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LIMINAL HORROR

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NAME

BACKGROUND

STRENGTH

DEXTERITY

CONTROL

HP

DEPRIVED?

ARMOR

STABILITY

NOTES

INVENTORY

FATIGUE

L - HAND

R - HAND

RULES SUMMARY

ABILITIES

STR: Physicality, brawn & toughness.

DEX: Speed, sneaking & precision.

CTRL: Willpower, charm & weird

SAVES

Roll d20 equal to or under target Ability. The party at most risk in a contested action makes the save.

HIT PROTECTION

HP reflects a character's ability to avoid damage (both physical and stress).

HEALING

A quick rest fully restores HP but can leave the investigators exposed. Ability loss requires a week's rest with medical or magical aid.

DEPRIVED

Deprived keeps a PC from recovering HP. Being deprived for more than 24hrs adds **Fatigue** to a PC's inventory. Fatigue takes up one slot and lasts until they can recuperate. This can happen multiple times

INVENTORY

PCs have 10 inventory slots. Most items take up one slot. Bulky items take up two slots and are awkward or difficult to carry. All 10 slots being in use lowers HP to 0.

MAGIC

A new spell is created each morning. It is random or is a copy of one the previous day. Spells take up one item slot. Spells cost one action to cast. One may attempt a CTRL save to retain the spell. If deprived or in danger, a CTRL save may be required to avoid dire consequences.

ACTIONS

On their turn, characters may move 40ft and take a single action. Actions are casting a spell, attacking, additional movement, or some other reasonable action. These are simultaneous.

Retreating from a doomed situation requires a successful DEX save and a safe destination.

For the Start of Combat round, characters must pass an DEX save in order to act. Subsequent turns have players acting, then adversaries.

COMBAT

All attacks automatically hit. Attackers roll their **Stress** or **Damage** die, subtract any protections from **Armor** (damage) or **Stability** (stress), and deal the remaining total to the opponent's HP. Excess damage is dealt to STR and excess stress is dealt to CTRL.

If there are **Multiple attackers**, or one using two weapons, roll all damage dice together and keep the single highest die.

Unarmed attacks always do 1d4 damage. **Impaired** attacks (position of weakness) reduce damage die to 1d4. Shooting into cover is Impaired. **Enhanced** attacks (position of advantage) increase damage die to 1d12. Blast affects all area targets, rolling separately for each.

DAMAGE

Damage that exceeds the remaining HP applies the excess to STR. They must then make a STR save to avoid **critical damage**. Failure drops them out of combat, dying if left untreated.

Having STR 0 means death; having DEX 0 is paralysis; having CTRL 0 they are lost.

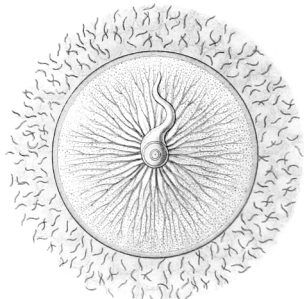
STRESS & FALLOUT

Choose **Stress Fallout** (pg. 22-23) when:

- Stress reduces a PC's HP to exactly 0
- A PC takes **critical stress** (when they fail a CTRL save after reducing CTRL due to stress)

Each Stress Fallout entry:

- Can only be chosen once at the table (*unless otherwise noted*).
- Permanently Consumes an inventory slot.



MODERN COSMIC HORROR

WARDEN AND PLAYER

Wardens make consistent rulings during play and facilitate situations in which the players can engage with the fiction. The goal is to create interesting stories of horror and struggle against powers greater than oneself.

PLAYER CHOICE

Wardens provide players with as much information as possible in order to be innovative and clever in their problem solving. Risks should be clear, with multiple options for player choice present. Every choice matters.

STRESS AND FALLOUT

Play deals with themes of cosmic horror. This is represented mechanically by Stress and Fallout. Fallout is how characters are changed by the Old Powers. The design avoids using mental illness and trauma as game-play mechanics.

NO CLASSES

Investigators are not limited by a predefined class. A character's specialty begins with their background, equipment, and experiences.

GROWTH

There is no leveling or mechanical experience in Liminal Horror. Success and failure lead to memorable stories. Building relationships, encountering void-touched relics, and Stress Fallout lead to character growth.

THE WEIRD

Liminal horror is designed to be set in a modern city. Characters slowly learn of the weird and dangerous things hidden in the dark. They will bend, or break, under the weight of the unknown.

THE OLD POWERS

The Old Powers are bound in the deep, far away spaces. Their progeny act as a connection to reality. Some scurry across its surface while others are trapped beneath it. Many serve knowingly while even more are oblivious to the plans they further.

DEATH

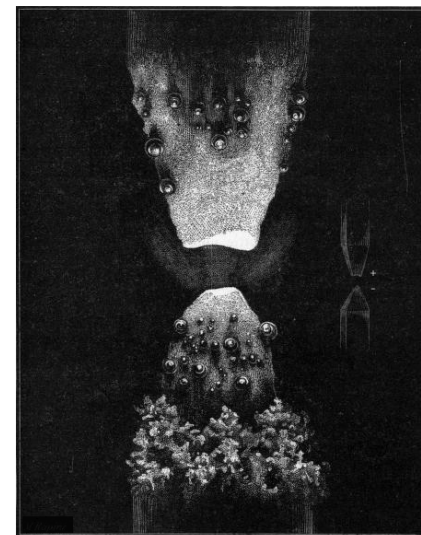
The world is dangerous and death is always a possible consequence. It should be ever present but never random or unexpected.

Death comes for everyone, but some suffer a fate worse.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There is a full web based version of this game text that can be found below. It has additional Warden Resources and play aides available for download.

<https://goblinarchives.github.io/LiminalHorror/>



PRINCIPLES FOR WARDENS

INFORMATION

- Information should never be kept behind rolls.
- Provide information readily and freely to facilitate critical thinking and clever play.
- Elicit questions from players and give them direct answers.
- The weird and their mysteries should be layered, leading players ever downward into the unknown.

SECRETS

- Leverage the themes of dread, forbidden knowledge, and fear of the unknown.
- Provide information on the physical and tangible reality to players but keep the true nature of things beyond reach.
- Slowly give investigators opportunities to pull at threads, drawing them deeper into the weird.
- The scale of what the PCs face is incomprehensible. True understanding is unattainable.

PREPARATION

- Make the world alive, allow it to change and grow because of your players' actions.
- Be flexible in your preparation. Create situations and possibilities. Plot and story should not be predefined.
- Give NPCs and factions motivations, flaws and drives. Have NPCs react accordingly to their principles, on and off screen. NPCs should always have a drive to survive.
- Play to find out what happens.

DICE OF FATE

- Sometimes randomness is required. Roll 1d6 to consult the die of fate
- 6: Good result
- 4-5: Mixed result
- 1-3: Bad result

DIFFICULTY

- Realism and fictional positioning are a good starting place for setting difficulty.
- Choices should have consequences and all failure should be interesting.
- Saves cover various scenarios of uncertainty and risk. If there is neither, do not call for a roll.
- Reward cleverness and ingenuity.

DANGER

- The risk is great for lasting harm, fallout from stress and overwhelming danger of encountering the Old Powers or their progeny.
- Present the potential of danger clearly for players and give them the opportunity to react.
- Increasing the amount of stress will increase the rate investigators are enveloped by the corruption of the Old Powers.
- Characters die.

CHOICE

- Offer tough choices.
- All situations should have multiple outcomes.
- Clarify player intent before dice are rolled to make sure players have all information that would be obvious to their character.
- The influence of the Old Powers bends and breaks reality, making the full scope of some outcomes obscured.
- Every action should leave an impact on the world in some way.

FAILURE

- Failure should push the story forward.
- It is encouraged to elicit complications or twists from players.

THE SWARM

10 HP, 3 Armor, 14 STR, 10 DEX

Cascade of vermin (D6, blast)

- (choose maggots/worms/ants).
- Once a normal person, now a host to a legion. Upon close inspection the viewer can see movement underneath the skin.
- Treat as a **Detachment**
- To burrow, to corrupt, to spread.
- **Critical Damage:** Unable to pick off in time, they burrow too deep.

FLESHSMITH

12 HP, 2 Armor, 16 STR, 8 DEX, 10 CTRL

Hands (D8 - D10)

- Master of the flesh, appearance shifts and changes. Often a mass of muscle & bone at impossible proportions.
- To mold. To perfect. To manipulate
- **Critical Damage:** The Fleshsmith distorts an appendage in an impossible way.

COMPANY MAN

13 HP, 1 Armor, 14 STR, 14 DEX, 14 CTRL

- Impeccable gray suit, trailed by a non-euclidian shadow.
- To control, to twist, to employ.
- Can heal using the bodies of others as fuel (drones).
- **Delegated Magic:** Can cast magics through conduits, consuming their souls and sundering their flesh.

DRONE

2 HP, 10 STR, 10 DEX, 10 CTRL,

Hands or tools (D6)

- Often normal people. When being utilized there is a glassy look to them. Sometimes they look faded
- To follow. To be used.
- Ignores critical damage.

CREATING MONSTERS

MONSTER TEMPLATE

- Title** (denotes type of NPC/monster)
NPC Name (most things have a name. Some have forgotten theirs and are now solely defined by their title)
HP, Armor, STR, DEX, CTRL
- **Attack** (dX, special items, qualities)
 - **Description** (appearance or demeanor)
 - **Drive**, behavior, tactic, or peculiarity
 - **Special effect** or critical damage consequence.

GENERAL PRINCIPALS

- Ability Scores are 10 unless noted.
- Ability Scores: 3 is deficient, 6 is weak, 10 is average, 14 is of note, and 18 is legendary.
- HP: 3 HP is average , 6 HP sturdy, 10+ HP is serious threat
- HP is Hit Protection, not a measure of Hit Points. It's a measure of skill, luck, drive, resilience.
- Flavor and style = memorable
- Use D6 as the baseline for damage.
- Including ways to deal stress makes the game more Weird (increases chance of Stress Fallout)
- Critical Damage triggers increase threat or strangeness

CREATURE CHEAT SHEET

- Able to avoid being hit? Give it HP
- Soak up damage? Give it Armor.
- Physically powerful? Give it a high STR or larger damage dice.
- Quick? Give it high DEX.
- Flavor and style = memorable
- Weird? Give it high CTRL or ability to deal Stress.

PARANATURAL BESTIARY

CULTIST

3 HP, 1 Armor, 8 STR, 12 DEX, 10 CTRL
Dagger (D6), Blood Sigil (D4 Stress)

- Every cult needs followers, footsoldiers, and believers.
- To please their masters, to gain access to power, to survive.
- Rarely alone.

FROG-MEN

4 HP, 13 STR, 12 DEX, 10 CTRL
Claws (D6) Tongue (D8)

- Sapient humanoid frogs. Large, muscular. Some look like men.
- To remain hidden. To free their master. To inherit the earth.
- Some have a moderate ability to create illusions and cloud minds. This can cause Stress.

SPECIAL AGENT

6 HP, 1 Armor, 14 STR, 12 DEX, 10 CTRL
Service Pistol (D6)

- Black suits and glasses. Some doubt, some believe, most follow orders.
- To obscure, to acquire, to maintain
- **Critical Damage:** The special agent apprehends the target.

MOTHER

14 HP, 1 Armor, 14 STR, 8 DEX, 14 CTRL
Claws (D8, hidden), Kiss (D6 stress)

- Impossibly tall, curvy, pale.
- To protect, to nurture, to punish.
- **Critical Damage:** Her time is now. Mother transforms.

THE DARK

10 HP, STR 12, DEX 15, CHA 14,
Bite (D6) Dark Embrace (D6 stress)

- Appearance unknown. Number unknown. Presence preceded by the blinking out of lights.
- To rend, to take within itself.
- All attacks made against them are made at disadvantage.

CHILD OF THE SPOOR

4 HP, 1 Armor, 12 STR, 8 DEX, 6 CTRL
Spoor blessed dagger (D6)

- Fungus overtakes the host, merging with the grand structure.
- Some have fruiting bodies sprouting from fissures, others are barely noticeable except the fuzz.
- To propagate. To gestate. To ↗↖↘↙
- **Critical Damage:** Some of the spoors enter the victim's body.

CORPORATE ANALYST

8 HP, 1 Armor, 10 STR, 14 DEX, 14 CTRL
Magitek prototype weapon (D6 blast)

- Varying in look, always professional in dress and appearance.
- To protect corporate interests, to test, to acquire.
- Each analyst has a different specialty, all pose unique dangers to the fabric of reality. Give a critical damage trigger that reflects their department.

WITCH

8 HP, 2 Armor, 8 STR, 12 DEX, 13 CTRL
Walking stick (D6) Magic (2+ spells)

- Witches can look like anyone. Some have been changed through proximity to magic
- To learn, to hide, to influence. Sometimes, to teach.
- **Critical Damage:** The Witch leaves their sigil upon their target, forming a connection with them

GHOST

10 HP, 3 Armor, 9 STR, 10 DEX, 12 CTRL
Spectral embrace (D6 Stress)

- Incorporeal spirits unable to leave after death.
- Drives vary as much as in the living. The act of becoming a ghost often means they lean toward violence, vengeance, and pettiness.
- Can attempt a possession, target must succeed a CTRL save to resist..

PRINCIPLES FOR PLAYERS

AGENCY

- The numbers on your character sheet act as tools to mechanically engage with the game. They do not define your character.
- Use how your character has grown to inform your play.
- Embrace the weird and unknown.

TEAMWORK

- Work to support others at the table.
- Elicit interaction from other players.
- Characters don't always have to be aligned, but players should be aiming toward the same goal of memorable stories of horror and fun interactions with friends.

PLANNING

- Ask questions.
- There is no perception or intelligence attribute. How you engage with the world hinges on how you use the information provided.
- Reconnaissance, subtlety, and fact-finding are necessary for survival.

TALKING

- NPCs have drives and flaws. Interact with them as you would a real person.
- Build relationships, engage with rivals, and invest in the NPCs.
- Information and positive outcomes can often be achieved through dialogue. That being said, sometimes a cultist's communion requires an offering of blood and bone.

CAUTION

- Fighting is risky and the consequences of violence are long lasting.
- A shattered mind is just as debilitating as a broken body.
- Gain any advantage you can. Preparation can stave off certain doom.
- Magic is chaotic and wielding the unknowable can have dire consequences.
- Victory comes in many forms, and often it is a successful retreat.

AMBITION

- Discover the drives and goals for you as a player, your character, and the team. Use those to inform play.
- Try and fail forward. An engaging story is infinitely more interesting and memorable than simple successes.
- It is the complications and resulting actions that we remember afterward.
- Characters die, but the story will continue.
- Play to find out what happens.



CHARACTER CREATION

1. ABILITY SCORES

Strength (STR)

Physicality, brawn & toughness.

Dexterity (DEX)

Speed, sneaking & precision.

Control (CTRL)

Willpower, charm & weird

When creating a Player Character (PC), the player should roll 3d6 in order for each of their character's ability scores. They may then swap any two of the results.

2. HIT PROTECTION

Roll 1d6 to determine starting **Hit Protection (HP)**. HP reflects the ability to avoid damage (both physical damage and stress).

HP is not a health. It can be recovered after a few moments rest (see **Healing** pg 14).

(+ _ Armor) is an item tag that provide protection from damage. (+_Stability) is an item tag that provide protection from stress.

If stress would take a PC's HP exactly to 0, the player must roll on the **Stress Fallout** table (pg. 22-23).

3. INVESTIGATOR DETAILS

- Choose a **name** for your character
- Roll a **background** (pg. 7)
- Choose a style of clothing or look for your character.
- Answer the **Getting To Know Your Character** questions (pg. 8).
- Determine the rest of your character's **traits** (tables on pg. 9).
- Choose their **age** or roll 2d20+16.

4. STARTING GEAR

All investigators start with an **Investigator Bundle** (a phone, cash, notebook & pen).

Players then roll on the **Starting Gear** tables to determine equipment (pg. 10). If indicated, the PC will add magic to their sheet and refer to the **Magic** rules (pg. 18-19)

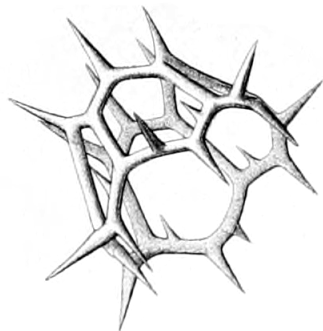
Characters have a total of 10 inventory slots: hands and upper body (four slots), plus a backpack or bag (six slots). If all slots are full the PC's HP becomes 0

Most items take up one slot, with smaller items that can be bundled together. **Bulky** items take two slots and are awkward or require two hands.

The **Equipment List** (pg. 12-13) has a more detailed overview of weapons and investigative gear. As a table, decide on what common household tools PCs have access to in addition to their starting gear.

5. THE PARTY

The final step is to establish a party set up using the **Party Questions** section (pg. 11). This provides the initial context for investigators and their journey into the unknown.



FALLOUT TABLE [11-20]

- 11 **Threshold:** There is a pale door with a black handle. It is unremarkable other than the fact that this door can seemingly appear anywhere. Sometimes the door is in places it should not be. Sometimes it stands alone, attached to nothing at all. The one thing you are sure of is that it is the same door each time-one you have not yet been able to open.
- 12 **Neural Superposition:** You see images of unknown places superposed onto this one, sometimes making it difficult to tell what is real. In another time you may have been called an oracle.

When you roll DEX saves, roll 2D20 and take the highest result. Once per day you see something significant (ask your Warden what it is).
- 13 **Seventh Son of a Seventh Son:** Enough exposure has shifted and changed you. You are more connected to the otherworldly. Add **Magic** (pg. 18-19) to your character sheet and follow the rules. This new power is great, and terrible.
- The first time you use a spell it causes 1d6 stress.
- Your second spell causes D4 stress
- Finally the third spell you cast causes 1 stress..
- 14 **Marked by fear:** The core of your being has been twisted and changed. When you act in a way that manifests your marked fear and have to make a save, roll 2D20 and take the lowest result. When you resist an opportunity to indulge the fear, take D4 stress.
Create a fundamental fear with your Warden.
- 15 **Heavy is the head:** An ethereal crown hangs above your head. It is not visible to all, only a special few. Tales have been told of your coming. Make a CTRL save. If you pass, increase your max CTRL by D6.
- 16 **Full to Bursting:** You have a feeling of fullness and contentment. Next time you would fail a critical damage STR save:
- you succeed instead. Immediately and violently begin to vomit vermin (player's choice).
- Any being that can see they must make a CTRL save or take D6 stress.
- Roll 3D6. If the total is higher than your max CTRL, take the new result.
- 17 **Progeny:** Something is growing inside of you. Hope has long since abandoned it, and it has no more room for dreams. Roll 2D6. Take the new result as your max HP
- 18 **Fate's Web** (*this can only be taken once per character but multiple times per table*): At least a puppet can see the strings that bind it, if only you were so lucky. Roll on the **Omens/Magical Catastrophes** table (pg. 19)
- 19 **The Hunt:** Patronage is a dangerous thing. It becomes harder to ignore the primal impulses that burn deep inside you. Your attacks are **Enhanced**. Critical Damage mutilates your body but you can continue to act. You become the primary target of otherworldly forces, attacks made against you are **Enhanced**.
- 20 **Doomed** (*this can be taken multiple times per character*): You have been branded for sacrifice, anointed for doom. If your next critical save against damage is a failure, you die horribly. If it is a success, you roll 3d6 + the number of times you've taken Doomed. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.

FALLOUT TABLE [1-10]

- 1 **Have you been replaced?** You've seen what they can do ... their magics and their deceptions. What would stop them from taking you? Maybe you aren't who you think you are? How would you even know?
During your next moment of quiet reflection, roll D6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 2 **Memories of an Unknown Traveler:** These memories are not your own. They are of a different time, a different place, from a perspective so unlike your own. The realities they walk through are so alien and different, their feelings so foreign. If only you could understand what they experienced.
During your next rest, roll D6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 3 **Paranoia:** Is it paranoia if the worries are completely reasonable? You've seen what happens in the dark, you know what goes bump in the night.
After a week, roll D6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 4 **Plagued by Nightmares:** It comes for you every night, without fail. You do not know if they are from the beginning, or the end. All you know is that they won't stop, and that they must mean something. After a week of nightmares, tell your Warden two distinct images that linger at the edge of your remembering.
- 5 **Mirror World:** Everything seemed okay at first, but now you are sure of it - the world inside the mirror is different. The side glances, the shifting of places, it is undeniable.
When you first start to notice, roll 2D6. If the total is higher than your max HP, take the new result.
- 6 **Odd:** You adopt an odd behavior that makes others uncomfortable. If you resist indulging in your "Oddity" for 24 hours, take the Deprived tag. If others see you engage in this creepy behavior, they must make a CTRL save or take 1d4 Stress.
After the first instance, roll 3D6. If the total is higher than your current CTRL, take the new result.
- 7 **Hunger:** You develop an unnatural hunger for the unusual. If you do not satiate your appetite for 24 hours, take the Deprived tag. When you eat, restore HP and give 1d4 stress to any that can see.
After the first instance, roll 3D6. If the total is higher than your current STR, take the new result.
- 8 **Scarred:** Every wound you inflict leaves its ragged mark upon your body.
After the first instance, make a CTRL save. If you pass, increase your max STR by D4.
- 9 **Liminal Communion:** It wasn't noticeable at first, but you've slowly begun to regularly do a sequence of gestures, words, or actions - almost as if you are performing a ritual.
When someone notices, make a CTRL save. Success: increase max CTRL by D4.
- 10 **Magical Corruption** (*this can be taken multiple times per character*): Flesh is weak. A part of your body becomes visibly changed through your proximity to the weird. The Warden and Player should decide on how that change manifests and if it has any mechanical impacts.

INVESTIGATOR DETAILS

NAME

Choose a name that best fits the character you are wanting to play (often I do this at the end of the character generating process.

CLOTHING

Choose a style of clothing/look. A gold star if you find visual references to share with the group.

BACKGROUND [roll D20 or choose]

1	Journalist	6	Archivist	11	Old Money	16	Ex-Cop
2	Store Clerk	7	Artist	12	Author	17	Trades
3	Private Investigator	8	Athlete	13	Professor	18	Social Work
4	Cleric (ex?)	9	Criminal	14	Very Online	19	Finance
5	Medic	10	Drifter	15	Lawyer	20	Hospitality



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CHARACTER

THE ABYSS STARES BACK

What was your first encounter with the unknown?

ROLL D10 OR CHOOSE

1	Lost a loved one under mysterious circumstances	6	The evidence online is too much to be ignored.
2	Witnessed something in the darkness	7	You survived an attack you cannot explain.
3	Something is lurking in your dreams	8	Someone close to you is pulling you in, or pushing you away.
4	Cult activity (perhaps they recruited someone significant)	9	You may be a card carrying member in a secret society.
5	You read something not meant for mortal minds.	10	You haven't yet, that's what session 1 is for!

IDEOLOGY & BELIEFS

What is your character's initial ideology/beliefs? What lens do they use to interpret the world and guide them toward action?

CREATE YOUR OWN OR USE THE TABLE BELOW

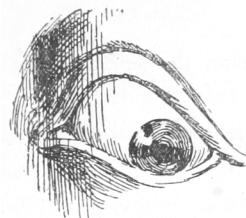
1	Everything has a rational explanation rooted in science.	6	Individuals can make a difference.
2	You ascribe to a specific political ideology.	7	A specific religion guides you.
3	Morality is black and white.	8	You believe in fate and it directly impacts your life.
4	Belief in higher powers. Astrology, spirituality, etc.	9	Free will is the only truth.
5	There are deep truths. The answers are out there.	10	You believe in the power of community.

CONNECTIONS

- **List one significant person to the investigator.** What is their relationship? Give them a name and brief description.
- **List one contact the investigator has.** What is the contact's area of expertise and what is their relationship to the investigator?

ROLL D10 OR CHOOSE

1	Family member	6	Online associate
2	Lover	7	Hero
3	Friend	8	Rival
4	Mentor	9	Specialist
5	Protege	10	NPC



STRESS & FALLOUT

Stress is identical to damage, but targets CTRL instead of STR. Stress may come as a result of narrative consequences, failed saves, magic repercussions, or enemy attacks. Stress targets HP before going to CTRL.

STRESS EXAMPLES

1 STRESS **GLIMPSE** -Encountering the strange or odd.

D4 STRESS **CONTACT** - The weird and unexplainable.

D6 STRESS **EXPOSURE** -Directly encountering the unknowable. Reality bends.

D8 STRESS **CATASTROPHE**- Major Powers, Omens, Catastrophes. Reality is close to breaking.

D10 STRESS **DOOM** -Direct contact with Old Powers. Reality rupturing.

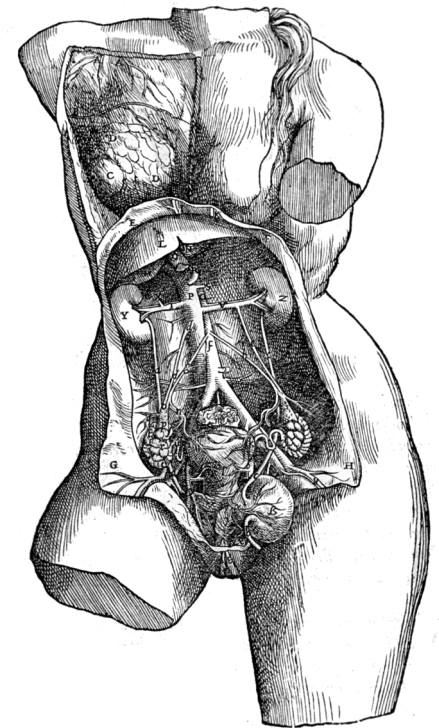
STRESS FALLOUT TABLES

Some moments change an investigator forever. Players roll or choose from the the Stress Fallout table when either:

- Stress reduces a PC's HP to exactly 0
- The character takes critical stress.

Unless marked, the Fallout can only be chosen once per table. Each Fallout takes up an inventory slot. It cannot be removed.

Note to Wardens: The tone of the stress fallout table reflects the themes and goals of the game. Adjust for what works for your table, adding or changing entries as needed to ratchet up (or dial back) the weird. This is the main mechanical dial for the cosmic horror of your game.

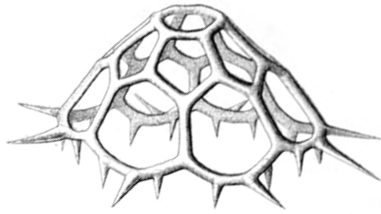


SCROLLS & RELICS

SCROLLS

Scrolls are similar to Magic, however:

- Does not take up an inventory slot.
- Does not cause fatigue.
- Disappears after one use.
- Players must make a CTRL save or receive 1d4 Stress

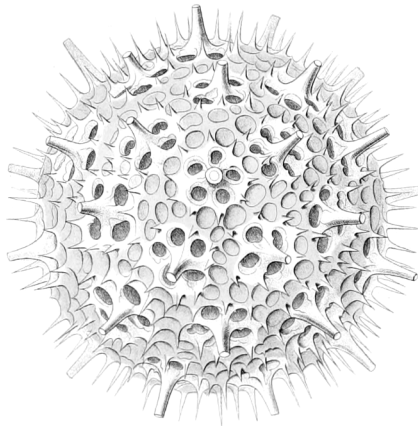


RELICS

Relics are powerful and dangerous items touched by the Old Powers. Relics often have limited use and a recharge condition. Some examples:

Extractor - 0 charges.

An old brass cylinder that resembles a medieval syringe. Able to transfer a 'consciousness' into another vessel. Recharge: Use the Extractor to wrench the consciousness from an "disabled" vessel. Users must make a CTRL save or take 1d4 stress.



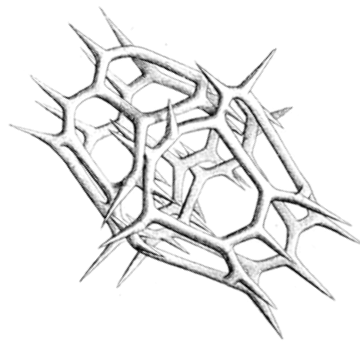
White Blade of Moonbone: (best of 2d6 CTRL damage) - 3 Charges. This glowing blade is made for one task, to sever. Recharge: Under a full moon, sunder a memory from one's past.

An Anatomical Guide to Memory :

The reader can converse with the souls bound within its pages. Take d6 Stress (CTRL) to read an entry. There are still empty pages in the book.

Stone of Behrit - 1 charge.

Resembling a small egg with a distorted face. If you would take critical damage, ignore it instead. This stone activates and whisks you to safety. Recharge: Sacrifice an innocent soul to the stone, add deprived and fatigued to the character sheet. On the third recharge roll on **Omens/Magical Catastrophes** (pg. 19)



CHARACTER TRAITS

Roll d10 or Choose

PHYSIQUE

1 Athletic	6 Scrawny
2 Brawny	7 Shorty
3 Curvy	8 Statuesque
4 Lanky	9 Stout
5 Rugged	10 Towering

VIRTUE [OPTIONAL]

1 Ambitious	6 Honorable
2 Cautious	7 Humble
3 Courageous	8 Merciful
4 Disciplined	9 Serene
5 Gregarious	10 Tolerant

FACE

1 Bony	6 Perfect
2 Broken	7 Round
3 Chiseled	8 Sharp
4 Elongated	9 Square
5 Dimpled	10 Sunken

FLAW [OPTIONAL]

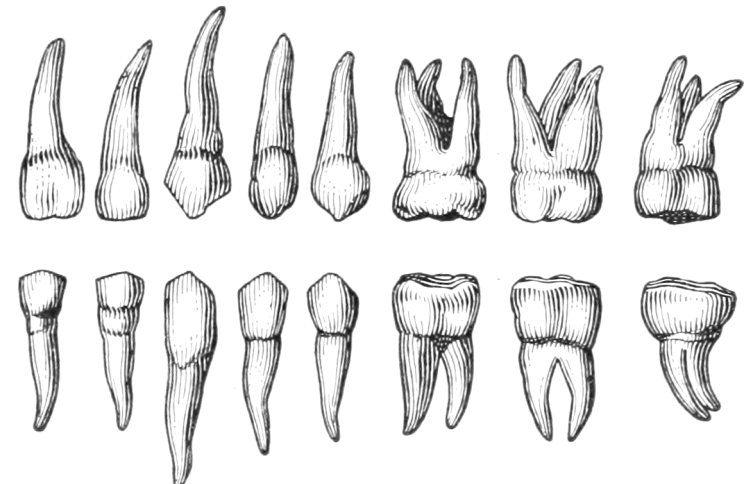
1 Aggressive	6 Lazy
2 Bitter	7 Nervous
3 Craven	8 Rude
4 Deceitful	9 Vain
5 Greedy	10 Vengeful

SPEECH

1 Blunt	6 Gravelly
2 Booming	7 Squeaky
3 Cryptic	8 Choppy
4 Droning	9 Precise
5 Formal	10 Whispery

MISFORTUNE [OPTIONAL]

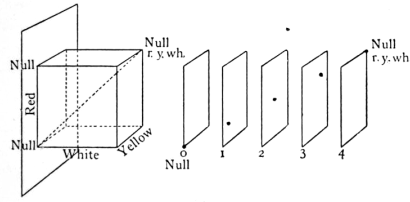
1 Abandoned	6 Defrauded
2 Addicted	7 Demoted
3 Blackmailed	8 Discredited
4 Condemned	9 Disowned
5 Cursed	10 Exiled



STARTING GEAR

All PCs begin with **Investigator Bundle**:

- Phone (roll 2d4)
1-4 is a flip phone
5-8 is a smart phone
- Starting Cash (\$3d10 x 3d10)
- Notebook and pen



WEAPONS [D20]

1	2-7	8-17	18-19	20
Armored Vest	Improvised or Crude Weapon	Dagger, Baton, Taser or Pistol	Rifle or Shotgun	Magic (pg. 18-19)

INVESTIGATIVE GEAR [D20]

1 Night Vision Goggles	6 Handcuffs	11 Flashbang	16 Spray Paint
2 Zip Ties	7 Grappling Hook & rope	12 Directional Microphone	17 Laptop & Printer
3 Binoculars	8 Body bag	13 Glass cutting tools	18 Kevlar Rope
4 Chain & Lock	9 Tactical Flashlight	14 A box with no seam	19 Good Camera
5 Ivory necklace (+1 Stability)	10 Lockpicks	15 Ancient Tome	20 Bolt Cutters

MEMENTO [D10]

1 A note from a lost love	6 A letter in a language you cannot identify
2 An item from your background	7 A book filled with names (in another's handwriting)
3 A business card with a number written on the back	8 A voice recording
4 A piece of jewelry carved from bone	9 A heavily redacted file
5 A will	10 A small, old figurine

BONUS ITEM [D20 - then roll on corresponding table]

1-5	6-13	14-19	20
Memento	Investigative Gear	Weapon	Magic (pg. 18-19)

Physical Effects

Animating	Crushing	Fusing
Attracting	Diminishing	Grasping
Binding	Dividing	Hastening
Blossoming	Duplicating	Hindering
Consuming	Enveloping	Illuminating
Creeping	Expanding	Imprisoning
Levitating	Reflecting	Sealing
Opening	Regenerating	Shapeshift
Petrifying	Rending	Shielding
Phasing	Repelling	Spawning
Piercing	Resurrecting	Transmuting
Pursuing	Screaming	Transporting

Physical Elements

Acid	Crow	Glass
Amber	Crystal	Honey
Bark	Ember	Ice
Blood	Fang	Insect
Bone	Flesh	Lava
Clay	Fungus	Moss
Obsidian	Sand	Tar
Oil	Sap	Thorn
Poison	Serpent	Vine
Rat	Sinew	Water
Rock	Slime	Wood
Salt	Stone	Worm

Physical Forms

Altar	Chariot	Eye
Armor	Claw	Fountain
Arrow	Cloak	Gate
Beast	Colossus	Golem
Blade	Crown	Hammer
Chain	Elemental	Hook
Horn	Sentinel	Tentacle
Key	Servant	Throne
Mask	Shield	Torch
Monolith	Spear	Trap
Pit	Steed	Wall
Prison	Swarm	Web

Ethereal Effects

Avenging	Compelling	Dispelling
Banishing	Concealing	Emboldening
Bewildering	Deafening	Encoding
Blinding	Deceiving	Energizing
Charming	Deciphering	Enlightening
Communicate	Disguising	Enraging
Excruciating	Nullifying	Soothing
Foreseeing	Paralyzing	Summoning
Intoxicating	Revealing	Terrifying
Maddening	Revoluting	Warding
Mesmerizing	Scrying	Wearying
Mind Reading	Silencing	Withering

Ethereal Elements

Ash	Ectoplasm	Light
Chaos	Fire	Lightning
Distortion	Fog	Memory
Dream	Ghost	Mind
Dust	Harmony	Mutagen
Echo	Heart	Negation
Plague	Smoke	Thunder
Plasma	Snow	Time
Probability	Soul	Void
Rain	Star	Warp
Rot	Stasis	Whisper
Shadow	Steam	Wind

Ethereal Forms

Aura	Bubble	Cone
Beacon	Call	Cube
Beam	Cascade	Dance
Blast	Circle	Disk
Blob	Cloud	Field
Bolt	Coil	Form
Gaze	Pyramid	Swarm
Loop	Ray	Torrent
Moment	Shard	Touch
Nexus	Sphere	Vortex
Portal	Spray	Wave
Pulse	Storm	Word

MAGIC

Characters may be able to use magic if:

- Rolled during character creation.
- Gained through Stress Fallout.
- Are warped through play.

Random spells are generated using the table and process below.

- Each morning the PC creates a single spell in an inventory slot.
- The spell may be rolled randomly or as a copy of a spell lost on the previous day.

SPELL FORMULA [ROLL 2D6]

	1-3	4-6
1	Physical Effect + Physical Form	Ethereal Element+ Physical Form
2	Physical Effect + Ethereal Form	Ethereal Element+ Ethereal Form
3	Ethereal Effect + Physical Form	Physical Effect + Physical Element
4	Ethereal Effect + Ethereal Form	Physical Effect + Ethereal Element
5	Physical Element+ Physical Form	Ethereal Effect + Physical Element
6	Physical Element+ Ethereal Form	Ethereal Effect + Ethereal Element

- Spells use a single action.
- Afterward they leave the inventory.
- If **deprived** or in **danger**, the PC must make a CTRL save to avoid any ill-effects. Consequences of failure should correlate in level to the intended effect. Failure may result in Stress, Fatigue, injury, death or Omens/Magical Catastrophe.
- Spell effects are decided by the warden with input from the player. They should work together to come up with the general effect and scope of the spell. The warden makes the final ruling in play. (Baseline: offensive spells typically cause d8 damage if it's single target or d6 if it's blast damage).
- PCs can attempt to retain the spell by successfully making a CTRL save.

On success: Spell stays prepared. PC marks fatigue in an inventory slot.

On a failure: the player does not retain the spell, marks deprived and adds fatigued to their inventory.

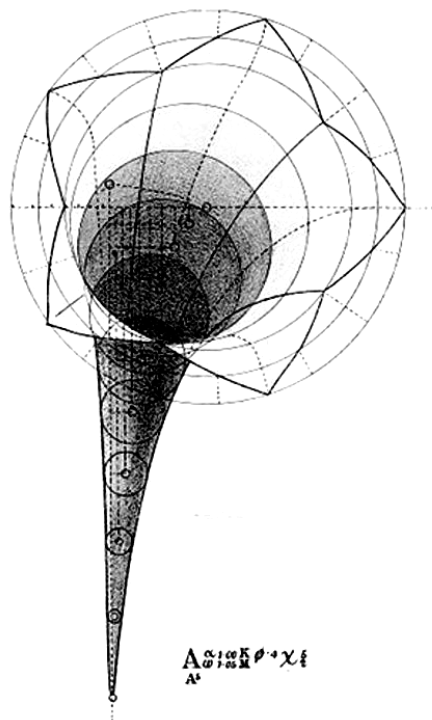


Fig. 9.

OMENS/CATASTROPHES

Animals die	Mass slumber
City appears	Meteor strike
Deadly fog	Mirrors speak
Dream plague	No stars
Endless night	Outsider enters
Endless storm	People vanish
Endless twilight	Portal opens
Endless winter	Rifts open
Forest appears	Tower appears
Graves open	Water to blood

PARTY QUESTIONS

THE PARTY

Why has the party come together? Use the answers from the Get To Know Your Character section to inform your decision. As a table create your own or use the table below (d6):

- 1 The investigators meet in a diner. They may or may not know each other. Fluorescent lights hum over checkered linoleum.
- 2 A simple "wrong place, wrong time."
- 3 United through self guided research. Online paranatural forum? Club? Support group?
- 4 A mysterious patron that has brought the investigators together.
- 5 Members of the community respond to a series of mysterious events.
- 6 Investigators (either professional or amateur) that are looking into an event.

BONDS [OPTIONAL]

Have each player state a relationship to another character at the table. Some examples:

- 1 ___ is hiding something from me.
- 2 ___ is my ex.
- 3 ___ saved me from whatever it was that tried to attack me.
- 4 ___ is my drinking buddy
- 5 ___ is my co-worker at ___
- 6 ___ is my neighbor.

VEHICLES

Determine as a group what types of vehicle or transportation the party has access to. The party may have access to more than one vehicle. Car chases are an essential part of solving a mystery.

Vehicles have HP. When it is reduced to OHP it is totalled. Totaling a vehicle can cause damage to those in and around the vehicle.

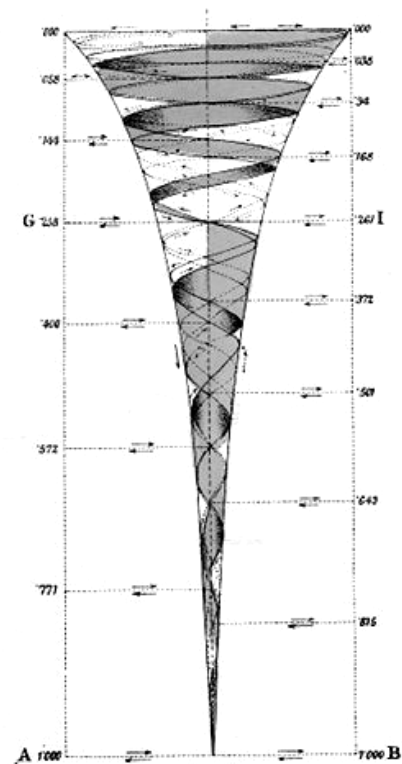


Fig.16.

EQUIPMENT LIST

PROTECTION

Armored Vest (+1 Armor)	\$1,000
Amulet from the old country (+1 Stability)	\$1,000
Gas Mask (protects against airborne toxins)	\$100
Mask (protects your identity)	\$20

WEAPONS

Unarmed attack (d4 damage)	Free
Improvised or Crude Weaponry (d6 damage, bulky)	\$20
Hand Weapons: Dagger, Baton, Axe (d6 damage)	\$50
Taser/Mace Combo (DEX save or momentarily stunned)	\$50
Pistol (d6 damage)	\$200
Sawed off Shotgun (d6 blast, bulky)	\$500
Rifle (d8 damage, bulky)	\$750
Shotgun (d8 damage, bulky)	\$750
Assault rifle (d8 or d6 blast damage, bulky)	\$1,250
Combat Shotgun (d6 damage blast with d8 area, bulky)	\$1,250
Sniper (d8 damage or d12 damage when hidden, bulky)	\$1,750

EXPLOSIVES

Molotov Cocktail (sets area alight, d6 continued damage)	\$50
Flashbang (blast, temporarily blinds those who fail a DEX save)	\$100
Grenade (d8 damage, blast)	\$100
IED (d6 damage, blast with d4 continued damage per round)	\$200

MODERN DAY POTIONS

Tranquilizers (STR save or pass out)	\$50
Drugs (variable high, CTRL or STR save to grapple with negative effects)	\$50
Poison (lose d20 STR if passes through a blood-tissue barrier)	\$50
Antitoxin (stops toxins - unpleasant)	\$50
Acid (persistent d4 damage, caustic liquid that burns through stuff)	\$100
Stims (immediate recovery from critical damage, +1d4 temporary DEX)	\$100

BLAST

The **blast** tag denotes an attack that hits everything in a target area with damage rolled separately for each affected. Blast can be anything from explosions to spectral tentacles to the impact of a space embryo. If scale is unclear, roll damage dice to determine the number of targets affected.

CRITICAL DAMAGE

If damage brings a target's HP below zero, their STR is decreased by the amount remaining. They must then make a STR save to avoid taking **critical damage**.

Suffering critical damage disables the victim. All they can do is crawl and grasp for life. Aid and rest required to persevere or they will die in the hour.

CRITICAL STRESS = FALLOUT

Stress that reduces a target's HP below zero decreases a target's CTRL by the amount remaining. They must then make a CTRL save to avoid **Critical Stress**.

If a character fails their CTRL save they take critical stress and gain fallout from the **Stress Fallout** table (pg. 22).

0 HP STRESS = FALLOUT

If **Stress** to a PC reduces their HP to exactly 0, they must immediately roll or choose a result from the **Stress Fallout** table just as if they failed their CTRL save (pg. 22).

ABILITY SCORE LOSS

If a PC's STR is reduced to 0, they die. If their DEX is reduced to 0, they are paralyzed. If their CTRL is reduced to 0, they are lost.

DEATH

When a character dies, the player can create a new character or take control of an associate. They immediately join the party in order to reduce downtime.

DETACHMENTS

Large groups of similar combatants fighting together are treated as a single detachment. When a detachment takes critical damage, it is routed or significantly weakened. When it reaches 0 STR, it is destroyed.

- Attacks against detachments by individuals are impaired (excluding blast damage).
- Attacks against individuals by detachments are enhanced and deal blast damage.

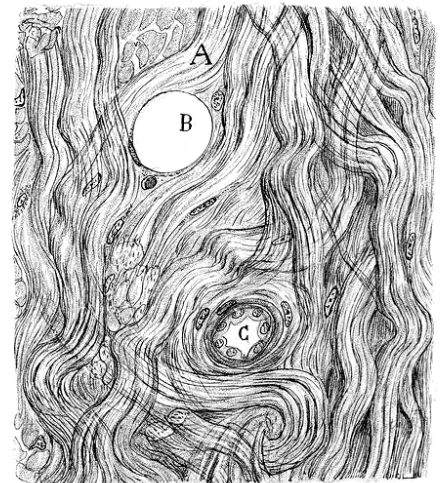
MORALE

Morale is a mechanical trigger used to simulate a NPC's desire to survive.

Enemies must pass a CTRL save to avoid fleeing when they take their first casualty and again when they lose half their number. Some groups may use their leader's CTRL in place of their own. Lone foes must save when they're reduced to 0 HP.

Some NPCs transcend measures of morale. Their proximity to the weird means their behavior diverges from other NPCs.

Morale does not affect PCs.



COMBAT

START OF COMBAT

At the **Start of Combat**, unless they surprised the enemy, each PC must make a DEX save for a chance to act before their adversaries.

- **Success:** The PC may act before their opponent.
- **Failure:** The PC does not get to go during the Start of Combat round.

After the Start of Combat round, order proceeds with PCs acting, then adversaries.

ROUNDS

The game typically plays without strict time accounting. If timing is necessary, use 10 second rounds to keep track. A **Round** is comprised of character turns.

During each turn all actions, attacks, and movements take place simultaneously.

ACTIONS

On their turn a character may move up to 40ft and take up to one action. This may be **casting a spell, attacking, making a second move**, or some other **combat maneuver**.

Players state what actions they will take before rolling dice. If they attempt something risky, the Warden will call for a save from the appropriate party.

All actions, attacks, and movements take place roughly at the same time.

RETREAT

Escaping a doomed situation requires a successful DEX save and a safe destination in order to get away. Safely retreating is a victory in its own way.

ATTACKING & DAMAGE

There are no rolls to hit. There are no misses, only varying levels of damage.

On their turn, the attacker rolls their weapon die, subtracts any **Armor** bonus, and deals the remaining total to the opponent's HP. Excess damage is then dealt to STR (see **Critical Damage**)

Some attacks deal **Stress** instead. These follow the same process of rolling the stress die, subtracting any relevant **Stability** bonus and then dealing the remaining total to HP. Excess Stress is dealt to CTRL (see **Critical Stress**)

MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

If multiple attackers target the same foe, everyone rolls damage dice and you only keep the single highest result.

DUAL WEAPONS

If attacking with two weapons at the same time, roll both damage dice and keep the single highest result.

ATTACK MODIFIERS

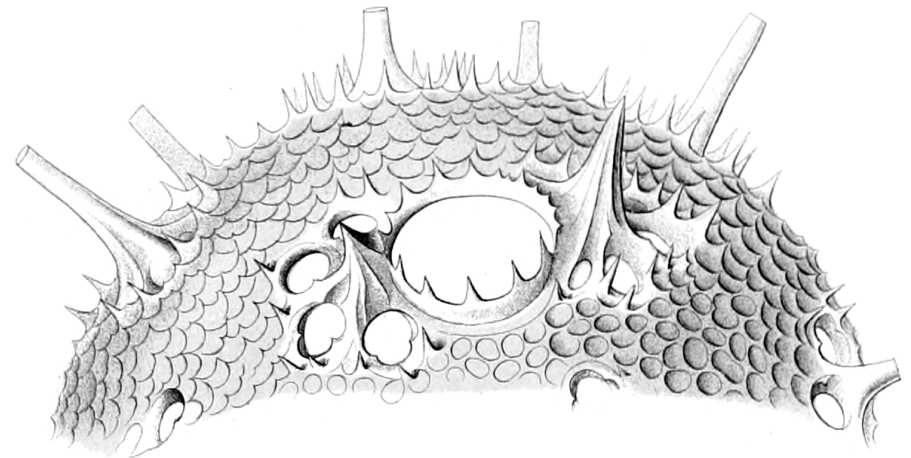
An attack is **impaired** if the attacker is in a position of weakness that would impact your effectiveness. Impaired attacks deal **D4** damage. Some examples of a position of weakness are attacking through cover, being bound, mind clouded by shadows.

An attack is **Enhanced** if the attacker is in a position of advantage. Enhanced attacks deal **D12** damage. Some examples of a position of advantage would be leveraging a daring maneuver, attacking a helpless adversary, or having your arm guided by the void.

Unarmed attacks always do **D4** damage.

GEAR

Alarm helper	\$500	Forgery Kit	\$150
Bear Trap	\$100	Glass Cutting Tools	\$150
Binoculars	\$100	Grease	\$30
Blow Torch (welding)	\$250	Handcuffs	\$50
Body Bag	\$25	Head Lamp	\$25
Bolt Cutters	\$40	Laptop	\$1,000
Car Opening Kit	\$75	Lighter	\$10
Chain & Lock	\$50	Locksmith tools	\$150
Chainsaw	\$200	Marbles	\$20
Climbing Gear	\$150	Mechanical Tool Kit	\$150
Ear pieces	\$500	Metal Ball Bearings	\$40
Walkie Talkies	\$200	Night Vision Goggles	\$200
Directional Microphone	\$200	Pharmacist Kit	\$150
Drone	\$200	Portable Ram	\$75
Good Camera	\$400	Portable Winch	\$100
Duffle Bag	\$50	Pulley & Rope	\$25
Duffle full of Black Bloc	\$150	Road Spikes (caltrops)	\$50
Electrical Tool Kit	\$150	Sledgehammer	\$40
Emergency Medical Kit	\$50	Spike Strip	\$150
Emergency Surgery Kit	\$100	Spray paint	\$15
Fake ID	\$200	Tarp	\$25
Flare	\$20	Zip Ties	\$25



RULES

ABILITIES

Each of the three **abilities** are used in situations.

Strength (STR): Used for saves in instances of physical power and endurance. Physical damage targets STR.

Dexterity (DEX): Used for saves in instances of speed, subtlety, and precision.

Control (CTRL): Used for saves in instances of the weird, luck, social interaction, emotional strain, stress, and fallout. Stress targets CTRL.

SAVES

A save is the resolution mechanic used in play. **Saves** are only used when there is risk. If there is no risk or interesting narrative outcome, no roll is needed.

To make a save PCs roll a d20 against the target attribute. If they roll equal to or under that ability score, they **pass**. Otherwise, they **fail**. A 1 is always a success, and a 20 is always a failure.

If there is a contested action, the party at most risk makes the save.

HEALING

Taking a quick rest for a few moments restores HP but can leave the investigators exposed. Ability loss takes longer to recover from. It can take as much as a week's rest with medical intervention or magical means.

REACTIONS

When the PCs encounter an NPC whose reaction to the party is not obvious, the Warden may have a player roll 2d6 and consult the table:

2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12
Hostile	Wary	Curious	Kind	Helpful

ARMOR & STABILITY

A target's **Armor** value is deducted from incoming **damage** before it is applied to HP. Equipment can provide this bonus defence (e.g. +1 Armor).

A target's **Stability** value is deducted from incoming **stress** before it is applied to HP. Equipment can provide this bonus defence (e.g. +1 Stability). These are rare items, trinkets, or objects that provide a deep sense of comfort and connection to reality.

It is up to the Warden's discretion to create additional equipment that have the tags (+1 Armor) or (+1 Stability).

DEPRIVATION & FATIGUE

A PC is **deprived** if lacking a crucial need (such as food or rest). They are unable to recover HP or ability scores. PCs may also take the deprived tag as the result of magical consequences or enemy abilities.

Anyone deprived for more than a day adds **Fatigue** to their inventory, one for each day. Each Fatigue occupies one slot and lasts until they are able to recuperate (such as a full night's rest in a safe spot).

PCs can also gain Deprived or Fatigue from casting spells or through events in the fiction.

VEHICLES

Vehicles have HP. When HP reaches 0 the vehicle is totalled. Totalling a vehicle causes damage to those in and around it.

Vehicle damage is relative to the target and its speed. Start at d6 and scale according to the fiction.

Damage against the vehicle depends on the method. Some instances may be Impaired based on the scale.

INVENTORY

Characters have a total of 10 inventory slots: a backpack (or similar case/bag) with six slots, one slot for each hand, and two slots for their upper body (such as the belt, chest, or head).

Most items take up one slot, and small items can be bundled together. Slots are abstract and can be rearranged per the Warden's discretion.

Bulky items take up two slots and are typically two-handed or awkward to carry. Anyone carrying a full inventory (e.g. filling all 10 slots) is reduced to 0 HP.

A PC cannot carry more items than their inventory allows. Vehicles can be used to store additional inventory, but they are inaccessible if you are away from the vehicle.

ASSOCIATES

PCs can hire **Associates** to aid in their investigations.

To create an associate roll 3d6 for each ability score, then give them 1d6 HP and a simple weapon (D6), then roll on the **Character Traits** tables to further flesh them out.

Associates cost between 50-100 dollars per day. Some are prepared for violence, but may require a little persuasion in order to undertake something truly dangerous or weird.

Expert Associates: An expert is a more temporary associate who is employed for a very specific task. They have 3HP and have an area of expertise with corresponding equipment. They cost \$300 per day.

WEALTH

Cash is the most common form of currency. Vendors (both legal and illicit) may require different forms of payment to access them. Different in game variables may alter the prices listed in the equipment section.

Debt transcends all boundaries and can be a boon or a burden.

Relics are powerful items touched by the Old Powers. They are dangerous and sought after.

