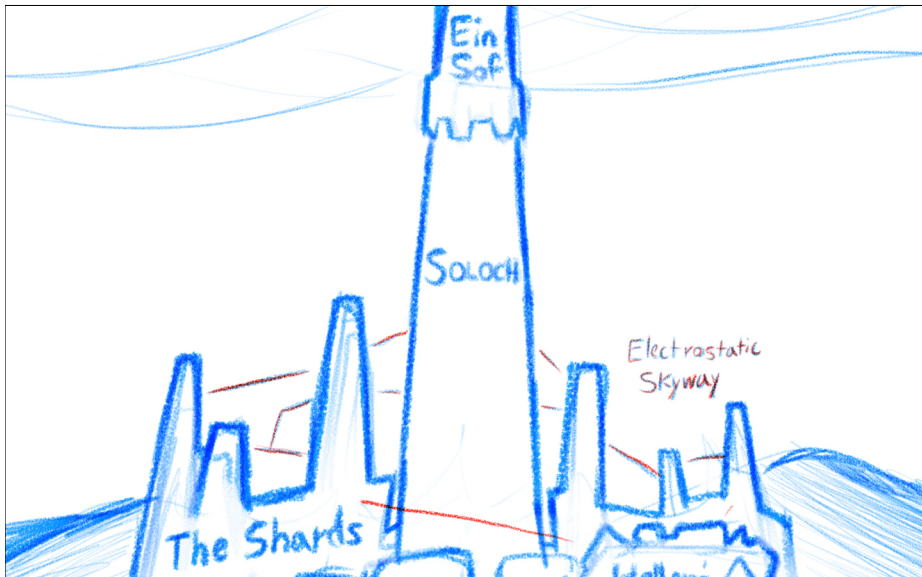
On the "street wares" table you can either roll once and use the entire row (each row has a cohesive theme), or roll for each feature to assemble a composite encounter.

canton castellum

Engagement rolls suffer -1d due to shifting, hidden paths and hyper-vigilant guardians. Great risks and great rewards: Take +1 COIN, +1 REP, and +2 HEAT during Payoff.

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
 monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
 goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value



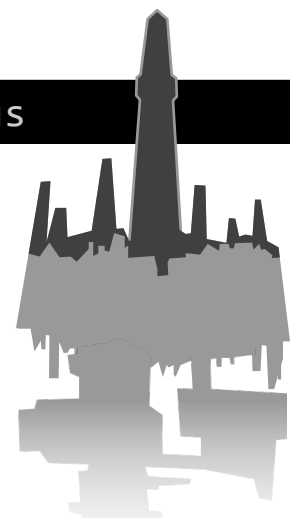
Landmarks

Soloch. The central spire of Gehenna pierces the storm laden sky, a dark tower overlooking Arcturus. Ancient mechanisms and guardians slumber on each floor, popular trappings for influential users to play at regality and show off exotic collections of riches and artifacts. Even the boastful Count Zero confesses little knowledge of the extent of its upper floors.

Ein Sof. Also known as the "Crown of Arcturus," Ein Sof rises from the upper heights of Soloch into the dizzying troposphere, refracting a baleful light through the turbulent thunderheads. A fortified memory palace crafted by the First Arcturans, spoken of in whispers as *Artaud-Lanier*, a best-forgotten clan name. The cavernous halls echo in reproachful solitude and those explorers lucky enough to return relate with horror how the shifting maze traps and disposes of intruders.

Electrostatic Skyway. This maze of glassy walkways connects Soloch to the other towers of Castellum. A harrowing journey due to the inclement weather and precipitous drop. To make matters worse it is a favored location for wandering rakes and bravos, always eager to tempt fate with a perilous skirmish.

The Shards. Mid-level houses that fall out of favor tend to find their home in the ring of neuroplastic towers that stand along the edge of Gehenna, cloned in Soloch's image. The unique timestamp-scrambling properties of these ageless structures makes Archival restoration challenging, thus protecting the secrecy of events within. Much of the scheming between rival gladiator teams and subsidiary Factorum enterprises occurs here, to Castellum's profit.



Buffeted by twisting spirals of silicon and waves of heat, the sharp black spires of Hive Gehenna dominate the desolate horizon of Arcturus. Canton Castellum is home to the majority of the server's User population, though only a scant few can afford to live in Soloch, the central tower carved out of core-mined obsidian memory-metal which dates back to World's founding. The other towers sprout from the Hive's outer ring, bound to Soloch by a thicket of criss-crossing lightning bridges. Castellum is the de facto luxury district of Arcturus and riches, secrets, and social connections await those ambitious enough to brave it's byzantine political landscape.

Details

Scene: Wind-blasted palisades and galleries overlook the Gladium as lightning arcs between the bridges of the Skyway. Inside the towers, hushed, twisting hallways lit with scented torches echo with whispers of power and conspiracy. Archaic edifices thrum quietly, hiding stairwells and passageways.

Resources: Spies, messengers and confidantes. Elegant gardens, tapestries, and decorations. Gourmet kitchens and other decadent pleasures. Trophy rooms rigged with intricate security systems.

Threats: Petty nobles spoiling for a fight, arrogant swords for hire, companies of Process honor guard. Dormant golems and escherian architecture. The displeasure of the truly powerful.

Notables

Count Zero. An eccentric noble who holds court in an open-air terrace halfway up the tower of Soloch. Rumors paint the Count as a mere steward for the sleeping masters of the house above. Seeks to possess the *Ivory Aquila* held by the Sanguine Legion in service of his true craving: a greater share of Ein Sof's power. (*Arrogant, Theatrical*)

Thrice-Accused. Infamous masked assassin, known for systematically derezzing nobles whose ambitions extend higher than the tacit social contract of their peers. Appears to accept or refuse contracts entirely on a whim; their ultimate goals are anyone's guess. (*Blindsight, Reflexes*)

Khafr3. A laconic viral cat which prowls the hallways of Soloch. It enjoys riddles and sweet things and has never been ousted from its domain. Those seeking greater insight into the workings of the towers often approach Khafr3, but the cat will always exact its toll. (*Daemon, Cryptic, Mischievous*)

Sanguine Legion

Faction Clocks

A stoic military order of red-clad legionnaires sworn to maintain the fading peace of an ancient accord. Keeping their oath forces them to take a political role in the distribution of power in Arcturus.	Attain leverage over noble families	6
	Locate and destroy heretical texts	8

Turf: *The Silent Forge* (HQ), a fortified mustering ground and armory in the middle heights of Soloch.

NPCs: **Legatus Sotix** (leader, strong, subtle, scheming). **Centurion Malcia** (record-keeper, loyal, impatient).

Significant Assets: *The Ivory Aquila*, an artifact which grants control of Soloch's dormant security protocols.

Allies: Adventurer's Guild. **Enemies:** Count Zero, the various Castellan Noble Houses.

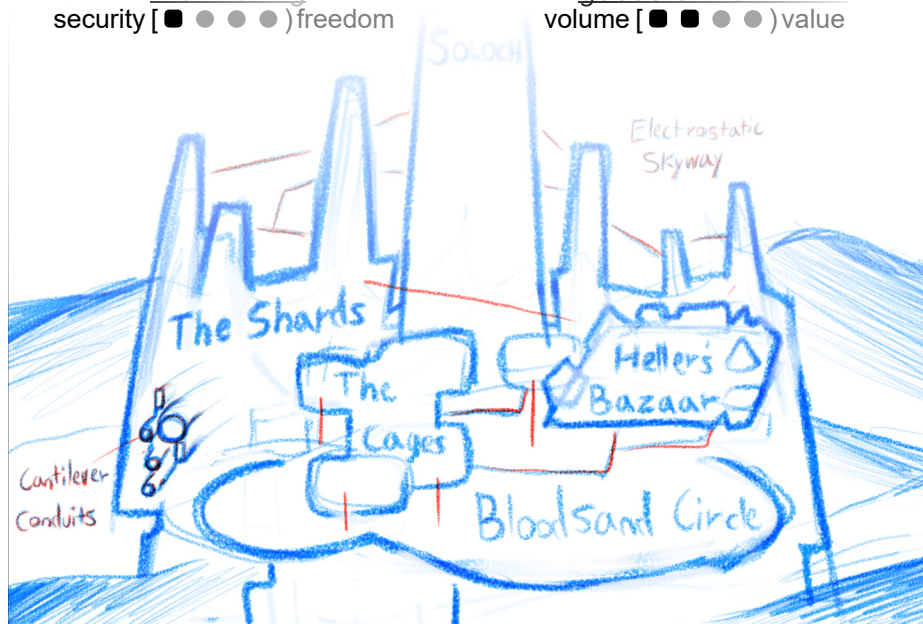
Notes: The Legion's historians maintain they were established by a charter clause in the *Pax Arcturan*, a document from a distant era of World that divided the resource wealth of Arcturus among it's bickering noble families and thus ended an age of warfare. No full copy of the *Pax* has survived to the present day, and a variety of disputed interpretations of the text are used as the basis for claims of legitimacy by the fractious subjects of the long peace. The Legion feels that it alone has the authority to evaluate the authenticity of any discovered fragments of the *Pax*, and if need be, the only authority able to amend those terms.

canton gladium

You can take **+1d to Acquire Asset** using the chaotic markets and cheap process labor available in the Gladium, but if you do also take **+1 HEAT** from prying eyes and informants.

data structure
 stable [● ● ● ●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [● ● ● ●] freedom

server traffic
 global [● ● ● ●] local
goods & memories
 volume [● ● ● ●] value



Landmarks

Bloodsand Circle. The formal dueling pits of Arcturus are in fact a vast basin that stretches the breadth of the inner Gehennan ring. Under the watchful gaze of Castellum, a rich variety of violent games are played out by grandstanding champions and dour process. The lightning barriers between matches occasionally 'short-circuit' according to the whims of the arena organizers, and the resulting cascade of bloodthirsty duelists, hunters, charioteers, and warbeasts engulfs the entire pit in a spectacular free-for-all.

The Cages. Part of Gehenna's mineral dredging system, these interconnected cranks and pulleys once churned up the sand in search of underground riches. Instead of being repurposed to ferry materials up from Factorum, these suspended chambers are now used alternately as a prison or an arena for prestigious personal bouts. It is considered a great honor to be dazed in a cage match, and you will certainly hear of it when you return.

Cantilever Conduits. A rat's nest of tunnels within the walls of Gehenna. The Conduits are not only the lifeblood of the Hive, but a crossroads for travelers from other servers as well as housing for the multitude of unassigned Process that have collected around the Gladium. A good place to lose a tail, or get lost yourself.

Heller's Bazaar. A riotous cacophony of goods and services offered at competing volumes, in close proximity to the Arcturan router. Frequented by flush investment brokers from Sirius and thrifty influencers from Canopus, the Bazaar supports a rich ecosystem of pickpockets and grifters. Troubleshooter presence fluctuates in time with the petty crime rate, however it is well known that organized criminal interests are unwelcome in the Bazaar and so Heller's is considered one of the safest locales in the district.



*Hive Gehenna is a gargantuan edifice that encloses the only major living shelter in Arcturus. **Canton Gladium** is the name for the bloodsand circle at ground level inside Gehenna, but as economic pressure has pushed Process by droves—and some Users by choice—to occupy lower and lower levels of the Hive, the district has grown to encompass a vast shanty town that chokes the tunnels of the city and clings to both the inside and outside walls. Residents have gained a reputation for being close knit and insular, though there are some who will take any chance to elevate their fortune, be it within the gladiator's ring or without.*

Details

Scene. Within the walls, sprawling tents and pavilions house strange wares and avaricious fingers. Listless process mill about in search of function while users sporting exotic scars, accessories and pets leer from the rafters. Columns of dusty light from towering lancet windows swirl and throb in rhythm to muffled impacts and crowd pops from the games.

Resources. A grab-bag of imported goods and delicacies from other servers on colorful sale. Cast-offs and imitations of dubious quality siphoned from the underground forges of Factorum. Willing process labor and willful combatants bound for the arena.

Threats. Trigger-happy bounty hunters, swarthy gladiators, overprotective Process gangs. Getting rolled right into one of the cages, or out onto the bloodsands. The avarice of the Syndicate.

Notables

Jerran Heller. The thriving community around the base of Gehenna's walls owes much to this opportunistic entrepreneur. Heller saw potential in the hordes of listless process matriculating out of shuttered Factorum mines, and put them to work gathering an eclectic market of Arcturus' strangest wares. Catchphrase: 'There's a gem in every grain of sand!' (*Gregarious, Shrewd*)

Gana Sol. This enigmatic hunter trudges out of the desert haze on occasion, bearing strange fruits and scavenged memchips for the markets. They seem to be looking for a specific memory, but always disappear back to the dunes empty-handed. (*Armored, Patient*)

B4stet. A multi-armed daemon-queen of the gladiatorial ring, B4stet is protected from prosecution through a prestigious chain of ownership which includes some of the oldest houses on Arcturus. Despite her violent reputation, the towering daemon is apparently quite soft spoken in person. It is said she eats a memory from every user she defeats in battle. (*Daemon, Cold, Efficient*)

Thrull Syndicate		Faction Clocks
<i>The same sickness that greases the blood-slick wheels of the arenas slides its fingers into the pockets of buyers at Arcturan markets. At its heart lies the corpulent mass of Thrull, Who Consumes Coin.</i>	Host a major gladiatorial event (repeating)	4
	Infiltrate Heller's Bazaar	8

Turf: Dueling pits and gladiator dens throughout the district. The crumbling *Crassus Colossus* (HQ), a festering hive from which future gladiatorial games and unwholesome revels are plotted.

NPCs: **Thrull Who Consumes Coin** (leader, *gluttonous, patient*). **Veer Ced Rol** (spymaster, *jealous, shrewd*).

Significant Assets: The fear and loyalty of many of Gladium's mercenaries as well as the *Siegebreaker Twins*: a pair of mighty war golems typically brought out for highly-destructive gladiatorial headline acts.

Allies: Troubleshooters, Castellum Royal Houses. **Enemies:** Jerran Heller, The Lightning Riders.

Notes: Thrull (Who Consumes Coin) lets their grotesque reputation and corrosive influence do much of the work for them, and the Syndicate as a whole prides itself on getting what it wants without resort to theatrics. While they have extorted and kidnapped their way to dominance over the lucrative business interests of Arcturus, one major holdout has defiantly stood in Thrull's way since the beginning: the free market of Jerran Heller.

canton factorum

Take +2 **Magnitude** to the **Compile Authority** when the facilities of the NCC are utilized to assist you, but the GM assesses an additional **Faction Status** penalty as the Factorum monitoring systems broadcast your activity.

data structure [●●●●] chaotic
 server traffic [■●●●] local
 monitoring [●●●●] freedom
 security [■●●●] value
 goods & memories volume [■●●●] value



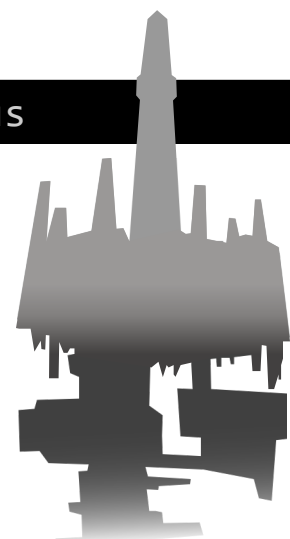
Landmarks

Refinery Hall. A massive and sweltering interior cavern, renowned World over for its state-of-the-art fabrication consoles. Shivering table-length blades made of pure Iso shear off white-hot rods of Neuroplast piped in from the Core. Shielded containment bays overlook the massive hooded furnaces that cook the threads of the plasma, altering their shape for final construction. Fabricator permits are not easy to obtain, but a User with enough pull can co-opt the use of a console in order to print out a structure of their own design.

The Plunge. A vast mining shaft kiloclicks in diameter, now largely abandoned. The Plunge was stripped of its valuable Isomorph many cycles ago and now remains as a historical curiosity, a side channel to the new data core pipeline, and of course a dark and dangerous space teeming with unregistered entities.

The Core. Each server of World is an instanced space offset from the central processing core that powers the contiguous simulation. Piercing the barrier between servers is a Tier V offense that threatens the stability of World itself, punishable by immediate Administrative deresolution and privilege review. There is a fine line regulating how much raw data the NCC can legally siphon off of Arcturus' membrane, and they push it as far as their precision mining instrumentation and surveys will allow.

Like an iceberg, the vast majority of Hive Gehenna extends deep beneath the surface of Arcturus, into the chaotic plasma flows of raw data that permeate the membranes of servers. As simulation stability begins to break down near the edge of the server's mantle, autonomous construction drones are constantly at work patching the underground walls of the hive and rewriting memory leaks. At the heart of this industry lies the shielded headquarters of the Neuroplastic Construction Company and their bank of furnace printers that extrude Neuroplast, the ubiquitous memory material comprising most of World's modern structures and commodities.



Details

Scene: The earth piercing rumble and glow of hot plasma, a clockwork dance of sheathed conveyors, pulleys, and manipulator claws blindly grasping at the bedrock. Above, the ceaseless droning of Refinery Hall. Far, far below, rows of hazard-suited Process marching to and fro amidst the great dredging apparatus teasing new neuroplast out of the tear in reality at the server's Core.

Resources: Rich veins of minerals. The combined industry and commerce of the NCC and its subsidiaries. Open workshops in the Refinery, and a rich history of artisanal talent. Delving missions proposed by entrepreneurial Users.

Threats: Physical conditions so extreme even the craggy native daemons are at risk without shielding. Sudden fitful convulsions of dormant heavy machinery. Buzzing electro-lashes wielded by NCC foremen. Frantic pitch-black struggles between NCC hirelings and pro-labor guerillas. Caverns collapsing under the passing of migrant Banshee Worms.

Notables

Heartbeat Quorum. This irrepressible fortune hunter operates a mobile waystation and research lab halfway down the Plunge, where they remain in protest against multiple eviction notices from the NCC. To hear Heartbeat speak of it, there are treasures yet to plunder in the depths of Arcturus that the ruling class of Gehenna would rather stay buried forever. (*Earnest, Obsessed*)

Knock. A figure of mythical speculation among the process who work Arcturus' mines who is variously interpreted as a vigilante user, a process who broke their chains, or a stranger entity born of the mines. They are said to lead a guerrilla band of liberated process which has been credited with the distribution of both radical pamphlets and unregistered explosives to the miners. Supposedly there is a secret rhythm one may tap into the walls of the mines to summon Knock's revolutionaries. (*Defiant, Elusive*)

Neuroplast Construction Company (NCC)		Faction Clocks
A bloated conglomerate of mining interests and subsidiaries squatting on mineral rights contracts from the dawn of recorded time, the NCC supplies World's thirst for raw materials.		
Deliver shipments of raw neuroplast		4
Smuggle black-market artifacts		8

Turf: Shielded corporate laboratories and refineries near the heart of the core. Sealed "black sites" built into off-limits mining tunnels, hiding ancient secrets.

NPCs: **Hecta Moridi** (chief financial officer, *cold, suspicious, glitching*). **Lathen Dreg** (labor relations & black site security, *stiff, moody, secretive*) **Foreman Zoss** (Process, *ancient, tight-lipped, cruel*).

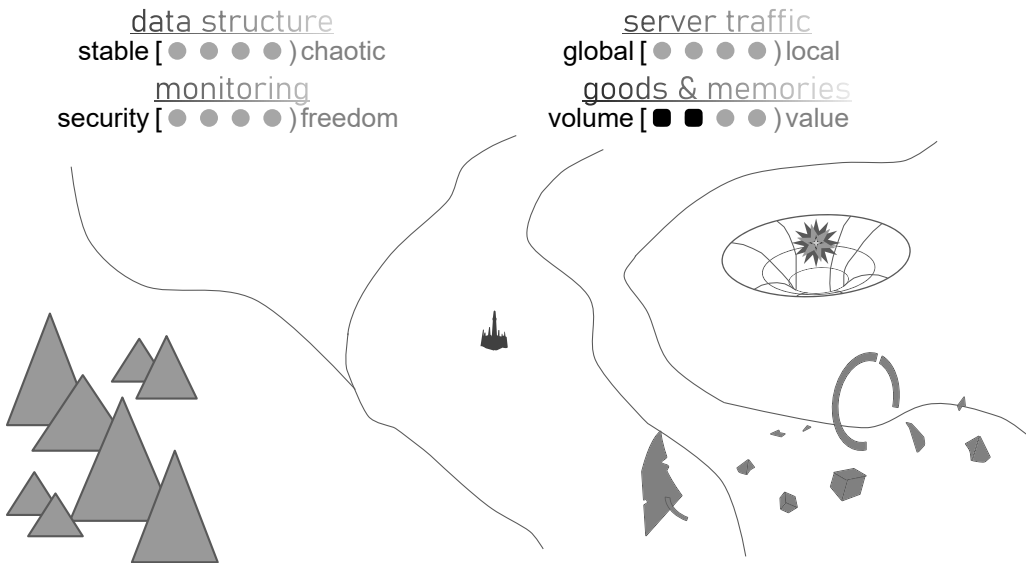
Significant Assets: Hazardous materials storehouses stuffed with exotic compounds dating back to World's creation. Sole control of the neuroplast pipeline that constitutes the raw material for most modern memories.

Allies: Castellum Royal Houses. **Enemies:** Isomorph Mining Consortium, Knock, Sirian Central Bank.

Notes: The NCC uses a monopolistic hold on World's most fundamental commodity to bend the financial capital of Sirius to their wishes, propping up the company whenever demand falls and squeezing prices to their limit whenever demand rises. A hostile takeover of the NCC's board of directors by Sirian Bank interests has been repeatedly threatened, but Hecta has somehow managed to hold off the sharks every time. It is not in the interests of the Arcturan royals to let Sirius get a foothold on the NCC.

the silicon sands

The Sands are a decent place to lie low if you don't mind the extreme conditions. Take **+1d** to **Reduce Heat** here, but also take **1 stress**.



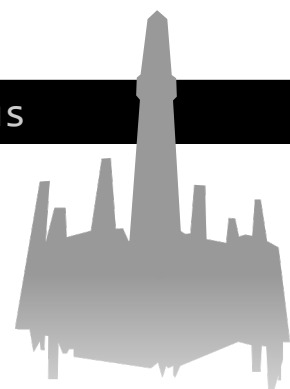
Landmarks

Static Zero Interrupt. One of the few constants of the wasteland landscape, local legend speaks of the destructive fury of the Static-Zero-Interrupt, a flickering coordinate point that seems to bend the polarity of the desert around it. Mere sandstorms are common enough in Arcturus, but stray too close to the magnetic center of the Silicon Sands and you risk witnessing a Glitch Storm, an event no User can survive.

The Rust Belt. No matter how many tectonic events and dune shifts alter the landscape of Arcturus, a rust belt always emerges, mangled metal crackling in the heat like the fuming teeth of a fiery beast. Clicks and clicks of abandoned vehicles, structures, and detritus can serve as valuable shade or resources, but they are also a reminder of civilizations old and strange which often seem to have no logical place in the accepted history of World. This is a relatively safe place to hole up in the wastes, but you are bound to run into other shelter-seekers.

The Howling Caverns. Rumors in Gehenna differ on the origin of the caves that twist through the wastes, sporadically uncovered by the shifting terrain. Some say they lead to partitions older than Arcturus itself, or are the resting place of priceless memories hoarded by daemons. Others claim the Banshee Worms retreat there to slumber during the harsh Arcturan nights. Most agree that the secrets within hold value, but few Users can claim to have successfully braved the depths.

Worldspine Mountains. An old daemon superstition posits this range as a marker of the resting place of one of the Titans, apocryphal entities that supposedly left their mark on the primordial state of World. Assays of the strange compounds that run in geometric seams through the range reveal unusually high minerological value, but the region is infamously difficult to extract from.



While it's rare for Users to derez purely from exposure to the elements, the physical conditions of the Arcturan wasteland have nevertheless garnered a deadly reputation. Chaos holds sway in the unformatted space of the server, where dunes, pits, and ridgelines merge and interrupt each other with maddening irregularity. The silicon sands themselves seem to be hostile to logic and order, as the heavy metals that kick up with every tectonic shift of the churning landscape play havoc on scanning or mapping electronics. Only entities who are truly adrift from World's society thrive out here.

Details

Scene. The haywire buzz of malfunctioning Vox, sweat beading on the inside of a protective visor. Static crackling on the horizon, the only other sound rising and falling in time with panicked breath. Ahead, rising out of the pall of whipping sands, the sharp, rusted over bones of hollowed-out metal. Dry thunder in the distance.

Resources. The wreckage of foolhardy explorers mingled with relics of a bygone era. Glittering hidden troves and buried partitions. The insides of a beached Banshee Worm—precious lost memories, sky-blue Iso, half-digested things of unknown origin.

Threats. The hiss and pop of spark shots from a concealed rifleman. Sonic booms from the monocycle of a cackling marauder. Desperate process thieves seeking a pitiful prize to hawk at Heller's Bazaar. The earthquake rumble of an approaching Banshee Worm promising certain derezolution.

Notables

Vanya of the Sunken Valley. If you're looking for a guide to hazard the wastes, you could do far worse than Vanya. Sure, she has a few quirks, what horizon walker doesn't? But you'll grow not to mind her strange mannerisms and insistence on digging up useless bits of buried pottery. Vanya is always saying she's looking for a lost city but there aren't any lost cities in Arcturus, otherwise there would surely be *some* records or memories of it out there. (*Haunted, Skilled*)

C4z1c-Thule, the Nomad. A self-styled "Lord of Fear," this daemon is known to appear before users lost in the wastes, bearing strange gifts in its many hands and prayers for the primordial Glitch it seems to worship. For every account of a chance encounter with the daemon saving a wayward user, there is a horror story of C4z1c-Thule's other aspect: a starved beast wearing the faces of long-lost friends. (*Daemon, Pious, Hungry*)

Lightning Riders		Faction Clocks
A rowdy monocycle gang that makes their home in box canyons and arid shatterlands. They are without exception Class III wanted users who have spurned 'domesticated' life underneath the Administration.	Raid weaker scavengers (repeating)	4
	Return to Canton Gladium for trading	8

Turf: A camouflaged fuel depot hidden in the Rust Belt (HQ) & wherever their monocycles are currently parked.

NPCs: **Amaranth** (leader, *skilled, popular, capricious*). **Wrecker** (right-hand, *strong, loyal, quiet*). **Sprox** (outrider, *observant, defiant, caring*).

Significant Assets: A reputation for trouble-making stunts and vicious raids, only somewhat deserved. Powerful spark-retrofitted custom monocycles just as temperamental and eccentric as their riders.

Allies: Jerran Heller. **Enemies:** Castellum Noble Houses, Thrull Syndicate, Troubleshooters.

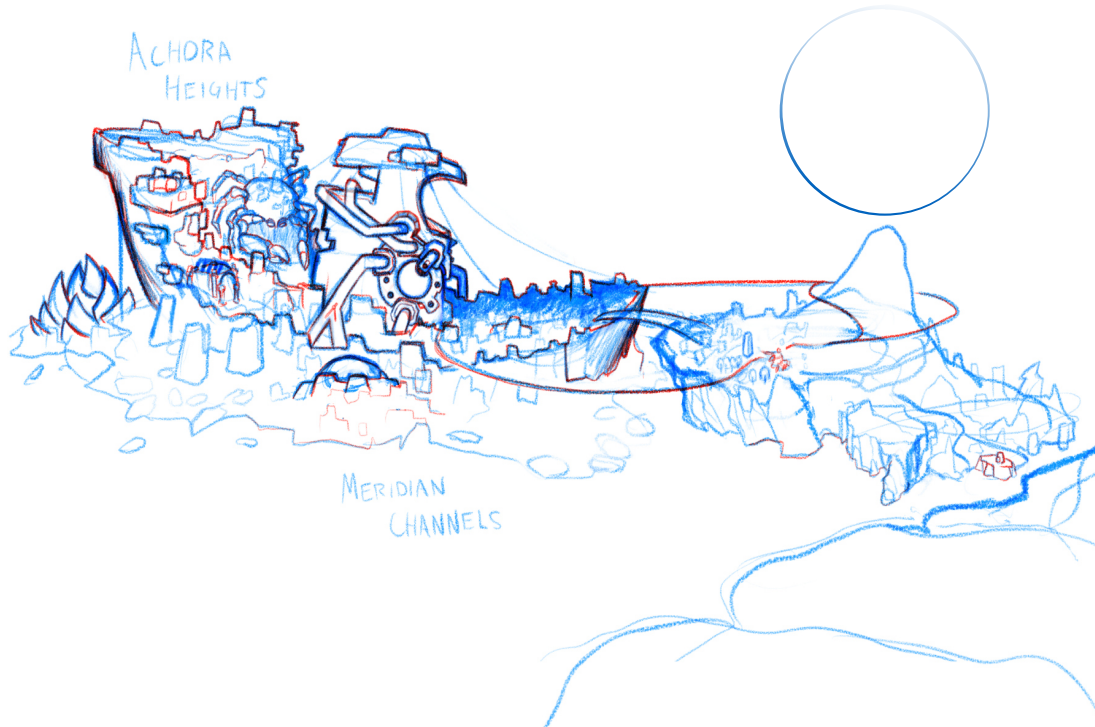
Notes: All members of the Riders refuse reiteration to the greatest extent possible, and thus are among the longest-lived users in World. They can run circles around anyone who wants to take them in, using their unparalleled knowledge of the shifting terrain of the Silicon Sands. Their primary weakness is logistical: they have to ride into Hive Gehenna for barter every few kilocycles just to keep their machines running.

Canopus

Canopus is a tropical oceanic paradise that attracts Users looking for a vibrant cultural nexus and upbeat community-focused society. The server's nexus is mostly built on the sturdy bones of the *Amaurot*, a gargantuan moored vessel that once sailed these mirrored seas.

As the cultural hub of World, Canopus forges the trends and habits that other users will end up mimicking. Empty memory chips formed of neuroplast mined from Arcturus arrive here to be filled with the consumables and cultural trinkets that turn the gears of commerce in World, then are shipped out through a byzantine trade network.

The users who first originated in Arcturus are known as **Lunar** after the strange moon that the server elected to serve as its symbol. Lunar are popularly cast as **adventurous** seekers of knowledge and experience, **eclectic** appreciators of the contributions and culture of others, and **friendly** forgers of close relationships. Here, rhetoricians and news-casters debate endlessly while performers and cultural commentators express the reigning zeitgeist through endless cycles of iteration and review. With culture comes counter-culture of course, and Canopus therefore also nourishes a vibrant tradition of artistic rebellion.



canopus environmental features

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Street Name	Broad Street — Stepped Falls	Coral Avenue — Clearwater	Moonfall Way — Murkwater	Mist Pier — Shimmerwalk	Anchor's Rest — Ring Street	Marble Shoal — Bilge Overlook
Denizen	Trendy shoppers	A performing Echo artist	Arguing Rhetoricians	Pick-up street sports	Hooded figures, watching you	Peacoat sailors
Mood	Bright — Breezy	Quiet — Bustling	Lively — Carefree	Eclipsed — Glamorous	Wind Gales — Humid	Calm — Watchful
Detail	Avian Daemons	Repurposed Signage	Bas-Relief Sculpture Wall	Elegant Pottery	Abandoned Freight	Overgrown Garden
Outdoor Location	<i>Hektor's Coffee Grind</i>	<i>Deep Diver Drowned Noodles</i>	Raucous Amphitheater	Shipping Elevator	Storefront Boardwalk	Luxury Yacht Moorings
Indoor Location	<i>The Sunken Anchor</i>	<i>Silvertail Union Brewpub</i>	<i>Chalk & Chain Barrelhouse</i>	Quiet Bungalow	Hissing Steamworks	Hushed Art Gallery

canopan coffehouse discussions

- "I looove the avatar, so cute, where did you find those drops?" "...Oh, this old thing? It's nothing, an old **Silvertail** hoodie I got at thrift modded over last-season's A. Arduri leggings."
- "So they meet in the stands, too much crowd noise for anyone to **restore** the terms of the deal, right? Every third game of the kilocycle. It could be anything: secret art transactions, daemon trafficking..."
- "He just wasn't my Aeldin, not anymore. That **Church** got to him, they keep filling his head with that nonsense about the s-sea... I'm sorry, it's been a long kilocycle. You're right, I should let him go..."
- "I swear I've never seen *anything* like it before, and I've been in for ten whole cycles of the scene. She comes from nowhere with this *awful* post-Pixelism mess. It's part of some whole *statement* on society."
- "Of course they've just been tossing the crates over the side, middle of the day in front of everyone. I guess the **Peacoats** aren't interested in what's actually *inside* the contraband, see? It's about the principle of the thing."
- "Ohhh-- Our spark mags made an awful din, but with one great crash **Vektor** stove us in--! Now I'm a broken shade on a Meridian pier, the last of Eruk's privateers--!" "...Give me the novelty memory, you're so embarrassing."

canopan street art

	Art Installation	Bystanders	Significance?	Value?
1	minimalist moon sculpture , pure silver	Diana , a solemn user wearing a cloak of starlight	"A mother provides, but what duties has a child?"	"This abstraction has no extrinsic worth-- but to me, well..."
2	neon-spray painted Magball pitch , in use	eager magball youth, emulating pro players	"I think they wanted to, uh, just have fun with it?"	"Seems kind of crass to put a coin sign on it, ya know?"
3	crumbled pillars orbiting a hovering stage for a raucous music competition	neo-baroque R&B moshers vs. Brightpop slam poets	"They're killing music, and only we can save it!"	"Booked out an entire hall, back when they were any good!"
4	abstract sculpture of grasping limbs , reaching desperately upwards	waterlogged cultists gurgling a chant to the depths	" <i>Shugh-nloth, ohmm nah saoo...</i> May waves crash over you, unsalted one."	"...Coin will unmake you."
5	arrangement of easels with impressionist paintings of Sirian city life	a contingent of grave art critics, comparing notes	"The brush strokes here betray a yeoman's impatience."	"For my gallery? I'd go no higher than a coin."
6	holographic echo of a dance troupe in motion	Trish and Tosh , shoppers comparing their purchases	"Umm-huh, I'm not sure. It's nice to look at though."	"Seems pretty expensive to me!"

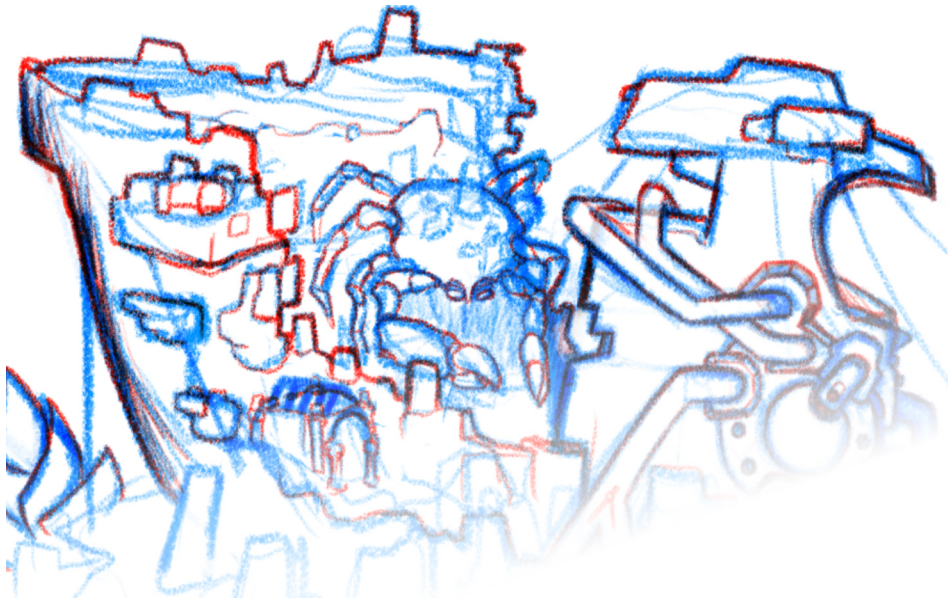
On the "street art" table you can either roll once and use the entire row (each row has a cohesive theme), or roll for each feature to assemble a composite encounter.

achora heights

Achora Heights is a favored social space due to its culinary prestige and attractions. When you **Frame a Scene** here, you may spend **1 coin**. If you do, gain **1 rep** (the ordinary rate is 2 coin → 1 rep).

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

Aftcastle. Though it has been buried under kilocycles of spontaneous civic growth, *Amaurot* is a gargantuan sailing vessel—sprawling rooftops overlap bulbous bows designed to cut through the glittering surf, and festive decorations hide rudders, pulse engines, and boom sails. These days the city's sailing apparatus lies dormant under the watchful eye of Transom Bilge.

The Flying Bridge. The forward command deck of *Amaurot* has long since been repurposed into the trading hub of the server, and shipments routinely cycle up and down the pulley elevators that surround the bridge like a carnival maypole. The daily manifests are guarded with an iron fist by the trade federation, making control of the Bridge a tempting prize.

The Brass Crab. This sprawling restaurant-campus is the culinary heart of the Heights. Aspiring chefs are trained in the art of 'Eat-Only' Memory craft, with dynamic flavor variables that simulate a food experience to an unprecedented degree. Many of the Crab's legs nestle into the tight alleys and homely neighborhoods of Achora, and as such are walk-in joints for local cuisine.

Hall of Rhetoric. Sequestered away on the leeward side of the floating city and buttressed by solemn pillars, this open-air forum to philosophy and discourse is a welcome diversion from the chaos and bustle of Achora. Users who enter are flagged with a 'Rhetorician' tag, and it's common practice to edit one's tag with current affairs, schools of thought, hobbies, or other points of argumentation one is willing to discuss.

Sometimes known as "The Birthplace of a Thousand Opinions", this district's boundaries are uncertain, perhaps best explained as an idea that inhabits a nebulously-defined region of the residential flats and bungalows set into stacked layers in the elevated fantail of *Amaurot*. Users gather for lively debate in public houses devoted to consumptory memories such as beer, ramen, and coffee, and intense competition for higher-quality renditions of this nostalgic fare keeps visitor traffic high.



Details

Scene. Gaudy streamers flutter in artificial breezes, reflecting holographic displays and endorsements onto baroque facades and bas reliefs. Thoughtful Rhetoricians and surly Peacoats mingle on the wide decks, capped by a sky so deep its blue registers in the ultraviolet band.

Resources. Pristine living conditions, with private cabins, hostels, or bungalows for sale. Revolutionary ideas, firebrand rhetoric, and engaging philosophies. Trade deals, negotiating halls, and control of Canopan shipping routes.

Threats. Arrogant opinion leaders with zealous adherents. Dangerous contraband mixed into legitimate goods, and the smugglers who move them. Getting on the wrong side of the Peacoats.

Notables

Seni Lavrou. World's most famous celebrity chef and a household name. Recently departed the Brass Crab to judge for the high-profile Canopan Invitational Cooking Circuit. Seni is a well-known advocate for social issues affecting Arcadian expatriates (as she herself is). (*Popular, Observant*)

Julius Crowley. Chief Liaison of the Achora Compact, a consortium that regulates trade to and from the Canopan Archipelago. Crowley's days are typically spent nose deep in negotiations and manifest inspections on the Flying Bridge as the trade empire demands. Persistent rumors hold that he is deep in the pockets of daemonic smugglers, further fueled by the broker's frequent disappearances on dubious "official business." (*Restless, Shrewd*)

Professor Keel. This itinerant professor alternates speaking at the Hall of Rhetoric on the nature of User consciousness with expeditions into strange ruins and collapsed partitions on Caliban. Has been developing some unusual theories about the origins of World and meanings behind the symbolic associations most now take for granted. (*Friendly, Didactic*)

The Peacoats

Faction Clocks

Named for their distinctive uniforms, this disciplined team of sailors monitors <i>Amaurot's</i> seaworthy status despite the fact the vessel hasn't been called upon to set sail for long beyond living memory.	Routine training & maintenance drills (repeating)	6
	Occupy and hold the Steamworks	10

Turf: The **Aftcastle** (HQ), long-buried by civic development, although they know the entire breadth of the sea-faring legacy structures of *Amaurot* like the back of their hand.

NPCs: **Transom Bilge** (Captain, *strict, taciturn, beloved*). **Hargan** (Bosun, *grim, experienced, easily-provoked*). **Wyda Rame** (First Engineer, *eccentric, friendly*).

Significant Assets: Mastery of the *Amaurot's* strange architecture and its remaining active mechanisms.

Allies: Citizens of Achora Heights. **Enemies:** Julius Crowley, Drowned Church.

Notes: The Peacoats fulfill purely honorary functions now, but Transom and his (mostly process) crew hold their sacred charge with dead seriousness. They think little of disrupting civic life with incessant sea-worthiness drills and damage control exercises, yet public approval for the Peacoats rarely dips. Most Lunar will tell you that they are just another part of the local flavor that you learn to love, but the romantic appeal of one last quixotic voyage is speculated to play a heavy role in the polling.

meridian channels

The shifting layout of the channels is a navigation challenge even to Meridian's locals, but the district is rich in valuable goods. **Transport** score plans suffer **-1d** to engagement rolls here, but take in an additional **+1 Coin** on Payoff.

data structure
 stable [● ● ● ●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [● ● ● ●] freedom

server traffic
 global [● ● ● ●] local
goods & memories
 volume [● ● ● ●] value



Landmarks

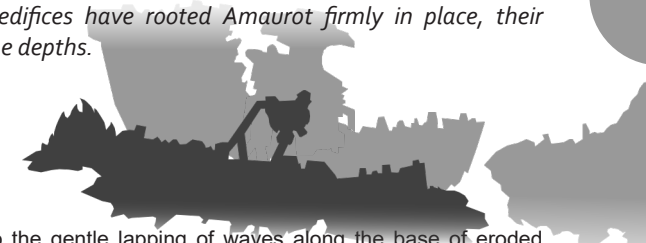
Macarensen Angle. A lucky arrangement of several luxury barges gave rise to an arts museum of unprecedented scope. Built-up geometric spirals encompass galleries that hang out over the serene waters and boast some of the liveliest scenic views of the Surf. Items include compositions with fabulously-detailed material replications practically unseen elsewhere in World (such as threaded fabric and worked metals). The collection as a whole is practically beyond valuation, and the museum's curators pay handsomely for private security teams to protect the collection.

The Hyperdome. Ordinarily set up as a Magball pitch, but capable of instantaneous transformation into no less than a dozen other configurations to support any kind of sport or charity event, including formal Arc Wheel duels and indoor Blade races. The principle draw of the Hyperdome is its cutting-edge *Format* modelling, with frictionless low-gravity 'bubble' arenas being particularly popular this season.

Steamworks. A pressurized and sweltering nexus of Amaurot's infrastructure, at the center of which lies the mighty water-cooled fusion reactor that once powered the great vessel's migration. The spent fuel rods are long past several half-lives but their latent heat is still harnessed to route steam energy throughout Amaurot. Ancient rumors persist of a hidden stockpile of fuel, never disclosed by the mute Peacoats and their Captain.

Freeboard. Amaurot's underbelly is a sodden labyrinth of massive ducting, drainage tunnels, and sunken buildings, slowly sagging under the weight of new construction above. Mostly deregulated and lawless, the region has become a haven for free spirits and ne'er do wells looking to practice their art or other, more occult expressions without supervision.

The Floating Ark of Amaurot used to bear a much sleeker profile, built for speed and integrity. After dropping anchor off the coast of Prospero, the Ark became a magnet for smaller vessels and constructions, and over the countless iterations of World the distinctions between the moored craft that served as outlying suburbs blurred and were quickly forgotten. A vast, sprawling network of inlets and channels rings the greater superstructure now, and haphazard dwellings, temples and edifices have rooted Amaurot firmly in place, their foundations and pillars sinking into the depths.



Details

Scene. Opalescent lacquer shimmers to the gentle lapping of waves along the base of eroded structures. Columns and quatrefoils line the entrances to half-submerged hallways, as Users skim soundlessly down the channels to colorful galleries. Every street boasts a unique and clashing style of renovation.

Resources. Curated fine art Memories of the highest quality, signed merchandise from celebrity artists and athletes. The maintenance tunnels and control rooms of Amaurot. Access to pleasure barges, skiffs, and yachts, most in disuse.

Threats. Creative pranks and thefts from art-banditos, riotous gangs of athletes engaged in high-risk street sports. Cultists to Sycorax, abducting users for watery communion. Elite private security process, guarding the wealthy and their symbols of culture.

Notables

JM. This identity-fluid graffiti artist and street performer wages a constant shadow war against the more respectable fine art institutions of Meridian, surreptitiously altering priceless works and sneaking unauthorized pieces into exhibits (alongside various forms of more blatant protest art). Recent investigations into JM's activities have revealed the possibility that they are actually two or more users working in tandem under a shared identity. (*Fractured, Passionate*)

Mazi "Triple" LaRude. This Magball player has rocketed to stardom on the heels of repeated tournament successes, combining encyclopedic game knowledge with *crashing* physical play and masterful *echo* shot-fakes into a 'terrible triple threat' (broadcast color commentators love her). Calls all of her team's plays from the Power Quarterfielder position, an unusual arrangement unique to the Meridian Silvertails. (*Talented, Obsessed*)

Drowned Church		Faction Clocks
A sect of devotants to the vast depths of the Canopan Seas, with a pyramid scheme ascension program. Expect to hear the following a lot: "You are not yet ready to understand."	Public unveiling of new luxury church	6
	Hire specialists for an expedition inside SycOrax's dream	10

Turf: Distributed across Meridian in elegant coral-and-sandstone houses of worship, all partly flooded.

NPCs: **M. Rev Edrain** (founder, *serene, obfuscating*), **Sandy** (program advisor, *tenacious, smiling, creepy*), **Aeldin** (Fathomless evangelist, *resourceful, loyal*).

Significant Assets: A handful of celebrity adherents who are routinely trotted out to boost Church public relations. A mighty war-chest of riches and an aggressive anti-defamation legal team.

Allies: Citizens of Meridian, Mazi "Triple" LaRude. **Enemies:** Coda Tribes, The Peacoats.

Quirk: The Church's hypnotic arts were learned from study of a deep-sea signal originating from SycOrax.

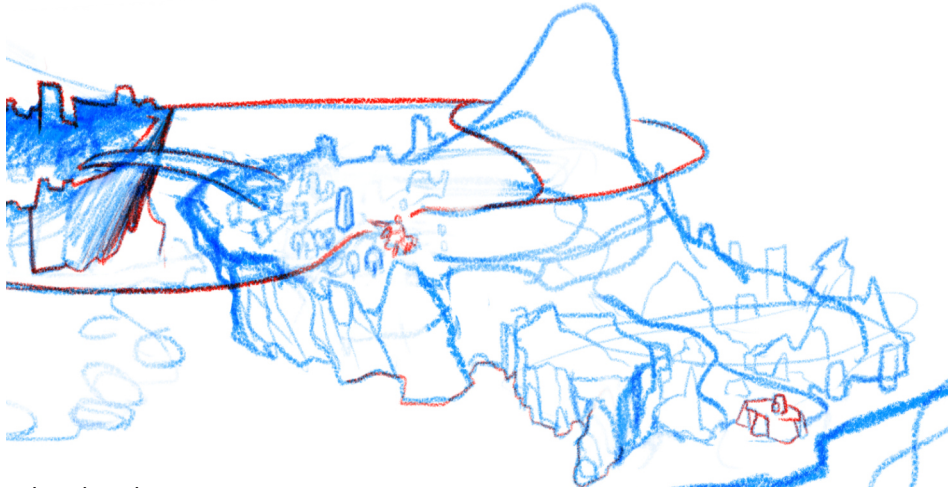
Notes: The Drowned are careful with their secrets, doling out carefully scripted platitudes and initiation puzzles to their lowest ranking members. Those found worthy (generally through massive coin donations and ceding their time wholeheartedly to the Church) are inducted into the ranks of the "Fathomless," and taught the Church's deepest truths. Nobody outside the inner circle can do much more than guess at these, but evidence does show a strange obsession with ocean floor exploration among the Fathomless.

prospero city

Prospero has premium commercial services and industry advisers available for consultation. Turn to them for **+2 effect level** on a creative **Long-Term Project**, at a cost of **1 Coin** and **1 Rep**.

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

Heliopolis Memorial Park. No memory recalls the subjects enshrined on this bluff overlooking the ocean, and archival Restoration of the faded inscriptions and friezes in the park has been deemed impossible, their honorifics lost to time. Nonetheless the Park undergoes renovation after renovation to stay relevant, the most recent having completely replaced its foot-pathways with pipes and skid bars to support Blade-skating passage across the Meridian. Derez-defying freestyle races are often held on these transit lines between Prospero and Amaurot.

Aftershock Canyon. An acoustically-amplified outdoor concert hall and DMZ are coveted territory in the center of the occupied battlefield that constitutes the premiere music district of Canopus. The canyon's broken earth is marked by constant heavy fighting; territorial genre flags and pop-up merch booths proliferate on held ground.

Fashion Row. The most creative avatars and cutting-edge accessories in World are on continuous display in Fashion Row, a wide, elevated bridging lane that cuts above the plazas and serves the highest foot-traffic rates in Canopus. Eccentric designers premiere new looks on a seasonal basis, but anyone in the know will tell you that the shifting trends here evolve too fast to properly categorize.

Plastic Beach. The coastline of Prospero is a marvel of *Restorative* technology, boasting instantiated tracts of sand for rent that can be personalized at will. Every aspect of your luxurious beach vacation can be altered in real time, from the weather patterns to the volatility of the waves. Misaligned timestamps and error cascades have rendered some sections of the beach unusable, flickering nightmare tableaux of revelry. Moderators maintain that the overall beach integrity is perfectly stable, and that the Administration will be pushing through hotfixes any cycle now.

The smallest key at the tip of a pastoral archipelago, Prospero City is a district of Amaurot in all but name and is the glittering jewel of Canopus. Magrails connect to the Floating City at Heliopolis Memorial Park, overlooking the island's verdant jungles and pristine coastlines. Last stop is Guillevin Terminal Hall, where glassy boardwalks and manicured courtyards circle back around Prospero City, expertly guiding visitors through a brilliant gauntlet of luxury shoppes, island tour getaways, and holographic divertissements.



Details

Scene: The thumping bass of distant instrumental-weapons discharge. Wide plazas and winding boroughs. Flashy holographs proudly boasting of unforgettable experiences at beach resorts and gallerias. Chic fashionistas sipping on sizzling refreshments as they overlook a stampede of beach festivities.

Resources: Premium item skins and consumables. Memory-molded fashion one can customize on a whim. Offshore trading accounts and exchangeable currencies, nearly untraceable. Aftershock memorabilia and war assets ('merch').

Threats: Running afoul of one of Guillevin's loan sharks. Getting caught in a concussive turf war between Aftershock cultist-groupies. The abrupt dissolution of a crashing beach instance.

Notables

August Guillevin. The founder of Prospero City is oddly attached to his position, returning after every sojourn on the stack to his waiting empire and the Process goons who dutifully fend off would be usurpers. The price of doing business on Prospero is high, and August's protection racket exacts its due in a variety of creative ways. (*Connected, Taciturn*)

Queen Crimson. Lead vocalist of Industrial Jazz Mega-Pop sensation **Pastel Massacre**, World's most famous band. Leads a colorful coterie of youthful idols whose dance numbers inspire fans across World (diehards wear all-white avatars, the better to display ink cannon splatters from PM's live act). Will not rest until Vivid Malaise is utterly destroyed. (*Frenetic, Eager*)

Pallous Ulver. Frontman of cult Post-Noise outfit **Vivid Malaise**, World's other most famous band. Leads a grim contingent of fellow technicians, inspiring solemn head-nods in true believers (muted attire and sound-cancelling headsets are common, the better to feel the pulse of VM's reverberations). Will not rest until Pastel Massacre is utterly destroyed. (*Laconic, Somber*)

The Somnolent Moon		Faction Clocks
Canopan myth holds that a 'wandering moon' guided the Amaurot to its present moorings. The Lunar knew their founding journey had come to an end when the moon finally rested above Mount Prospero.	Gather the children	8
	Traverse the horizon once again	12

Quirk: The Moon's place on the horizon is taken for granted by users at large, and modern Lunar are largely immune to its gentle influence. There are some still attuned to its subtle ministrations, however.

NPCs: Mostly Mika (echo artist, *stylish, confident, moon-touched*). **Eyes-9** (pamphleteer, *morose, friendly, moon-touched*).

Significant Assets: A mother's tender love, as well as control over the tides and eclipses of Canopus.

Allies: Citizens of Canopus, Coda Tribes. **Enemies:** SycOrax.

Quirk: Calling the Somnolent Moon sentient would be inaccurate (what could a moon possibly *want* anyhow?), but Lunar users are generally eager to anthropomorphize it anyway. And why not? Few users make the pilgrimage anymore, but the Resting Moon can be summited if you reach the highest point on Mount Prospero. Users who jump during the lunar perigee find that gravity reorients them to the celestial body within a short click over the surface, offering visitors a perspective-challenging jaunt on the featureless silver sphere.

the glittering surf

The Canopan ocean is a preternaturally calming environment, except for when it isn't. When a user **Indulges Memory** here, roll **2d6**. On a 1-3 result a violent storm catches you, **inflicting Level 2 Harm**. On any other result, clear an additional **1 Stress**.

<u>data structure</u>	<u>server traffic</u>
stable [●●●●] chaotic	global [●●●●] local
<u>monitoring</u>	<u>goods & memories</u>
security [●●●●] freedom	volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

Caliban. Brother island to Prospero, Caliban is a vast untamed wilderness, one of the only stable representations of 'nature' in World. As such, it represents a priceless opportunity for ecologists seeking to catalog the endless varieties of flora and fauna ('subroutines') that are procedurally generated somewhere deep in the jungle. These safaris take care not to venture too far inland, where morphogenic fields thwart LIDAR scanning and warp Caliban's terrain in defiance of spatial causality.

Ultraviolet Sound. The oceanic expanses between the islands of Canopus are quite deep, and hint at unknown structures in the waters. Deep sea exploration is made treacherous by the uniquely heavy properties in this region, which seems to collect memory fragments in its depths. Divers who have ventured far beneath the waves tell tales of dreamlike environs and otherworldly presences.

Sunset Sea. The Canopan horizon is a beautiful mirage, as light from the Glittering Surf reflects off the curvature of the server's boundary representative points, spooling out a neon kaleidoscope of color. Though stories of terrible sea storms and capricious daemons abound, voyages into the Sunset Sea are nearly always serene and uneventful.

Shrine of the Divinities. Ancient temple grounds hidden in fog and sequestered amid towering cliffs, occupied by a sect of benign ascetics worshipping the spark of divinity they say dwells within every User. They preach that the Administrators are flawed experiments left behind by the "Superuser," a mythical being whose prophesied return will presage the uplift of World into a benevolent "Third Age". Probably harmless.

The 'oceans' of Canopus are an elaborate illusion, comprised more of primordial soup than water. This dynamic fluid medium is a homogenous repository of unformatted information, one of World's many methods of storing unusable material for reprocessing. All the same, the data lattice behaves similarly to water, with a strong surface tension governed by electromagnetism and a buffered response to temperature differentials making for relatively placid seas server-wide. With no other significant landmasses to sail to and few celestial bodies to navigate by, the vast oceanic expanse beyond the Canopan Archipelago remains largely uncharted to this day.

Details

Scene: A solemn procession of robed monks chant beneath the decrepit arches of ancient structures, their Shrine etched in the bedrock of the server. A swell of waves lapping over a beachfront composed entirely of discarded MEMcard husks. A mismatched set of baleful eyes peer out at you, cackling from the shadows of a jungle that ripples from expansive shifts in its source code.

Resources: Beauty and isolation. Sunken treasures of impossible provenance. Untouched wilderness teeming with exotic flora and fauna.

Threats: Wild subroutines eager for the taste of User. Vast, unstructured geography—disorienting to most urbanized Users. Unexplainable phenomena, equipment failure, disappearances. The irresistible, haunting call of the deep.

Notables

Vektor Bronze. An infamously impatient soul profiled in interviews as the "Metal Viking," Bronze swiftly departed Amaurot when the first journey concluded and has since risen to command a fleet of longships modeled after anachronistic seafaring explorers. Though ostensibly peaceful traders and guides, rumors persist of Bronze's fleet striking their colors and knifing through the water to perform daring coastal raids while hidden under one of the Somnolent Moon's frequent eclipses. (*Boisterous, Massive*)

SycOrax, the Dreamer. There is something in the waters deep beneath Canopus, and it is reaching out to Users. Lost cycles are a common complaint among the freewheeling residents of Amaurot. "It's dusk and I feel like I've been staring at the water for cycles," they'll say, avatars hunched and grasping at something you can't see. "I think I left something important down there... I need to get it back." Most will forget the feeling in time. (*Ancient, Hypnotic*)

Coda Tribes	Faction Clocks
<i>Egalitarian bands of users who have chosen to live apart from Canopan centralized society, camping across the islands and hunting the wild fauna that lurk in the primordial jungles of Caliban.</i>	Gather a council to determine course of action against the Drowned Church 6 Mobilize the tribes 8

Turf: Tent camps, herding trails, and hunting footpaths. The game-rich waterways between Caliban and the smaller isles. **Staggershell Lodge** (HQ), permanent structure used for leadership councils and ceremonies.

NPCs: **Zatyll** (Highland matriarch, *caring, patient*). **Omatt** (Waterway patriarch, *strong, territorial*). **Ryva** (First Spear, *skilled, solemn*). **Xxock** (craftsman, *friendly, tough*).

Significant Assets: Sophisticated hunting weaponry, traps, and techniques, honed against the aggressive wild subroutines of the inner Caliban jungle depths. The loyalty of tamed Staggershell crab subroutines, utilized for heavy labor and tribal migration.

Allies: The Somnolent Moon. **Enemies:** Drowned Church, SycOrax.

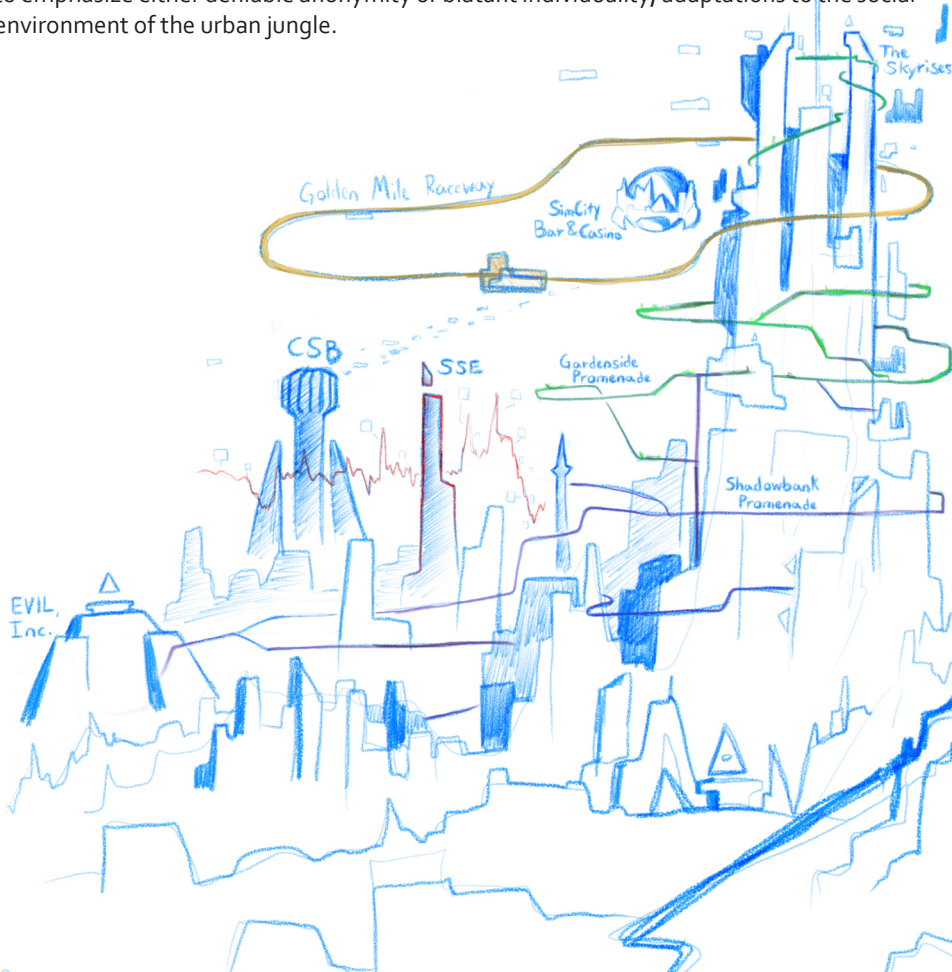
Notes: The Coda are facing incursions into their territories by Fathomless excavation (and evangelization) parties. Though resistant to the appeal of the Drowned faith, the tribes are concerned about the outcome should the Church's search teams find whatever it is they seek. The highland tribes have little to gain from confrontation and are at less threat than those which dwell near the waters, a tension soon to play out as the Coda seek a unified answer to the problem.

Sirius

Sirius is a benighted, rainy city with literally no boundaries (the server is a sprawling ecumenopolis). It invites users who enjoy cosmopolitan bustle and a hectic social environment: either to be the center of attention, to gain proximity to fame and fortune, or to use the city's anonymity in order to escape notice entirely.

Sirius is the economic center of World, and information as well as coin flows here in abundance. Market speculators and opportunistic grifters rub elbows with the wide-eyed "innocents": a statistically-significant percentage of World's user population who have chosen emptiness of mind as an adaptation to immortality, purging their own thoughts routinely to experience the Endless City anew every cycle. Sirius welcomes all with free housing and non-stop trivial pleasures.

Native users to the server are called **Sidereal** as a reference to the constellation of lights that perpetually illuminate the city, users who first originated in Sirius are held to be **connected** to webs of relationship and favors, **dispassionately** in control of their emotions and appearance, and **urbane** with refinement in manners and the ability to rapidly synthesize new information and deal with surprising situations. User avatars tend to emphasize either deniable anonymity or blatant individuality, adaptations to the social environment of the urban jungle.



sirius environmental features

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Street Name	Divinity Ave Pillar Street	37 th and Pike Warp Alley	Eclipse Lane Upper Z Street	Mirror Junction Exit 163	Howl Skybridge Pad 18C	Void Walk Crosstown E
Denizen	Crushing crowds	Angry stock-brokers	Hordes of shoppers	Silent Process gang	Trenchcoated and tailing you	Suddenly alone
Mood	Teeming Chaotic	Sodden Sullen	Lights, Colors Riotous Sounds	Dusky Moody	Foggy Muted	Torrential Furtive
Detail	Brutalist Architecture	Public Transit Announcement	Art Deco Installations	A lounging Viral Cat	Vertical architecture	Massive crowd of Process
Outdoor Location	<i>Dark Star News & Coffee</i>	<i>Night Shift Bagels</i>	Overgrown Park	Shadowed Walkway	Roofs and Catwalks	Public Transit Center
Indoor Location	<i>The Nova Club</i>	<i>Burnt Chrome Speakeasy</i>	<i>The Constellation</i>	<i>Shadowbox Theater</i>	A Private Skyrise Gala	Empty Office Complex

sirian news bites

- Factional disputes threaten to result in tax hikes serverwide, #NotMySyndicate currently trending 84%
- Ursula Major of the **Skypainter's Union** is here to kick off IPO festivities with announcement of crowdsourced cloud tags: write your message in the stars!
- Concerned party LFG to riot in streets over Helios oppression, PST with premium emote package equipped
- "Sports Blast! The **Mute City Outlaws** have clinched a playoff spot over long-time rival **Echo City Overlords**. They will face the undefeated **Meridian Silvertails** in a best-of-five postseason series next decacycle."
- "The Administration gave authorization to urban remodeling plans that will expand Shadowbank Promenade into Bass City to relieve traffic. Final *formatting* is expected with the upcoming iteration."
- "...in other news, yet *another kaiju invasion* is demolishing process tenements spin-ward beyond 81st Street. Users advised to plan routes accordingly until the Overwriters can be dispatched to resolve the situation."

highly legitimate ventures

	The Venture	The Hustler	Exposure?	The Twist
1	Hostile takeover of a rival enterprise	D.run , a nervous widget marketeer	"This will all have been completely legal, retroactively speaking."	You have stumbled into a WCB compliance audit
2	Sabotage a Golden Mile racer's vehicle	blank-faced process with a one-way message cutout	"It will need to look like an accident, of course."	You are obligated to participate in the event
3	Stake in a new crypto currency	influence-preneurs with popped collars	"Well, obviously you just make it all right back!"	The obvious thing happens
4	Install a risky avatar mod	wormw00d , distressed daemon peddler	"Too many questions! Need decisions..."	An unwelcome memory bleed alters you somehow
5	Participate in an award gala	a calm daemon chauffeur, beckoning to a lux ride	"You would of course be recorded for broadcast."	It's a set-up at your expense to make a rival look good
6	Crash a high society party	Aelth , a socialite wearing evening dress and cold fury	"Oh, <i>please</i> do."	They were expecting you all along

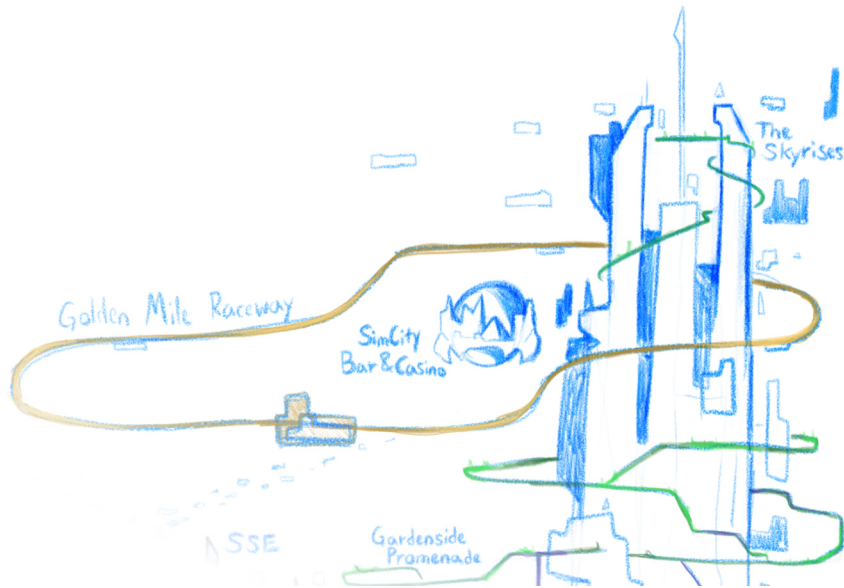
On the "ventures" table you can either roll once and use the entire row (each row has a cohesive theme), or roll for each feature to assemble a composite encounter. When it comes time to reveal the Twist, remind players that they can **resist** or **flashback** to avoid or alter the terms of a deal gone wrong!

echo city

Money makes its home here, but the wealthy take notice when their bottom line is threatened. Scores in Echo City may receive +2 Coin in Payoff at a price of +3 Heat.

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

The Skyrises. Users in Sirius take the term 'living the high life' quite seriously, and from the Skyrise Launchpad they can obtain temporary authorization to float their customized condo through the clouds. Many of the server's elite take to retrofitting their flying tracts of land with gratuitously illegal thrusters and ordnance. In Echo City, it is considered terribly impolite to entertain guests on the ground.

Gardenside Promenade. Soaring above the chaotic topography of the Fade, Gardenside connects most of the city's districts with a gravity-defying maze of bridges, stairways, and scenic overlooks. Echo City's stretch of the walkway boasts a rich botanical garden, cultivated by an eager green-thumbed Process crew. Many cycles ago, in perhaps overzealous treatment of their duties, they grew the promenade far beyond its original structural permit. Gardenside is now a labyrinthine jungle of exotic organics sprouting seamlessly from its silicon boulevards.

Golden Mile Raceway. The grav-thrusters that Sirian swoops favor can take the death defying corners and loops of this raceway at ludicrous speed, all the better to thrill the audiences that congregate on rooftops and in floating villas above the track. Bookies for the races rake in coin, especially when elaborate schemes and traps built by rival teams result in devastating crashes that spike viewership.

SimCity Bar & Casino. The glamorous SimCity Bar and Casino is a paean to World's excess, and a fitting place for Echo's movers and shakers to make themselves seen. Vast halls are dedicated to sport betting on live-streamed gladiatorial games from Arcturus and Magball matches from Canopus. These compete with raucous stage-show acts from across World amid an infinite labyrinth of slot machines and card tables.

Echo City is the glittering jewel of Sirius: rain-slick towers and soaring colonnades rising improbably above the metropolitan landscape. In truth, this high-flying district is little more than a cacophony of easy distractions and frivolous politics. If a User isn't burnt out on endless decadence, they can look forward to a brilliant sunrise on the rare occasion that the clouds part and the rain lets up. After a brief day cycle, the pervasive twilight of Sirius returns and the jewel shines again, lit by the golden halo of a floating raceway and a thousand tiny stars.

Details

Scene. Raindrops sizzle through flickering holographic ads. Scenic platforms swell on the backs of rising mist clouds, while hovering manses and trendy flying cars cut through the gloom. A city of glass grasps at the stars, bathed in the reflective glow of clashing neon kaleidoscopes.

Resources. Well-informed socialites and loose-lipped groupies. Luxury stores and mall plazas with limited availability wares. Open and closed door parties, attended by the rich and famous.

Threats. Prying eyes, knowing smiles, and predatory con artists. A high likelihood of showing up on the evening news. Losing your shirt in the races, or your head in the SimPods. Becoming a catspaw in somebody else's elaborate scheme.

Notables

Honora Plath. Self-styled 'Princess of the Clouds' whose customized skyrise has been a fixture above the horizon well longer than should be legal. Anyone who makes it big in Echo is expected to pay her tribute with a housewarming gift as extravagant as her personality. (*Lavish, Overbearing*)

Sanje Ras. Three-time reigning champion of both the Group X (Experimental) and Group M1 (Heavyweight Monocycle) classes at the Golden Mile Invitational. Sanje's meteoric rise to fame has been breathlessly followed by fans, amplified by a larger-than-life personality and eagerness for off-season illicit street racing. (*Competitive, Oblivious*)

Ohm. A Process of Interest to the Troubleshooters. Has been traced departing the scene of recent instances of unexplained civic unrest and infrastructural instability. Refer to case file for further details, classification-level Platinum. (*Secretive, Unstable*)

The Minor Arcana		Faction Clocks
A fashionable gang of high-class confidence artists and burglars who prefer not to get their hands too dirty. Pressure from a botched long con against the Bank has forced them to seek new allies.	Execute a confidence game (repeating)	6
	Obtain assistance from The Family	8

Turf: *The Marked Card*, a members-only club based in a floating skyrise (HQ). A handful of hidden swoop hangers and hideouts scattered around rooftops.

NPCs: **Queen of Wands** (the leader, *enigmatic, fearless*), **King of Cups** (the face, *charming, self-interested*), **Five of Swords** (the duelist, *quiet, suspicious*), **Two of Pentacles** (the wheel-man, *smooth, impatient*).

Allies: Citizens of Echo City. **Enemies:** SimCity Bar & Casino, Troubleshooters, World Central Bank.

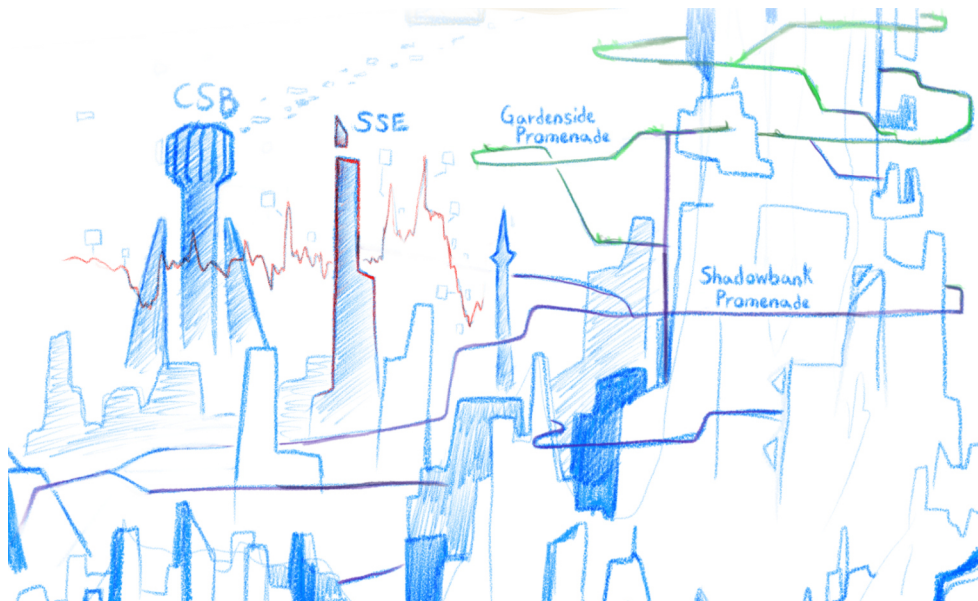
Notes: It turns out that charm and popularity can only get you so far when you are caught trying to steal "real coin" from the World Central Bank. The Minor Arcana recently lost a member to the Stack (**Page of Wands**, a confidence conspirator and technician) and have had to clean up their club after repeated Troubleshooter harassment. With their avatars all over the news-bites and funding for their luxury lifestyle at risk, Queen of Wands has made the decision to engage a risky ally she would normally avoid: the daemonic mobsters of The Family. First they'll have to obtain a suitable offer to get a seat at the table with the Family...

mute city

Gather Information rolls take +2d when conducted in the information crossroads of the Intelligence Market, but you will also accrue +1 Heat because ubiquitous mass surveillance is, as they say, a "two-way street."

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
 monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
 goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

Panopticon. A distributed network of fisheye lenses, spy-towers, shotgun microphone arrays, and scanning pillars that blankets the district, logging every action of the crowds that pass through Mute City. While in theory all activity in World can be Restored for analysis after the fact, Mute City is unique by virtue of active monitoring that dynamically tracks all occupants in real-time and directly collates data. Aggregated 'bundles' of information are sold on the Intelligence Market to interested users or occasionally requisitioned for moderator analysis.

Shadowbank Promenade. Winding through the void between skyscrapers, the Promenade is the common thread linking all of New Arcadia. Far below its twin Gardenside, Shadowbank pulses with crowds of greedy hustlers. A unique property of the Promenade folds vast distances of space in the formless metropolitan sprawl. Open the right (or wrong) door here, and you'll find yourself exiting kiloclicks away.

Sirian Stock Exchange (SSX). A raucous, open-air space dominated by massive updating stock tickers and crowded by process intermediaries in bidding wars. Composed of:

- a **Commodities Index** linking neuroplast production from Canopus with ,
- a **Currency Exchange** pegging the Coin against thousands of junk currencies,
- an **Intelligence Market** ("the InfoEx") which buys and sells raw data, and...
- endless obscure derivatives of all of the above.

By far the most population-dense region of World across all servers, Mute City lives in the shadowed canyons and refracted-light causeways beneath its glamorous sister. "Mute" is both a descriptor for the sonically-dampened region as well as it's residents, who have grown accustomed to a state of permanent inescapable surveillance. The Sirian Stock Exchange (SSE) dominates the district, a monstrous data nexus that accounts for nearly a third of the total cross-server traffic through all of World.

Details

Scene. A huddled gang of disaffected process Echo to each other in a visual cryptoelect, hoping to obscure their communication from outsiders and the evolving recognition algorithms of Panopticon. Panic from the Stock Exchange ripples through the crowd, flashing alert-red notifications as the market undergoes one of it's routine crashes.

Resources. Direct access to the premiere information hub of World. An endless crowd of easy marks, and easier getaways via Shadowbank. Close friends, and echo-spoofed apartments.

Threats. Inescapable and ubiquitous surveillance, including from independent information brokers hustling for juicy data to sell on the InfoX. Suited pit bosses from the WCB on the lookout for counter-market activities. Market predators performing a hostile takeover and "recapitalizing your assets," which is about twice as invasive and dehumanizing as it sounds.

Notables

Kaolus Wulf. Freewheeling speculator buried in debt from dangerously overextending on a "sure thing" stock short. Wulf stays perpetually one feverish deal ahead of debtors threatening him with a multi-iteration stint on the Stack. Eager to expand into 'aggressive acquisitions' and other dubiously-legal growth markets. (*Amoral, Calculating*)

Thr4ex. A recent addition to Mute City's charged climate, Thr4ex is a mass-derezzing psychopath of a daemon which can impersonate any user's avatar almost perfectly. It seems to obey a strict code of conduct and will spare anyone canny enough to see through it's disguises. It is unclear how it has evaded Moderator detection thus far. (*Daemon, Cultured, Gleeful*)

Yvritte. An Architect of World-renown, who has taken to using Mute City as a personal playground for her civic experiments. Dwells at the center of Panopticon, monitoring the results of every subtle change in terrain, utilities, and transit systems. Well-connected by virtue of upper-crust Moderator networking. (*Analytical, Egotistical*)

World Central Bank (WCB)		Faction Clocks
The WCB is the credit rating and economic regulatory agency as well as prime lender of World. Physical security is airtight, and even if it wasn't, the Bank is much too big to ever fail.	Bubble the Market / Crash the Market (alternating)	6
	Lobby against moderator regulations	10

Turf: The **Central Bank** (HQ), fortified against any conceivable form of attack, whether physical or economic. The Sirian Stock Exchange. Branches and transaction kiosks across World. Your pocketbook.

NPCs: **Alhani Imortu Egala** (Chief Finance Officer, *cold, fearsome*). **Runita Trench** (Regulatory Inspection head officer, *corrupt, insightful*). **E-Dak** (pit boss, *ambitious, fierce*).

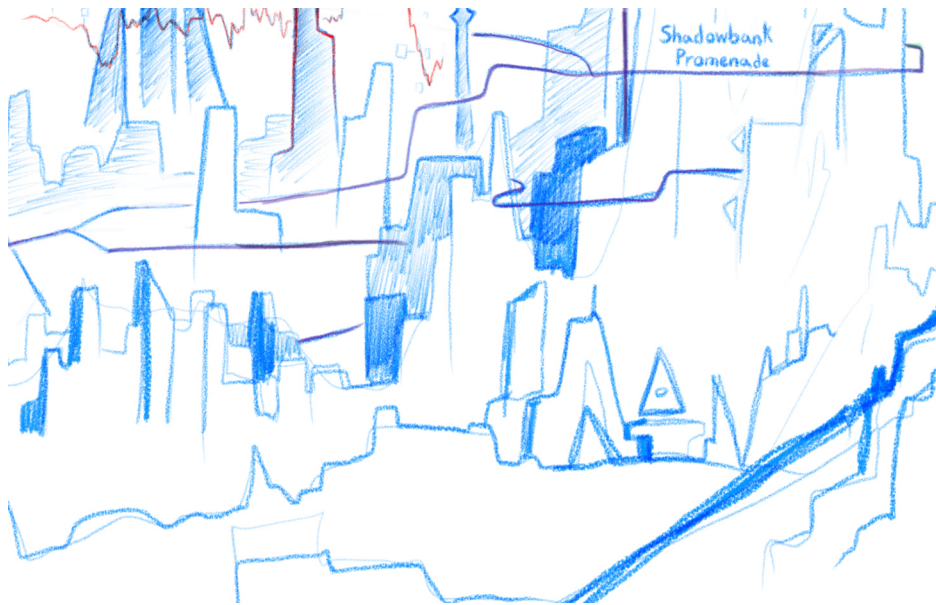
Allies: The Family, Troubleshooters. **Enemies:** Administration, The Minor Arcana, Neuroplast Construction Co.

Notes: Much of the Coin earned by Users (and nearly all of it by Process) passes through these over-wrought doors. Despite their vast economic power and apparent good graces with the Administration, the WCB has recently come under threat of regulation due to a new wave of activist moderators who want to see market power curtailed and a more stable economic guarantee for World's populace. Staving off oversight will soon be a key problem. In response, the WCB has been deliberately keeping market volatility high in order to maintain the loyalty of Sirius' rabid userbase of stock speculators... hoping to maintain grassroots pressure on the Administration from below.

bass city

Bass City is regulated by the Family thanks to a truce with the Administration. Scores against daemons or their economic interests here take -2 **Heat** but the GM resolves an **additional Entanglement** for the crew running afoul of organized criminal interests.

data structure stable [●●●●] chaotic
 server traffic global [●●●●] local
 monitoring security [●●●●] freedom
 goods & memories volume [●●●●] value



Landmarks

Kamidana. The first colonizers of World discovered that, like a salt circle, daemons cannot willingly cross certain data thresholds. What started as a project to contain and research World's willful natives has become a monument to their adaptability. Shadowy, guttural mob bosses run the underworld from within this maze of sliding doors and interleaved hallways. They are outwardly quite polite, but the shimmering creatures in their tightly-pressed suits and folded fabrics seem to chafe madly against the restraints of genteel society.

Lockstep Promenade. The vaulted chasms of Bass City were difficult to traverse even in the best of conditions. As Sirius grew upward, the foundations of its great towers swelled and blocked off old causeways, ruining the horizontal topography of the lower city. Lockstep Promenade is the solution: a network of magnetic rails that run up, down, and along the ceilings of subterranean arches and bulkheads. Take one step onto the promenade, and World will reorient itself to your new trajectory.

Nightwall Market. World's predominant red light district, Nightwall is a buzzing hive of illicit wares and services, buttressed between the monolithic pillars that hold up the highest peaks of the Sirian skyline. One of Nightwall's biggest industries is aftermarket process customization, where wealthy users come to outfit their servants and wards with illegal physical or mental modifications.

The Procession. The manufacture of process is a tightly regulated system, nigh-uncrackable thanks to massively redundant security and the threat of it's looming Administrator. Few Users have seen the assembly lines and molds that craft the 'end product', nor the banks of terminals that monitor data piped in directly from Panopticon. Old, recalled Process are summoned into massive queues to await their fate, while new batches are calibrated precisely to adhere to trending variables in appearance, fashion, and temperament.

Bass City was not always the reverberating foundation of Arcadia, but if the district had another name it is lost to the Archives. Even the posh residents of Echo enjoy 'slumming it' in the depths from time to time, their modded swoops and stretch-hovers spilling fluorescent light over darkened alley canyons. They bring their business to the black markets of Sirius and are eagerly received by Bass City's locals, exotic entities long since acclimated to the gloom.



Details

Scene. Looming superstructures emerge from the black without warning. Loud, aggressive colors bathe the shadows in blinding neon. Ancient displays and hijacked power conduits advertise strange products in alien languages. Furtive inhabitants scurry along the dizzying surfaces of Lockstep to hidden parlors and emporiums.

Resources. Illegal wares in open display: heavy ordnance, computation-altering substances, hazardous glitch-containment canisters, untested process modifications. A congregation of underworld connections from every server.

Threats. Losing your way to the endless night. Encountering a truly malicious Daemon in an unregulated space. Testing faulty merchandise. Getting in deep with the loan sharks, who are sometimes also actual sharks.

Notables

Akuma Tai. The most dangerous user in World, depending on who you ask. Akuma is the final word in blood-debt enforcement for the daemonic underworld, known for falling into a red-eyed precognitive fugue when at work thanks to 'gifts' from his diabolic patrons. (*Addicted, Deadly*)

3.n.0.c.h. "The Assembler." A fractal structure of manipulator arms plucking at gossamer strands, distant chiming from scores of unseen bells. Holds the title "Demurge of Flesh" thanks to its eternal task: shepherding the input/output flows of The Procession. (*Administrator, Creative, Precise*)

Obelisk. Factor and majordomo for a subset of daemon clades in Kamidana. Holds the tally of users enrolled in "Rootkit", an inner circle of subscribers to the hidden ways and paths of Daemons that run behind the visible structure of World. Rootkit credentials are eye-wateringly expensive and failure to make a payment will result in enforced memory-loss as Obelisk uninstalls your privileges with a highly personal touch. (*Daemon, Informed, Tormented*)

The Family	Faction Clocks
A daemonic enterprise organized around blood-ties and debtor fealties. The Family achieved legitimacy with a peace accord that spared them the Administration's wrath in a forgotten epoch.	Dominate a rebelling daemon lord 8
	Obtain leverage over Moderators 12

Turf: Kamidana, a fractal prison of shadow and light where the bosses of the Family meet to plot and double-cross. At the heart of Kamidana lies a portal to the Abyss (HQ), a place outside of World's servers where new daemons are created and lesser daemons sent for punishment.

NPCs: **M4mm0n** (mob boss, *craggy, covetous, patient*). **Ja3lzibeth** (mob boss, *calculating, fiery, treasonous*). **Glakk** (porter, *pathetic, wheedling*). **M0rt1mer** (legal counsel and daemon-at-law, *insightful, slimy*).

Significant Assets: Open contracts with the finest bounty hunters, repossession experts, and fixers in Sirius.

Allies: Troubleshooters, EVIL Inc. **Enemies:** Administration, Daemons who reject their authority.

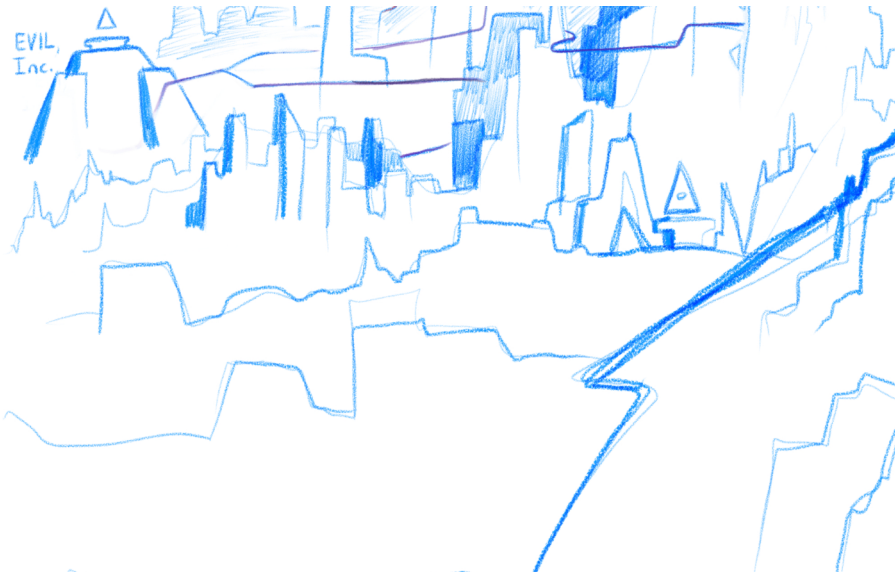
Notes: The Family does not represent all daemons: their supposed authority is a carefully-crafted mask that conceals numerous disputes. However this facade is convenient for the Administration which sees the Family as the closest thing available to a central daemonic 'authority' that can be negotiated with (or scapegoated)... and the Family is equally eager to maintain the illusion to prop up their own tenuous legitimacy. A shadow war between the Family and a loose coalition of rebellious daemon clades is brewing.

the fade

You can take **+1d to Acquire Asset** by raiding the endless storefronts lost to the Fade, at a cost of **1 stress** from navigating this soulless commercial wasteland.

data structure
 stable [● ● ● ●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [■ ● ● ●] freedom

server traffic
 global [● ● ● ●] local
goods & memories
 volume [■ ■ ■ ●] value



Landmarks

Grand Central Terminal. Art nouveau decorations, cathedral-like waiting spaces, and security scan checkpoints enclose a dormant Port larger than seen anywhere else in World. A small handful of Process still tend the Terminal, holding open information centers (that lack useful information) and baggage claim carousels (that hold no baggage) amid rows of shuttered 'duty-free' stores. The purpose is unknown, as none of the destinations advertised by the ticket counters seem to exist.

The Mall. The Mall is the manifestation of a particularly-dense data substrate in Old Arcadia. It speaks to unfulfilled desires, forgotten product lines, naked avarice. It is run-down, decrepit, emptied of meaning. It could exist anywhere, and so it chose to exist nowhere. Escape is difficult, landmarks are unreliable.

The Beltway and Intraserver-665. Roads that exist only for their own sake, cutting underneath, above, and through the spaces of the Fade like a tangled spaghetti can. At the flickering boundary references of Sirius the paved surface contorts and twists, buckling against the physical limitations of World as though it's intentions lie somewhere beyond the perimeter. Carefree Users sometimes careen through the Beltway, looking for shortcuts to destinations in New Arcadia or else to simply lose their worries in the desolate wash of passing lights.

Disorganized data clusters in Sirius take the form of endless clicks of liminal commercial spaces: in-patient waiting rooms, empty lifeless malls, featureless corporate interiors carpeted in off-yellow, silent transit terminals, all leading nowhere or folding back upon themselves. Daemons form exile communities here outside the margins of the populous cityscape. You can find anything in the Fade, they say, if you're willing to lose yourself in the process.

Details

Scene. A cavernous pearly-white mall commons, partially flooded. This is the same escalator you took twenty cycles ago. A distorted recording of an ancient public service announcement briefly interrupts the distant strains of flavorless nu-jazz corporate muzak. Interior of an office complex, walls stained with an unidentifiable dark fluid.

Resources. All of yesterday's consumable goods and disposable lifestyle choices, invitingly free. Prototype weapons of destruction and process goon squads outfitted by EVIL, Inc.

Threats. Finding your way home through the strange, gummy webbing that entangles dense clusters of vacant storefronts. Advertising billboards in eery shopping plazas which know exactly what it is you seek before you realize it, always offering unbeatable deals. The Janitor.

Notables

Ch4r10tte. A pleasant spider-like daemon matriarch who oversees a cheerful web-village community in the vaulted rafters of a warehouse. Does not wish for you to stay here forever in a crystal cocoon to slowly drain your avatar of memories. Will not send a scuttling tide of her children to immobilize you and put you in a crystal cocoon. Just wants to talk, perhaps over tea. You like lavender, yes? (*Daemon, Friendly, Insightful*)

Dan Shelman. Apparently the only middle manager employed at EVIL, Inc. Dan Shelman from Marketing will send you to see Dan Shelman working Travel Claims to fill out the expense report that Dan Shelman in Accounting gave you. Never seen in the same room as himself. Betrays no unease with his apparently infinite work arrangement and holds few opinions aside from a frantic insistence that no one ever attempt to visit EVIL's secretive leadership. (*Bland, Secretive*)

The Janitor. An uncategorizable entity that stalks the Fade, cleaning eternally. Whether he is a function of World's baseline code is unknown, but he is unique to Sirius. When he is cleaning, he cannot be disrupted or slowed in any way and will mulch anything in his path. When he is not cleaning he's fine enough to be around, if a little 'flat' in personality. (*Affable, Inexorable*)

EVIL, Inc.	Faction Clocks
<i>The only surviving business from a previous, heavily-incorporated variation of World. Successive waves of mergers and acquisitions have turned EVIL into a twisted labyrinth of economic concerns.</i>	Develop a "new" (faulty) superweapon 8 Unveil marketing campaign 12

Turf: *The Pyramid* (HQ). Call centers and fulfillment hubs filled with listless process scattered through the Fade.

NPCs: **Dan Shelman** (*bland, secretive*). **Dan Shelman** (*bland, secretive*). **Dan Shelman** (*bland, secretive*).

Significant Assets: Kill-bots, weather control rays, and middle-management solutions for would-be dictators.

Allies: The Family. **Enemies:** Administration, Troubleshooters.

Notes: EVIL was thankfully defeated long ago. In an age predating most living memories, the ancient megacorporations that tried to divvy up Sirius were rejected by the users of World and have mostly died out. The only remnant of that era is this sad shell of a super-villainous consortium, an artifact of the unsuccessful attempt to get users to put their loyalties in the legal fiction of Limited Liability Corporations. Still, EVIL has its pride, and it continues to eagerly look for patrons to fill the empty void of eternity with orders from its massive back-catalogue of failed doomsday weapons.

Argos

ARGOS was the old-town of World's servers. It is sometimes referred to as "Old Arcadia" in order to distinguish from Sirius, the new city. Argos appealed to Users who desired the feel of hand-wrought things, or the fantasy of living in an early-industrial city from a long-forgotten place before World. Argos is undergoing an indefinite defragmentation cycle, and the Administration does not answer questions about when it is scheduled to be back online.

Known as **Arcadians**, those Users who were forced to undergo the diaspora from Argos are now said to be **observant** to changes of fortune and poor omens, **mysterious** in their ways and presentation, and **subtle** in their dealings. If they maintain semblances of Old Arcadian culture, by and large many have chosen to keep it to themselves. Few ever speak about the circumstances that resulted in Argos coming off-line.

Argos has a Wharf district, a bustling Market Street, tidy and pleasant Row Houses, and a host of other quaint features along winding cobbled streets and gas-lit lamps. But now, large portions of it have become a morass of churning data, and legal access to the server is only available members of the Administration on official business.

argos environmental features

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Street Name	Hope Street — Firststone	Lamp Street — Market Square	Charter Way — Darkstone	Forg#* L^ne — The Narrows	<ERR//nan> — Quill Lane	a blank street sign
Denizen	a listless shade	<i>echoed crowds, lost in time</i>	nobody at all	a shiver in the simulation	the Woman in Gold	a shade with your face
Mood	Empty — Forgotten	Churning — Unstable	Grinding — Shifting	Rippling — Alive	Glitching — Hostile	Unsettling — Paralogical
Detail	Anachronistic Brickworks	Neat Rowhouses	Trampled Mementoes	Piles of Strewn Luggage	Wrought-Iron Fencing	Missing Textures
Outdoor Location	<i>Market Square Co-op</i>	<i>South Hook Shipping Co.</i>	Dark Channels	Cobblestone Bridge	Folded Buildings	Disintegrating Streets
Indoor Location	<i>The Shore Party</i>	<i>The Lodge</i>	<i>Hart & Hare Public House</i>	Customs Checkpoint	Collapsing Warehouse	A Featureless Cube

argos whispered echoes

1	"Go ahead, open it! Don't you love it? Just like you always said you wanted." "Wanted this, wanted this... never..."
2	"You ever notice that street before? No, that one." "Lived here a thousand cycles, never once seen that street..."
3	"I want an Overwriter team on this block. Scrub everything." "No. Erase it. We can't have a panic. Tell them it was an anomaly."
4	"Hey friend, have you got a tick—ah, rude. Hello, do you have a spare ticket? No no, I can pay..." "Got my ticket, got my ticket, got my ticket..."
5	"She knows, and she's chosen to stay. Tell her I ..." "She knew, she knew, she knew..."
6	"Last boat off Argos! Last call for boarding! ... No sir, that ticket will not..." "CQD all stations this is SALVATION. Last position fix: Four Alpha Niner, 800 souls onboard, CQD..."

mementos and keepsakes

	The Object	The Markings	The Archival Record
1	A palm-sized wooden horse, stained dark chestnut	"For J from Alice"	Ash and bronze, a memory of the forge
2	A tobacco pipe, damaged by trampling	Maker's symbol, faded	The object's timeline is scrubbed clean, suggesting foul play may have been involved
3	A pocketbook with a golden clasp	A mercantile family's heraldry	Guarded by an anti-theft subroutine which unfolds like a fractal stinging nettle when <i>restored</i> to cause damage (as a function consequence)
4	A studded collar with a comically-large bell on it	"What is so delicate it breaks upon hearing it's name?"	Appears to have belonged to an infamous viral cat, lover of riddles
5	A brass pocket watch with a lion etching	"10.16.xx"	Constant manipulation, fixtures worn down by the fidgeting of a nervous hand
6	A 5 piece sea-foam green suitcase set, abandoned	"Sorry about everything"	Arguments and hurt feelings, a mutually-broken promise tearing us apart

On the "mementos" table you can either roll once and use the entire row (each row has a cohesive theme), or roll for each feature to assemble a composite encounter.

the wharves

The wharf district is subject to a phenomenon called "temporal drift": up to once per downtime, one character can take an additional downtime action at a cost of **2 rep** (instead of paying 1 coin as normal).

data structure

stable [● ● ● ●)chaotic

monitoring

security [● ● ● ●)freedom

server traffic

global [● ● ● ●)local

goods & memories

volume [● ● ● ●)value

Landmarks

The Narrows. This jumble of old brickwork buildings and repurposed storehouses has been fashioned into a cozy neighborhood of row houses peppered with vintage stores and eateries. The sharp proximity of buildings within this maze appears to be a result of some kind of geography-shifting event: the streets show signs of tectonic stress and the archival record holds a much more historically-open street plan.

South Hook Shipping Headquarters. An emptied-out nexus of bureaucracy nestled among empty warehouses. The mountainous piles of shipping manifests lack any understandable references to origins, destinations, or cargo. Instead, it is all densely-abbreviated jargon in obtuse formats.

The Wharves are an enigma to modern users. To be clear, there are no other destinations anywhere within Argos that could reciprocate the gross shipping capacity on display here. And just like any other server Argos has Ports which (pre-lockdown) offered rapid transit across World. So, where do the giant tankers come from? And where was all of this bulk shipping once sent? The official records are scrambled, the subject considered verboten among distinguished historians of World... though plenty of cranks and influencers have their own opinions they are happy to tell you about.

Details

Scene. The distant echo of a sea shanty carried on the breeze.

Helios

Helios is the seat of the Administration, and it is a perfect reflection of the values of the ruling clade: spotlessly anodyne, dazzlingly massive, and oppressively impersonal. The public places of Helios do not appear to have been designed with the physical dimensions of users in mind, and such plants and structures as are cultivated do not take shapes that can be easily parsed by most users.

Still, there is life and culture here, brought by the **Solar** who are the only users comfortably able to inhabit Helios. Among their number are moderators, architects, and other prestigious elites who are allowed access to the shimmering lanes and fractal gardens of this place. The most powerful factions of the simulation (whoever those are currently) are given leave to stake turf in Helios with outposts and consulates, though they are held constantly at arm's length by the permanent Administration. The inhabitants of Helios mostly see these representatives from the 'lower' servers as a nuisance: symptoms of the fleeting turbulence of political life in World.

You see, when it comes to power over World only the Administration is truly immortal.

helios environmental features

	1/2	3/4	5/6
Street Name	The Substrate Via.0028593	Silver Circuit Platinum Way	Central Promenade Set [0,0]
Denizen	A pair of conversing Architects	Tier 5 faction enforcers	An Administrator, monitoring
Mood	Frigid — Empirical	Shimmering — Overclocked	Alien — Unsettling
Location	The Stack	Central Processing	Memory Controller Hub
Details	Rearranging Surfaces	Doppler-shifted architecture	Crystalline Flora

central

Most engagement rolls suffer **-2d** due to heavy administrator presence and the difficulties of information-gathering. Operations against the Administration accrue an additional **+2 heat**.

data structure
 stable [●●●●] chaotic
monitoring
 security [●●●●] freedom

server traffic
 global [●●●●] local
goods & memories
 volume [●●●●] value

Landmarks

Central Processing. The base of the Stack terminates here, under the watchful gaze of the current Executor (a rotating assignment among various Administrators). The Executor monitors the Stack for abnormalities while inducts reiterated users back to World. When need arises, the Executor also oversees interviews with users on the stack (usually initiated by Moderator request, or elevated from a Troubleshooter incident report). The current Executor rotates according to a fathomless schedule.

adminastrators in rotation for role of executor

1-2	Kuan Yin	Manifests as an elevated stone fountain whose streams spill through an intricate maze of troughs and water wheels, calculating the passage of time and triggering obscure mechanisms. Expresses itself just as often through bubbling or weeping vocalizations as speech. Compassionate, quick to forgive, nearly always sides with users that can tell a sympathetic story.
3-4	Azur.a	A sphinx-like chimera who rests imperiously on a stone plinth, one claw rapidly tapping beads around on a massive silver abacus. Typically distracted, but shrewd but decisive. Expresses boredom at traditional punishments, will instead suggest restorative justice arrangements or may simply demand entertainments. Patronized by viral cats, who may be seen leaving her gifts.
5-6	Ph.4nu3l	The gardener, patron of World's plants and obsessed with the act of pruning. A blazing sword plunged into a gnarled, shrieking tree around which burning pages swirl. Judgemental and abrasive, has little interest in user affairs. A rigid legal textualist which does not believe in second chances, and has no indoor voice.

Command Line Hall. Administration holds a few key tenets sacred: 1st, to preserve World and 2nd, to protect the Users (from themselves, if needed). These overriding priorities are etched onto the infinitely-high walls of a monstrous hall, the final missives of the Command Line. One might expect this to be a place of worship or activity, but it is instead an unlit cathedral that thrums with the oppressive silence of eternal readiness. When the gates closed and users stopped arriving in World, the command line stood in waiting to receive new programming. No new entries have ever been recorded. There is a persistent rumor that a hidden emergency method exists to write directly onto the command line from inside World's simulation, but if it exists it has never been discovered.

The seat of the Administration and a region of polarizing temperature extremes and inscrutable geography. Even those users most acclimated to Helios find the Motherboard to be a little intense for their tastes.

Notables

Commissioner Tanis. A fresh-faced civil servant with a heart of gold, elevated by popular vote. Charismatic and logical, but naive and susceptible to backroom politics. Compromised by his on-again, off-again relationship with Queen of Wands: a criminal confidence artist known to prey on high society users in Sirius. (*Optimistic, Intelligent*)

Constable Sysk. A former Troubleshooter door-kicker who cut her teeth in Vice, then rose through the ranks to end up on the moderation team. Incorruptible and street-savvy, but chafes against regulations and maintains problematic connections with daemonic contacts. Promoted out of her element: she still craves the rush of field work. (*Bold, Flirty*)

Architect Metera. A sociologist whose dissertations on civic behavioral functions in relation to public space design propelled her into moderation. Aloof and enigmatic, she harbors repressed memories of her past in Argos, and fears what will happen if that server collapses. Holds numerous junior moderators under her influence. (*Manipulative, Thoughtful*)

Superior Court of Helios		Faction Clocks
<i>The laws of World are extremely permissive... at least if you're a user. But infractions against the stability of the servers or repeat offenses against the rights of other users must see justice.</i>		Hold court 8

Turf: The Superior Court (HQ), a baroque structure shielded against the temperature extremes of the server.

NPCs: Chief Magistrate Migsala (*cautious, shrewd*). Justice Anya (*perceptive, lenient*), Justice Black (*indecisive, quiet*), Justice Malus (*cruel, rigid*), Justice Overton (*centrist, long-winded*).

Allies: Administration, Troubleshooters. **Enemies:** Overwriters, Phlegethon Productions.

Notes: The Superior Court recently resolved a controversial case (*Kiyoshi v. Administration*) which opens the door to future legal protections for process, even though it did not explicitly make process "citizens of World" (currently only users are considered "citizens," a legal status that confers considerable rights and privileges). The decision both does not go far enough for process rights activists, and goes much too far for many traditionalist scholars (including in a dissent by Justice Malus and the Chief Magistrate). A group of legalists displeased by the decision are looking for a test case to bring to the Court which would distinguish and minimize the effects of *Kiyoshi* before it becomes established law. Meanwhile, activists in the wake of *Kiyoshi* are beginning to question the Court's long-standing legal history of excluding daemons from legal cognizance.

factions

faction overview

The following pages feature a selection of factions that can be used to populate your campaign. Factions in *Hello, World* have differing membership, qualities, assets, and goals depending on what **Tier** they are presently at. World is a highly fluid society and the GM can use the downtime **Faction Turmoil** rules to create a relatively rapid turnover of leadership in servers. Each of the factions on the following pages are given variations that describe them at **Tier 1** (fragile and newly-established), **Tier 3** (a dominant concern in their server), and **Tier 5** (enacting their full will upon World). The descriptions are *additive*: at Tier 3 a faction also still has all of the members and assets described for it's Tier 1 form.

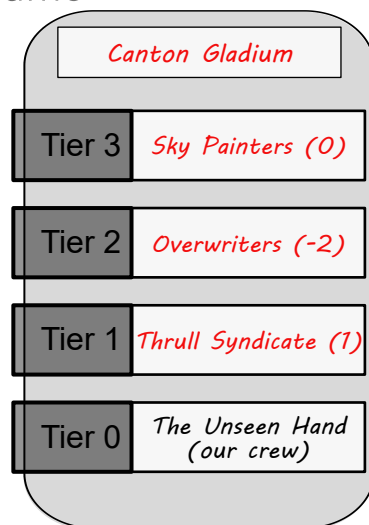
Factions at **Tier 2** or **Tier 4** can be described as an integration of the two closest tiers on their entry into a fusion. Perhaps a Tier 4 faction resembles it's Tier 3 version, but it has already achieved one of the Tier 3 Faction Goals and is actively acquiring the resources or assets described in their Tier 5 iteration. Arriving at Helios (ie. Tier 4 and especially Tier 5) is a *big deal*. Tell the players how World changes to accommodate it's new (temporary) masters. *What's newly fashionable now? What's "so last cycle"?*

What becomes of all the 'stuff' described in a faction that has not yet achieved the Tier to 'unlock' it? This is a question that can have a lot of creative answers. World procedurally generates Process for a faction based on their current influence, allotting more resources to factions with higher status. Assets might be undiscovered and waiting in the Archives for someone to *restore* them to existence. For users belonging to a faction, perhaps they are not yet at the full power and position in their description, somewhere on the Stack, presently-unaffiliated, or away on a distant mission.

when you are first starting a game

If you're preparing for your first game, find a faction or three on the following pages that interest you, and read a little about them so you will be able to find appropriate points to slot them in: the crew creation rules will tell you when to do this. Don't plan out a story! The story is something you'll discover alongside the rest of the players.

The faction pyramid in the handouts for *Hello, World* has spaces for you to write your own labels in for just the locations you want to focus on in your campaign (as seen to the right). You can narrow your focus down to individual Districts, or even Streets within a server! Set the scope of the game that you want to play.



using the faction pyramid

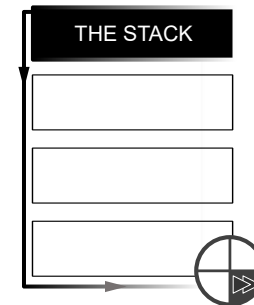
The faction pyramid isn't something you set in stone in session 1 and then leave alone. Remember, the *player crew* will also be written in on that page! When they (or an NPC faction) changes in Tier or moves somewhere, make the appropriate changes on your faction map. I like to also write in the Faction Status number in parentheses next to each NPC faction so we can see at a glance who is allied with the crew, and who is an adversary. Write in the features of your World with a pencil, and edit all the time as things change.

Portray a World where all the valuable real estate, media attention, and social currency has already been claimed. Note that you shouldn't feel the need to pencil a faction into *every slot* right away, you can give it time to breathe.

For example, you may consider making one of the locations a 'marginal' space... every server has a wilderness page spread detailing the unformatted wastes surrounding the areas of user civilization for this very reason. These places are, of course, actually teeming with life and entities of all kinds, they are simply playing a different kind of game to the users pursuing power in the centralized structure of World's hierarchy.

the stack

This tool in the top-right of the faction pyramid handout is meant to be used to track NPCs (and even entire Factions!) which have been deresolved by player action or distant conflict. Fill their names in from bottom to top, and mark a segment of the 4-clock printed here when prompted in downtime. When the clock fills, or when the stack overflows, release the bottom-most inhabitant back into World.



The Stack is the holding pattern of immortality in World, but it's not always a perfect vacation. When a character or faction comes off the Stack, take time to ask yourself what changed for them during their exile. You can *Consult the AI* on page 152 for help and story advice!

faction authority clocks

NPC factions can wield Authority too! These do not look much different from ordinary long-term faction goals that you might establish, but when they resolve they imply much more instant and immediate effects that will change a major part of World.

Give the players ample opportunity to stop, slow, or subvert them. Spread rumors! Make the last-minute stopping of a dangerous Authority clock a Score, as the enemy's doomsday weapon, profane ritual, or wellspring of power gathers energy to unleash.

In terms of ballpark math: the Magnitude of a faction's intended Authority function should generally not exceed **three times their Tier**.



Tsuruga KILLS the Society's HQ

The Tsuruga Clan is a Tier 3 faction. The GM sets out a downtime clock that the Clan is advancing to damage an adversary (another NPC faction). When they complete their preparations by filling the clock, the Magnitude they wield for the Kill command to destroy the HQ of their adversary should be no higher than 9... this may mean they will have to get very close in **Range** to enact their grim will, or make other strategic compromises.

factions administration

ARC Foundation

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Explorator **Lith** (*enviro-sealed, inquisitive, doomed*) launches expeditions through **The Office** (HQ, *aware, logical*), a dormant brutalist slab of a home complex which seeks its own answers and sporadically guides staff via subtle means.

Explore an Office department (repeating) 6

Tier 3: Director **Stone** (*glitch-scarred, haunted, secretive*) is appointed by Administrative mandate to reactivate ARC and contain Glitch outbreaks. Contact & Disposal ("C&D") teams of disposable Process seeking and isolating Glitch for study. Experimental Research is unlocked, freeing the Head of Research **Dr. Moss** (*brilliant, distracted*).

Contain a Glitch Outbreak 8

Unlock a quarantined section of The Office 6

Tier 5: The hunt for answers leads ARC's leadership to the **First Specimen** (*glitching, hostile*) buried deep in the broken Containment Vaults. The Office is infected by contact, turning into a realm of madness.

Pull strings for new data purity laws 8

Allies: Administrators, Phlegethon Productions

Enemies: Overwriters

Notes: ARC is technically short for "Anomaly Research & Containment" but that's not very well advertised, prefers a long leash and minimal public visibility. The precursor to ARC was founded long ago to study the stability of World's servers and predict external threats, but the Foundation has lain dormant for kilocycles until very recently. The surge in sightings of Glitch on the edges of servers has deeply worried the Administration. ARC is racing the clock to seek clues as to what is causing the Glitch outbreaks and devise containment strategies, even as they struggle with organizational inertia and unlock horrific internal mysteries in their own secretive history...

Archive Academy

Faction Goals

Tier 1: A boarding school of misfit "pledges" (newly-reiterated Users emulating teenage forms) with far too little supervision. An anemic school board run by **Professor Moorcroft** (*ancient, arcane, eccentric*). The mysterious "Key to the Archives" hidden somewhere on school grounds.

A semester of madcap hijinks 6

Recruit Students 4

Tier 3: A full class roster prompts the re-inauguration of the Grand Academy Cup. The student body conflict spills out into the server at large, and recovered artifacts are wielded with total disregard for public safety.

Grand Cup battle in Archives 8

Acquire a **Seal** (repeating) 6

Tier 5: A student chosen by fate (and the school board) rises up from one of the four Houses and quests for the *Six Seals* that control full Archive access. They unite the Academy in an effort to initiate a global restoration of World to a baseline back-up.

Use the **Sixth Seal** to re-Format World to the Academy back up 12

Allies: Overwriters, Phlegethon Productions.

Enemies: Administration, Adventurer's Guild.

Notes: The **Archival Schoolhouse** (HQ) is constructed over a dormant backup iteration of World, sealed by lethal puzzles. Pursuit of the Academies' **Tier 5 goals** will put them in direct conflict with Administration, which is withholding a secret about the true nature of the Academy's backup. Though the Academy is likely to fail as it always has before, the board of trustees is patient. They are content to wait for another student of prophecy to arise in the next generation...

The four branches of the Academy which pledges are selected to during their first semester are:

House Eclipse, led by **Sworn To Ammun** (*charismatic cultist*),
House Comet, led by **Sazil Ergon** (*reckless Magball jock*),
House Radiance, led by **Pria Laiss** (*ruthless clique-leader*), and
House Void led by **Oridia the Empty** (*calculating chessmaster*).

All House leaders are young, dumb, gifted with excessive authority, and seeking competitive edges.

Overwriters

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Solitary masked hunters [ex. **Acra Shorn** (*determined, resourceful*)] guarding secret techniques for full-data erasure, effectively forced to act as vigilantes due to Troubleshooter interference. Seeker daemons (*arcane senses, arrow-quick*) for flushing out shades and contraband.

Hunt a Shade (repeating) 4

Initiate new Overwriters 8

Tier 3: Customs checkpoints across the server and a floating ops center trawling above districts, performing deep scans for signs of Glitch and unlawful data activities. A sophisticated vox crystal network coordinated by sysop **Lens** (*analytical, ambitious, vain*).

Sweep a District for contraband 6

Relocate Ops Center (repeating) 4

Tier 4*: Heavily-armed specialist teams [ex. squad leader **Morthane V** (*glitch-scarred, hair-trigger, uncompromising*)] tracing World for infringement of data purity laws. A processing facility with stockpiles of illicit memories/process slated for destruction.

Pull strings for new data purity laws 8

Allies: Administrators, Archive Academy.

Enemies: Adventurer's Guild, ARC Foundation, Cult of Static, The Directory, Temple of Unresolution.

Notes: Overwriters are above the law and jealously guard ancient permissions for usage of the *Kill* command. Their sanction permits them to only use *Kill* to wipe infected data clusters that hog World's resources or violate contraband laws, and they take this job seriously. One of their hardest targets are Shades, forked shadow clones of users that occasionally are left behind after incomplete deresolutions. Shades tend to resist destruction and go into hiding, assisted by their dislocation from the timeline, World's activity and traffic logging system which operates in parallel with the Archives.

*Unless something drastic changes in their leadership and belief structure, the Overwriters will **refuse any opportunity to advance to Tier 5**. If they exceed their mandate and seek political power they would be summarily stripped of their command-line permissions and legal exceptions by the Administration.

Troubleshooters ("Precinct 42")

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Small street patrols of Process, one overworked plainclothes investigator: **Detective Harlan** (*cold, shrewd, corrupt?*), deference and graft paid up to local Syndicate. Evidence lockers and a burgeoning protection racket.

Procure better arms and equipment 6

Hire informants 8

Tier 3: Armored patrol bolt-cars, STRIKE teams led by **Sergeant Slee** (*armored, mocking, vicious*), planted evidence & sting operations against local non-Infrastructure factions that don't pay up.

Execute sting operation 8

Raid an enemy/Syndicate 6

Tier 5: Helios in the pocket of **Commissioner Wallace** (*arrogant, corrupt, connected*), extensive militarization, fortified HQ, routine district sweeps to 'clean up dirty servers', citizen outreach efforts to portray Troubleshooters as local heroes.

Public outreach campaign to clean up image 10

Sweep a Server 6

Allies: Administration, Moderators, The Family, the local highest-Tier Syndicate.

Enemies: Archive Academy, Cult of Static, all other Syndicate factions

Notes: This entry can form the template for multiple Troubleshooter precincts which may exist independent of each other, and they will all serve the same overarching goals even if minor rivalries exist. In the event one of them occupies **Tier 4** or **5**, that Precinct becomes the "Central Office" and all operations by lesser Troubleshooter branches receive **+1d** to Fortune rolls to advance Faction goals.

World's basecode dictates that only 1 Troubleshooter faction may be in Helios at a time. **When the reigning Troubleshooter faction is displaced from Helios**, immediately reduce **Tier** of every other Troubleshooter Precinct by **1** due to widespread public backlash.

factions_criminal

Adventurer's Guild

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Doomed teams of dungeon explorers getting derezzed in forgotten places. Barbarian **Mope** (*brutal, dim, tough*) and Cleric **Healbot** (Process, *buffers allies, fragile*). Recovered artifacts, mostly dubious value.

Raid ancient partitions (repeating)	4
-------------------------------------	---

Tier 3: Dragoon **Korrin Vayle** (*elegant, powerful, ruthless*) gathers a trove of forgotten relics from World's past, dabbles in protection racket. Ancient lore-memories leading to treasure-filled partitions. Arms and armor plundered from World's history. Bound lesser daemons.

Acquire artifacts	6
-------------------	---

Tier 5: Vast PvP zones are designated in each server, where heavily-armed Guild heroes with artifact weaponry prowl the streets provoking fights.

Discover Ortu's binding circle	8
---------------------------------------	---

The Seventh Sacrifice (*wielder, strange, haunted, obsessive*) seeks the release of the Daemon-Lord **Or7ul** (*ancient, glitched, sorcerous*) from its partition prison... supposedly for the great knowledge Or7ul holds.

Accidentally unleash proto-Daemon rampage	6
---	---

Heroically contain rampage	12
----------------------------	----

Allies: Bluelight Society

Enemies: Archive Academy, Overwriters, Troubleshooters

Notes: The Guild's membership bylaws, supposedly devoted to the good of World, have done little to reign in these morally-bankrupt vagrants. Adventurers often break into sealed "partitions" in order to plunder the lost wealth (and brave the slumbering dangers) within.

The Adventurers Guild's fixation on forbidden places outside of World's civilized network means they often stumble across artifacts. At any time their membership might (Fortune roll with **Tier**) manifest uncovered 'magic items' that grant them powerful advantages, or perhaps fizzle out or unleash dangerous powers beyond their control. See the rules for *Artifacts* on page xxx.

Bluelight Society

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Petty memory theft, a black market of unusual sensory experiences, and a small-time enforcer gang led by **Blaise** (*brutal, fiery, well-dressed*) nestled in a web of allegiance with memory-brokers and artifact hunters.

Run a pop-up black market	4
---------------------------	---

Tier 3: Elaborate catered social events headed by majordomo **Porfus Ordan** (Process, *discrete, formal*), extensive blackmail on peer factions in other servers. The **Bluelight Crown** is used to suppress rivals.

Hold a grand masquerade	6
-------------------------	---

Use Bluelight Crown on rival	10
-------------------------------------	----

Tier 5: Bluelight's leadership reveals itself: **Alureon** (*viral cat, enigmatic, terrifying*), **Delia** (*memory artist, obsessive, visionary*), **Kronos** (*daemon, cunning, ruthless*), **Iage** (*moderator, covetous, resentful*), **Malzahir** (*vice purveyor, manipulative, sophisticated*), **Vatista** (*enforcer process, quiet, weaponized*). They encourage cooperation at the threat of memory wipe.

'Restructuring' of Moderators	8
-------------------------------	---

Allies: Adventurer's Guild, Avatar Sculptors, Cult of Static, Troubleshooters

Enemies: Overwriters, Tsuruga Clan, Temple of Unresolution

Notes: The Bluelight Society's traffic in illicit goods and memories will eventually (**Tier 3+**) lead them to recovering the infamous artifact that is their namesake, the **Bluelight Crown**. The **Crown** purges memories and reduces the unwilling wearer to a catatonic shell (it is an artifact that causes a *Format* reset against the logic core those who wear it). Though the effects are not permanent, it is a fearsome deterrent.

If the Crown is used on a player, they must take time off to reconstruct their identity. Treat this as though a were a **Resolution Roll** on the "Computation" table, fixed at **1d**. The user must take a **Trauma**. Non-user players are immune to this effect, finding the Crown to be a profoundly-uncomfortable experience to wear but not much else.

The Directory

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Derezzers and cleaners for hire, reached by a rotary telephone that briefly appears on certain street corners at certain cycles. A whispered code word in the ear of an "innocent" user (ex. **Loupe**: *efficient, empty, resourceful*) triggers their programming: to destroy, or steal, or silence.

Execute a freelance job	6
-------------------------	---

Tier 3: Mole process are installed among Troubleshooters and other rivals to tamper with evidence and subvert operations that might threaten the Directory. A sleeper agent (**Orphan**: *deadly, perceptive, volatile*) goes rogue, forcing the agency's hand in order to limit exposure.

Infiltrate a faction or crew	6
------------------------------	---

Tier 5: Access to the logic pathways of Helios embeds Directory into World's heart, suborning funding and settling in the crevices of power.

Rogue operative strikes a Directory nerve center	8
--	---

The Recruiter (*ancient, paranoid*) seeks one final coup: retrograde mass amnesia by *Killing* every last memory of Directory's existence.

World is made to forget that the Directory ever existed	12
---	----

Allies: Cult of Static

Enemies: Administration, ARC Foundation, Overwriters

Notes: The Directory is a broken remnant of a forgotten shadow war. It is alleged that the founder(s) were never meant to exist here, having infiltrated World long ago back when users were still arriving. Now what remains of their insurgency is an espionage fever-dream: tradecraft and paranoia taken on a life of its own via a network of recursive switchboards, dead man's triggers, and subliminal logic bomb code phrasings.

Directory's field agents are always "innocents" - users who habitually discard their memories and live a short-term existence. Innocents are very hard to pin crimes on and do not suffer any of the effects of **Drift** that most other users do, but are also incapable of forming complex motivations and relationships. The Directory used ancient methods of deep memory implantation to indoctrinate these agents and seed them among World's populace. The Administration has never cracked their code, as Directory always cleans up the loose ends.

Tsuruga Clan

Faction Goals

Tier 1: A small band of rough breaker mercenaries and filcher cut-throats pledging their swords to the highest bidder. Their mobile bivouac, illuminated by nightly revels and tests of strength. **Tsuruga Isshin** (*analytical, taciturn, Soul Edge*) chases rumors of a mountain citadel lost in the mists.

Pursue Tsuruga Castle rumors	6
------------------------------	---

Tier 3: Fortified in **Castle Tsuruga** (HQ), the clan focuses inward on recovering lost secrets. **Ao Nohime** (*composed, subtle, Reflexes*) manages household affairs while living a double-life as an infiltrator sabotaging Clan enemies. The shades of Tsuruga Clan's derezzed heroes, serving even in 'death'.

Mercenary for another faction	4
-------------------------------	---

Delve beneath Castle Tsuruga	8
------------------------------	---

Infiltrate a faction	8
----------------------	---

Tier 5: A mighty host of Process warriors assembled by the Castle and led by Isshin's generals: **Tsuruga Naomori** (*boastful, hasty, powerful*) and **Musō Takauji** (*loyal, patient, skilled*). Masked assassins and informants everywhere.

initiate a new phase of military campaign	8
---	---

Allies: Avatar Sculptors, Temple of Unresolution, Sky Painters

Enemies: Bluelight Society

Notes: Castle Tsuruga is not *Compiled* or *Restored* by the Clan like most faction HQs but is a recurring architectural feature that is code-locked in World's terrain set, making it inevitable that it will iterate somewhere in every cycle whenever absent. This unusual characteristic is the foundation of Tsuruga's claim to dominance: when the Castle migrates to Helios, so too do the legitimate rulers of World.

Upon ascent to Helios, the Tsuruga Clan attempts to ally with, vassalize, or else eradicate the other factions there in preparation for the next phase. With Isshin installed at the head of a military junta, a campaign of conquest will be waged against the **Tier 3** faction leaders of each server. Isshin is canny and generally seeks to divide enemies with in-fighting and careful use of spies prior to direct action, but the clan as a whole favors bold maneuvers and personal combat to achieve swift resolutions.

Sky Painters

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Haunting luminescent graffiti splattered across the server. A small network of informants and rogue artists (ex. **Bluejay**: *eager, fearless*), mocking authorities and stirring up trouble on personal hoverboards.

"Vandalize" infrastructure 4

Tier 3: Mastery of secret aerial pathways and hidden roosts, enabling elaborate art capers and heists. A hoard of sophisticated *echo* painting gear and reagents... but most prized of all is a tattered duplicate of old Sky Painters Union bylaws. These treasures are maintained by **Owl** (*observant, subtle*) and wielded at command of **Finch** (*artistic, visionary*).

Stage a protest art exhibition 8

Tier 5: Despite broad public support and successful fundraising drives, the Administration refuses to renew the skypainting contract leaving the Union at a crossroads on how to proceed. Finch's leadership is challenged by **Wren** (*vengeful, haunted*), who has long preached that the Painters must take what is owed by force if persuasion fails.

Seize the *Format* keys from Administration to once again paint the sky... 10

...*Format* used for darker ends 6

Allies: Phlegethon Productions, Tsuruga Clan

Enemies: Administration, Overwriters

Notes: The Sky Painters were treasured artists in World, once. A stipulation of the ancient contract was that the Administration could record every skybox the old Painter's Union created. For iterations the price was considered worth the prize: exclusive access to the single greatest canvas that could ever be conceived, and the adoration of a grateful World-wide audience. But one cycle the backlog of recordings tipped over a turning point, and Administration began to just loop old skies. At that point no user's memory could stretch back long enough to realize they had ever seen the same clouds twice, and in an instant the Sky Painter Union's artifice was no longer needed. They disbanded long ago, and the current "Sky Painters" are a collective of disaffected statement artists and political malcontents with nebulous ties to the old Union.

factions_weird

Cult of Static

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Spaced-out cultists dosing on "Snow", a designer memory drug that creates thought-eradicating euphoric waves. The elusive **Deacon Kalix** (*cunning, persuasive, insane*) deals Snow and proselytizes to a fanatical contingent of faithful.

Hook new Users on Snow 4

Devise deadly new formula 8

Tier 3: Processions of cloaked aspirants march to the chanting of **Confessor Matteus** (*armored, fanatical, glitch-fire*). Subterranean headquarters hidden in forsaken partitions, at the heart of one lays a festering nexus of Glitch. Ritualistic cabals attempt to summon Glitch into being: they mostly fail.

Call forth the Glitch 10

Tier 5: Glitch Harbingers in the streets. Tendrils of **The Great Maw** (*ancient, mindless, ravenous*) burst through foundations, creep across the skyline. **Archbishop Thayen** (*gibbering, glitched, sorcerous*) preaches the end from a palanquin drawn by chained horrors.

Shatter World's Firewalls 12

Allies: Bluelight Society, The Directory

Enemies: Administration, Overwriters, Temple of Unresolution, Troubleshooters

Notes: The Cult's beliefs are antithetical to World's existence. **If the Cult grows in power to Tier 4**, Admins and Moderators will mobilize in force to try to contain their influence. **Temporarily modify the Chaos level by +1 (at Tier 5, +2 instead)** for as long as the Cult dwells in Helios: the harm and confusion they cause across World results in collateral damage for everyone. **If this would raise Chaos above 4**, resolve 1 extra Entanglement every downtime as World plummets toward anarchy and collapse.

Temple of Unresolution

Faction Goals

Tier 1: An enclave of meditation. Pamphlets on the banality of existence in World, calling for an ascetic lifestyle. Temple guards led by **Fourteen Waves Crashing** (*friendly, powerful, talkative*).

Attract followers (repeating) 4

Study hypnotic artifacts 8

Tier 3: Teachers in the "Art of Dying" lead prospects through empty mind rituals. Grand Master **Towering Pearl** (*discerning, subtle, transcended*) projects public echoes of their lucid dream, forever meditating on the margins of deresolution. Shades of the Unrezzed begin to congregate at temples throughout server. Works of art that slowly alter their owners.

Produce hypnotic artifacts 6

Gather Shades 8

Tier 5: Brainwashed aspirants (the "Unrezzed") take deresolution pacts across World, and the Stack becomes crowded as acolytes clog the feed and their unliving Shades outnumber the legitimate population. Crypto-sculptures with mind-altering programmatic properties are openly displayed in major server gathering spaces.

Pact of Unresolution creates new ghost district (repeating) 6

Allies: Tsuruga Clan

Enemies: Avatar Sculptors, Bluelight Society, Cult of Static, Overwriters

Notes: The Temple preaches a paradoxical logic fixating on Deresolution. Though initially harmless, their doctrine of self-negation is coded to propagate through methods of subliminal reprogramming of user minds. **Starting at Tier 3**, begin a 6-clock ("*Brainwashing*") for PCs who observe the Temple's hypnotic crypto-sculptures in their fullness.

Shades are ordinarily a mistake caused by a server-side deresolution error. However, a mental technique taught exclusively to the Temple's "Unrezzed" loyalists allows these users to voluntarily leave behind a Shade at their personal moment of deresolution, and to prevent any degradation of that Shade's user-tag. Since the Executor of the Stack is incapable of iterating a user dataset when an identical user-tag already exists anywhere in World, the subject becomes stuck on the Stack while their Shade roams freely. Shades are difficult to directly observe or track timestamps on, making them excellent spies.

factions_commercial

Isomorphic Mining Consortium

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Wilderness pioneer teams taking samples at valuable "Iso spikes" across the server. **Science Head Olivia Calcifer** (*brilliant, demanding, high-strung*) and her enterprising R&D department work on the recovery of lost MEMCrystal fabrication techniques.

Siphon Resources	4
Rediscover Iso-refining process	6

Tier 3: Iso cutting lasers, crystal refineries, and hazardous materials storage, housed in the mobile base camp "Alpha-1" (HQ). A corporate paramilitary squad led by **Team Lead Kruger** (*heavily-armed, ruthless, tenacious*) defends Alpha-1 and its remote extraction sites.

Extract local ISO and relocate Alpha-1 (repeating)	6
--	---

Tier 5: Private military regiments with autonomous combat walkers motivated by Rubric Cores enforce 'free trade' chains that exclusively benefit the IMC, strangling competition with an iron fist. A corporate nation-state under **Governor-General Hardinger** (*corrupt, heavy-handed*) controls vast swathes of territory, press-ganging Process labor and heedlessly exploiting mineral wealth.

Develop Rubric Cores	8
----------------------	---

Expand territorial control	8
----------------------------	---

Destroy a competitor	10
----------------------	----

Allies: Bluelight Society, Troubleshooters

Enemies: Neuroplastic Construction Company

Notes: The IMC alone has the resources and knowledge to manufacture new MEMCrystal in World, and they do so by pursuing a rare randomly-occurring diamond-like substance called Isomorph, or simply "Iso" for short. Though MEMCrystal is valued for its durability, Read/Write functionality, and high-fidelity storage, the IMC's monopoly on production makes it wildly expensive and dangerously warping to World's economy.

While the IMC is a Tier 4/5 faction, increase the price of *Indulging Memory* in downtime by +1 Coin, +1 Memory slot, or +1 Heat (player's choice). The spiraling costs of memory production and economic warfare take their toll as the IMC raises prices and chokes out competing storage formats.

Phlegethon Productions

Faction Goals

Tier 1: Interactive game shows hosted by **Zagreus** (*charismatic, magnanimous, vain*). A gossip and news stream run by **Megaera** (*insightful, mocking, spiteful*). A small memory card studio tucked away in an artistic corner.

Dig up some dirt on another faction	6
-------------------------------------	---

Tier 3: Big-budget Memories starring action icon **Theseus** (*handsome, petty*) heroically battling vast Daemons (actually just convincing post-production effects). Giant arenas for Battle Royale reality shows, complete with team Coin currencies and factional sponsorships.

Battle Royale TV kicks off a new season...	6
--	---

...you're the guest star	4
--------------------------	---

Tier 5: Elysian Studios, a high-brow subsidiary devoted to "finer art" productions. Pervasive paperazzi presence in all major servers.

Install new mass-recording / broadcast systems in a server	10
--	----

Allies: Archive Academy, Troubleshooters.

Enemies: Temple of Unresolution, Superior Court of Helios.

Notes: Phlegethon dabbles in a lot of multimedia experiences, but their specialty will always be delivering chaotic, loosely-scripted entertainment in front of a live-streaming audience. They are willing to televise just about anything and will gleefully make their enemies a part of "this season's plot arc" on whatever "reality memory" production is making the most bank currently.

While Phlegethon is the Tier 3 Faction in a server, assess +1 extra Heat in Payoff for scores in that server due to the added publicity, unless the crew somehow manage to keep all evidence of their actions and presence completely off-camera (highly unlikely). If Phlegethon is a **Tier 4/5 faction,** this may apply to **any score in any server** at the GM's discretion.

Avatar Sculptors

Faction Goals

Tier 1: High-brow avatar craft sought after by the rich and famous, though the Sculptors refuse to ever perform the same work twice. **Aurora** (*artistic, demanding, thoughtful*) runs a local salon, happily drafting up a "more perfect you."

Acquire an influential client	4
Start a World-wide fashion trend	8

Tier 3: Sensationalist glamour shows and server-wide polling of fashion trend, all of it a front for the actual work: compiling a massive library of meta-heuristics on the algorithms behind user appearance. **The Chum** (*dismissive, fabulous, strong*) picks fights with noteworthy users to ascertain their true strength.

Upgrade The Chum with a new strain	6
---	---

Sculpt process imitations of an influential user	8
--	---

Tier 5: The algorithm is completed, permitting the Sculptors to realize their aim: remaking World's user base for maximum beauty by excising all imperfections. Users are weeded out in elimination-style pageants, the top performers admitted to Sculptor HQ for immortalizing in the bodies of process clones. **Adonix** (*bequiling, gorgeous, perfectionist*) controls a cadre of clones sharing his strain of the algorithm.

Modify an ally with deadly avatar enhancements	8
--	---

Allies: Bluelight Society, Phlegethon Productions, Tsuruga Clan

Enemies: Temple of Unresolution

Notes: Though the Avatar Sculptors do seek beauty through traditionally-recognized visual traits, it would be a mistake to think of them as (just) superficial aesthetes. Beauty can as well be found in the graceful flick of a knife or the moving words of an eloquent lie. Furthermore, this obsession with avatar enhancement goes beyond the visual: the Sculptors know hidden techniques to graft enhancements granting superior speed and power to the favored subjects of their craft... though the procedure is unspeakable and those so 'blessed' have an alarming tendency to become addicted, endlessly demanding greater enhancements.

Faction Goals

Tier 1:

Tier 3:

Tier 5:

Allies:

Enemies:

Notes: