



Stormflux

-U-LARP Companion Rulebook-

1.9 Release 6.2021

My thanks to the players of the Stormflux campaign for exploring these new frontiers with us. Despite some changes and adjustments along the way, we have charted a grand adventure, and I look forward to setting out again.

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- In-character bit

Campaign Overview

A World of Potentia

Stormflux takes place in a world warped by the introduction of a new power known as **Potentia**. Potentia is both a resource and phenomenon that can reshape reality. Potentia is controlled by an individual's willpower, and manipulating it is a function of discipline and rote memory. Monstrous creatures can also utilize Potentia, and it contributes to a number of mysterious occurrences.

Potentia can be manipulated to control the elements or wield curses. It can create empathetic bonds and transmute materials. It levels the playing field between archers and gunmen, between wizards and werewolves, and eats away at the idea that "the self" is something limited.

The rise of Potentia led to an era of chaos known as the **Lost Age**, during which all things were possible. The Lost Age ended with the rise of several rules that bound this seemingly limitless power. As of the end of the Lost Age, it was found that Potentia is no longer able to manipulate time, create illusions, or subjugate minds.

Opportunities for Adaptation

Through the power of Potentia, individuals are able to change their form. Cosmetic changes can be accomplished over time, and bear a cultural similarity to piercings or tattoos. More extreme or dedicated individuals can accomplish greater changes, such as growing claws or even additional limbs. Some adjustments can occur subtly and accidentally. The means of change can involve image training, meditation, and dietary changes. The ability to adapt this way applies to beasts as well as civilized groups, creating a literal arms race throughout the wilderness.

A Shifting Landscape

The world of Stormflux is tumultuous. Locations themselves are not "rooted" and reliable, and navigation is more of an art than a science. A great and terrible storm is always visible, looming in the far-off skies, and as the weather shifts, so too does the landscape. A derelict cabin that is found at one location may be gone next time the same location is visited.

Players at Stormflux should expect that there will always be new locales to explore. Rather than continually expanding the world outwards, the world will twist around in ways that steadily uncover previously hidden alcoves and new challenges.

Though the world is confusing in nature, characters can learn to navigate it. Rather than following physical landmarks, the world is navigated conceptually. For instance, “exploring to find something new” or “making my way home” are basic applications of this conceptual navigation. Like attracts like, so players will see their exploration affected by their actions, associations, and assets.

Ruin and Splendor

The wonders of old societies are almost entirely lost, destroyed, or hidden away. Much of the world is a wilderness, and is treated as such, but some isolated areas may feature highly developed structures, either laying in ruin or remaining active. Any place that remains in good condition can only exist because some powerful will is exempting it from the whims of the Storm; these places will feature dangerous guardians or be protected by ancient enchantments.

Ruined places are not to be discounted, however. Many groups make their living by picking through remnants of older societies, finding all manner of older items. It isn't unusual for a character to be familiar with an old brand, like twinkies, or older technology, like a walkman.

Left on its own, anything sufficiently technical will be rendered useless by the Storm, but a device carried or maintained by a person is guarded by their will. A device that is easier to understand is more likely to keep working, so records and cassettes are more common than CDs. Flatscreen devices won't work unless maintained by a creature with a very advanced mind, or an Ancient Lore.

Skills in Stormflux - Patterns

Almost all skills in Stormflux are Equipped, and are referred to as **Patterns**. Patterns are represented as cards and are kept within a **Tapestry**. Players are limited to having a maximum of 8 cards Equipped at any given time. There is also an inherent set of skills available to all Human characters.

There are three varieties of Patterns:

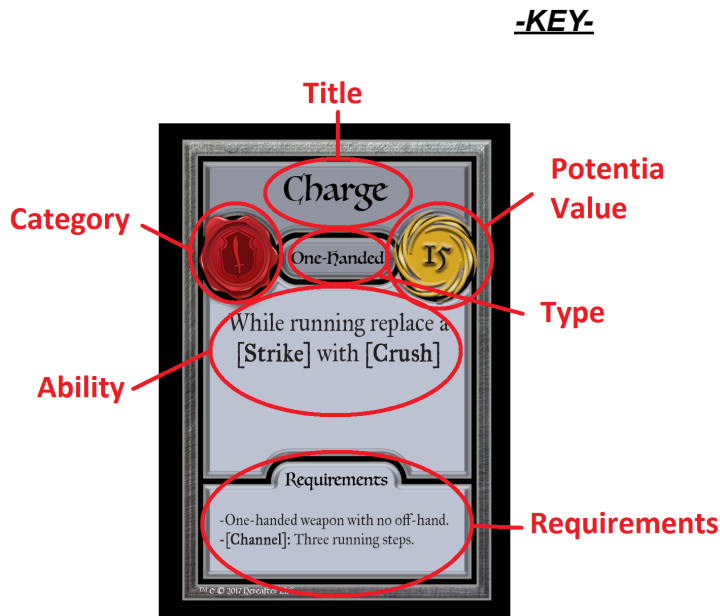
Codified patterns can be freely purchased and do not typically have detriments.

Wild patterns are limited in access and tend to have difficult requirements or drawbacks, but are generally more powerful, or offer some unique flavor.

Corrupt patterns (called Corruption) are Negative Skills assigned at death. You must pay to have them removed or they can be removed by communicating with a staff member and completing roleplay prompts listed on the card called **Omens**. Death is the most common cause of corruption, but interacting with corrupt entities, locations, or materials can also cause corruption.

Patterns can be freely traded, but can only be taken forcefully by the **Siphoning** mechanic. Patterns are considered in-character—all characters are able to manifest a visualization of their abilities. Patterns are only active when woven into a tapestry. Adding or removing patterns from a tapestry is called **Weaving**, and the ability to weave is a rare and exclusive skill.

ANATOMY OF CARDS



- **Title** - the name of the Pattern.
- **Category** - identifies if the Pattern is focused on Combat, Social, Exploration, or Crafting.
- **Potentia Value** - how much Potentia the Pattern is worth.
- **Type** - what kind of Pattern it is. Some Patterns can only be used depending on the types of Patterns already in your Tapestry.
- **Ability** - what the Pattern does.
- **Requirements** - what you need to do to use the Ability on the Pattern.

If a card states something contrary to the rules, it is intended that the card alters or overrides the rule in question. Please check with a Marshal or GM if you have further questions about the mechanics of a card.

- Anything else card related

Attributes in Stormflux

Stormflux uses the **Aegis** and **Tenacity** attributes, but does not use the **Spirit** attribute. Human characters begin with zero Aegis and zero Tenacity. Armor sets an **Aegis Limit**. Unarmored characters have an Aegis Limit of 1. Wearing armor increases your Aegis Limit as follows: Light Armor - Aegis Limit 2; Medium Armor - Aegis Limit 3; and Heavy Armor - Aegis Limit 4.

Wealth in Stormflux - Potentia

The Wealth of Stormflux is **Potentia**. It is used to advance your character and serves as the primary currency of the game. Potentia is an energy that infuses *all* things. It responds to your will to cause changes in the body, in the environment, and can cause supernatural effects.

Every character naturally accumulates Potentia from the atmosphere and the food they eat at a rate of 5 per event. It is assumed that characters earn and spend an untracked amount of potentia between events that covers their meals and **Trivial Items**.

Potentia and Patterns can be extracted through a violent process known as **Siphoning**. Siphoning can only be performed on an incapacitated target. Humans and monsters have different rules and results for siphoning. If you are siphoned, you must forfeit some Potentia at the end of the encounter when rewards and corruptions are handled. If you siphon a monster, you will receive a tag that can be exchanged for Potentia. If a Human siphons a Human, they will take a random pattern from the victim's tapestry. Siphoning a powerful monster can reward Wild patterns. Siphoning is one of the inherent skills available to all Human characters, alongside Stabilize and Recover.

Essences in Stormflux

Stormflux uses twelve essence types separated into three categories. Additionally, all essences are named. If the name of the essence matches its use, it can be more effective.

Elemental Essences

Igneous - the energy of fire, the yearning to consume, the heat of passion

Glacial - the chill of ice, the lethargy of hibernation, the shimmer of snow

Voltaic - the crackle of lightning, the tingling of risk, the jolt of instinct

Arenaceous - the sizzle of acid, the wither of famine, the inevitability of decay

Substantive Essences

Petrified - the stillness of stone, the unfeeling,

Mutagenic - the changing of flesh,

Verdant - the growth of nature,

Scrap - the intricacy of technology, the complexity of workmanship

Ephemeral Essences

Echo - the lingering of sound, the feelings that last, the repetition of history

Tempestuous - the currents of air, the bustle of travel,

Aqueous - the sustenance of water, the relief of cleanliness, the mystery of depth

Umbral - the veil of darkness, the finality of death, the sting of betrayal

Bulk Resources in Stormflux

Stormflux uses the Bulk Resources **Food**, **Lumber**, **Stone**, and **Metal**, listed in order of incrementing value. The exact value of each resource fluctuates somewhat with respect to scarcity, but the average prices are 5, 10, 15, and 20 potentia. Labor is available at a cap of 1 Labor per character per event, and can be earned as a reward for one NPC shift. If you are offered Labor as a reward for an encounter, this does not count against your cap.

Corruptions

Corruptions are tiered into Minor, Major, and Severe. A Minor corruption has a low value and requires only a modicum of effort to resolve. Major corruptions have a notable value and may

require extended effort to resolve. Severe corruptions have a high potentia value and will almost always require more than a single event to resolve. The tier of corruption you receive will relate to the source, with more threatening monsters or destructive actions relating to a higher tier.

Because corruptions occupy your tapestry, they will also reduce the number of Patterns that you can benefit from. If your tapestry is ever completely filled with corruptions (excluding your center card), any non-Severe corruptions will combine into higher tier corruptions. If your tapestry is ever completely filled with Severe corruptions, your character will become **Lost**. Lost characters are unplayable.

Some corruptions, especially Severe corruptions, can become related to ongoing plots or have effects beyond your character. Sometimes, it's possible to resolve Omens in a manner that will change or empower corruption...

Props and Costuming in Stormflux

Permitted Weapons - Mega Nerf and “Launcher Class”

In addition to the standard boffers permitted in U-LARP, Stormflux allows the use of the Mega Nerf line of Blasters. All Mega Nerf weapons are legal out-of-box. Any Mega Nerf weapon must be painted to have an appropriate in-character appearance by the second event of use, with the exception of the barrel tip, which must remain orange. Logos or branding on the weapon must be obscured or removed. Any modifications or customizations must be approved by an Inspector or GM. Custom weapons may be accepted if they fire Mega Nerf darts.

A weapon may be designated as a Launcher if it can fire safe, palm-sized projectiles. Launchers cause Strike damage by default. There is a set of Launcher-specific patterns that can allow for Elemental or Crush damage types.

Costuming and Mutation

Characters in Stormflux are able to change their shape over time in various ways. They can be altered by the whims of the Storm, the lingering effects of corruption, by the steady efforts of personal introspection, by mimicry of another creature, or by any other methods agreed upon by the staff and the player.

Any costume level greater than 0 provides a benefit called **Mutation**. During check in, a Wild Pattern related to the theme of the costume is selected at random, and you will be told the cost and given the opportunity to purchase the pattern using Potentia. An additional pattern is offered for each costuming level, but only one can be purchased. In this way, a character can develop the skills of a monster as they take on an altered form.

Campaign Rules

Combat in Stormflux

Damage & Armor

Stormflux uses a numberless damage system with the damage calls [Shot], [Strike], [Crush], [Pierce], [Ruin], and [Exploit], as well as the elemental damage calls [Fire], [Ice], [Shock], and [Acid]. When landing a hit, [Strike] is the assumed damage type and does not need to be called aloud. All other damage *must* be called. The exception is Nerf Blaster weaponry. The assumed damage for Nerf Blasters is [Shot], and any other damage must be called.

Wearing armor increases your Aegis Limit as follows:

Light Armor - Aegis Limit 2

Medium Armor - Aegis Limit 3

Heavy Armor - Aegis Limit 4

Casting

From the U-LARP core system, Basic, Couplet, Alchemical, and Chanter casting are all available in Stormflux. Stormflux additionally includes Runic casting that uses shields inscribed with a coded script, and Magishot casting that uses bullets empowered through advance preparation.

- **Magishot**
- **Runic**

Exploration in Stormflux

The process of navigation-by-association frames some of the history of the world of Stormflux. Because The Storm causes terrain to rearrange, travelers often became Lost and did not return home. A group of clans now known collectively as Wayfarers gained their namesake when they pioneered the practice of Pathfinding for the sake of trade. As this practice proliferated and their society became stable, Wayfarers eventually explored into broader lands. One by one, they found isolated pockets of humanity, some with centuries of recorded history.

As circles of communication expanded and became ever more complex, the Wayfarer Trade Princes convened. They declared the beginning of an “Age of Discovery”, the counterpoint to the Lost Age of yore. Two years later, the Trade Prince Cynwrig founded the outpost of Crashpointe. This campaign follows the struggles and exploits of the mercenaries and tradesfolk who make their home in Crashpointe.

---Maybe put a map here?---

The Storm is visible whenever you can see the sky. In safe places, it will appear far away, while dangerous locales appear overcast. The areas that can be safely traversed are collectively referred to as "The Calm". The area is disjointed and inconsistent, so those who would try to make maps often depict locations as individual bubbles. Locations can be brought into proximity with one another using roads and trails, but the accumulation of too much construction in one place will attract great and terrible creatures that few societies can rival or deter.

Available Lore Patterns

The **Creatures** of Stormflux are divided as follows, each with a related lore skill:

Avian - all birdlike creatures, both land-dwelling and capable of flight.

Beast - mammalian creatures, largely characterized by fur, claws, and horns

Construct - a variety of things lacking standard biology, fashioned by another hand. Sub-categorized into golems, mechana, and poppets, each have their own essence relationships and properties.

Drake - scaly creatures, many of which have elemental abilities. They have a tendency towards coveting treasures, and may develop advanced intelligence.

Insect - all insects, arachnids, and other chitinous beings. Highly varied creatures, they can appear individually or as a swarm. Hard plates and shells function as shields, making these uniquely armored creatures.

Ogre - all monstrous humanoids, large and small. This category includes craven goblins, mighty trolls, withered hags, and storied creatures like Oni and Wendigo. Some are able to communicate, but are either simple or savage, with a limited understanding of the humanity from which they are derived.

Stormflux uses the following **General** Lores:

Crime - knowledge of and connection to illicit or unsavory dealings, controlled substances, possible access to a fence or source of criminal contracts.

Law - knowledge of procedures and documents, contractual clauses and phrasing, as well as cultural norms and social rules

Lost Age - knowledge of myth and obscure possibilities regarding machinery, enchantments, powerful or legendary monsters, and possibly lost civilizations

Occult - understanding of subtle influences and patterns, their implications in ritual, craft, pathfinding and obfuscation.

Sympathy - understanding of bonds and relations, how to foster, manipulate, or erode connection between persons places and things.

Tactics - understanding of strategems, resources, designations or patterns used in battle. Insight regarding cultural differences in battle strategy.

Trade - knowledge of supply and demand relating to bulk resources or other commodities, as well as seasonal supply shocks.

A location will generally relate to at least two Essences, sometimes one or three. Essence Lores will assist in Pathfinding by providing a waypoint when attempting to reach less familiar locations, if you have a prop related to the essence. General Lores do not have a direct impact on Exploration, but may help you to better understand situational modifiers or establish goals. Creature Lores generally do not apply to Pathfinding, but may help you pursue or evade creatures, or improve your ability to prepare for hunting contracts.

Interaction in Stormflux

Bonds in Stormflux are akin to an empathic attunement, allowing bondmates to sense your presence, emotional state, and even communicate over long distances.

Bondmates are allowed to carry short wave radio to communicate in-game. Each Bond must register their frequency with staff. You may also ask a staff member at any time to locate a bond member or send a message to a bond member, and staff will assist as they are able. If staff is busy or unaware of the location of your bondmate, then the bond's connection is currently receiving interference from The Storm. Communication over a bond is perceptible, and some may think it rude if you take an aside to speak with your bond while they are talking to you (a bit like being preoccupied with a cell phone).

When you are in proximity of a Bondmate, you may pool Shaping, Pathfinding, and Lores together when making bids.

These benefits are in addition to enabling the use of Teamwork Patterns.

Creation in Stormflux

Crafting is referred to as Shaping in Stormflux, and relates both to an immediate ability to reshape your surroundings but also the long-term capacity to impart change on the world. A shock of potentia can shift the immediate circumstances in a supernaturally fast manner for one who understands their medium, but effecting change slowly and using traditional crafting methods allows one to more thoroughly imbue their will into an object or structure.

Essence Lores can empower bids through Shaping Power. The amount of shaping power that can be applied in this way is limited by your Shaping pattern. In order to take advantage of this power, you must either use an essence related to your lore, or that essence must already be present in the environment. Using an essence that is well suited to the task will provide good results, but using an essence that is poorly matched or conflicting may cause strange side-effects.

<Put a shaping table here regarding various things players can do>

Available Shaping Patterns

Chemistry- the recombination of chemicals, especially relating to corrosive or volatile compounds. Create poisons and potions.

Construction - the shaping and reinforcement of structures. Predisposed to long-term efforts, but can be used to patch or adjust doors and passages, or create temporary bridges.

Cooking - the (mostly) safe preparation of various potentia-infused ingredients. For best results, use essences that sound edible. Can provide both immediate and short-term benefits.

Etching - the practice of inscription, but also the shaping of any writing or language. Can be used in conjunction with Runic languages to provide a wide variety of effects, but you must learn Runic yourself by studying examples.

Medicine - long-term or surgical treatment of corruption, as well as the preparation of special bandages, poultices, medicines, and therapeutics. Long-term applications in body modification or mutation.

Obfuscation - the often subtle practice of hiding objects and erasing or overriding sympathetic connections. Also assists in detecting Obfuscation enacted by others.

Smithing - the creation and maintenance of arms and armors, including non-metallic alternatives. Access some short-term benefits through the creation of special sharpeners and resins.

Tinkering - all craft related to gearwork, springs, electronics, and other fine parts. Used in working with guns, bows, and traps.

Many shaping requirements will list categories of essence rather than specific essences. In this case, you may use any essence that falls into the correct category. When using Elemental Essences, any elemental choice on the resulting item must match the essence used.

Campaign Setting

Welcome to Crashpointe

Crashpointe was formally founded by Trade Prince Cynwrig in the second year of the age of discovery, marking his third outpost. At the time of its founding overtures were made to the populous cultures of The Calm that a home and plenty of work would be available here. It's frontier locale is ideal for Pathfinding to various places, hunting monsters and treasures alike.

Your Wealth

Whatever has brought you here and whatever you may have held before, all players begin with the same amount of Potentia (100) to spend on skills and no other holdings.

Your Origin

To better integrate characters with the world as it exists and the people around them, we suggest that your character originate from the factions prepared by staff or other players. You can also create your own custom background not related to our factions. There are a few guidelines to follow in either case.

Recent History - the Age of Discovery began in the real-world year of 2015. Prior to this there was little to no intermingling between different cultural groups - the intermingling of cultures is the subject of the now! If your character has interacted with multiple factions as part of their background, these interactions should be very recent. Select factions have recruited members from unnamed groups or tribes, or Lost persons. Please review the information regarding any factions you are interested in before making concrete decisions about the timeline of your character's past. The time before the Age of Discovery is referred to as the **Age of Strife**, and is catalogued in different manners and spanning different periods depending on the reliability of recorded history within each individual faction. When used in the descriptions to follow, it is a general reference to times before meeting other civilized groups, with isolation often prompted by the presence of some calamity. Your character may have endured such calamity, or may have been born in the later years of the Age of Strife, after your faction had suitably adapted but prior to integrating with other cultures.

Rule of 5 - a character may only claim in their background to have accomplishments or standing relative to a group of five people. If the character was a leader, they may not claim more than 5 subordinates. If they accomplished a great feat of craft or strength, it should be something no greater than what could be done by five ordinary people. If the character is a remnant of some greater society that is not part of our established factions, any persons in excess of 5 must be Lost. If you are collaborating with other players to create a shared background, you may pool your allocation of NPCs and make grander claims. When including NPCs in your background, you may request a specific player or staff member to act as that NPC if/when they are featured in the game. Any NPC appearances are under staff control.

Major Setting Elements

Human vs. Monster - the wilderness is full of monstrous creatures, each adapting to one another through an instinctual use of potentia. The people of the calm are often beset by these creatures. Some embrace that humans can gain monstrous power by hunting, slaying, and siphoning, but others fear and distrust the blurring of the line between Human and Monster. The world is host to both intelligent monsters, and monstrous humans.

Death is not the end - after death, the body fades away and the person returns to life, with very few exceptions. One does not return from death by natural causes in this way. Traumatic deaths can cause corruption, and an excess of corruption may prevent a person from returning either temporarily or permanently. In the time prior to pathfinding, the return from death was

more tenuous. Certain influences can cause a person to return to another place, or to lose their connection to their home. A traveler who becomes lost without pathfinding may be as good as dead. Most people in The Calm use “Lost” instead of “dead”. In this world, the dead will return. The Lost may never come back.

Pathfinding and Land Wars - a person’s home is their castle, and that castle can be taken. The place you call home is easier to return to with pathfinding, and will determine what sort of places you can easily reach. Conquering requires driving somebody out of their home, and this is done by severing their feelings of sentiment towards that place. If you were to be killed in your own home, or watch it burn down, these events will make it difficult to return, and this is the means by which land trades in ownership. Entirely unoccupied land will be taken by the Storm, anything you wish to take must be occupied or built upon.

Faith in The Calm - while some people pay homage to a distinct religious figure, or espouse faith towards a once living entity or sacred construct, there are four “Great Powers” that are more commonly held in reverence by smaller cultures or tribes within The Calm. These are the Earth, the Moon, the Sun, and the Storm - the latter regarded with fear but respected as a great and terrible influence. The presence of these entities are undeniable, but their animus is questionable. Still, these entities each ‘preside’ over a certain purview. The Earth relates to resources, nature, and craft. The Moon relates to mystique, exploration, and all things stellar or distant. The Sun relates to conflict, endurance, and the harvest. The Storm relates to chaos, destruction, grief, and loss.

Factions

Wayfarers

The history of the Wayfarers is long and poorly documented. Bygone Wayfarer leaders have been known to make claims of glory or heroism with nary a shred of evidence. These claims would stand on force of personality as often as not, as great hordes were formed through sheer charisma. There was a time when the whole of them had devolved into barbarism and routinely raided one another, burning anything that wasn’t valuable. When there were few warlords left, with little to call their own, they broke bread and established a few simple accords. Society progressed from open war into uneasy truce as people struggled to rebuild. Many lands were despoiled such that the only solution was to move on.

The resulting nomads found that no matter how they wandered, they would encounter again and again the victors of those old struggles, the forests winding them back along seemingly-familiar paths and somehow confusing their best ability to navigate. During their wild wanderings however, they came to find “treasures” of older times and materials that would serve as goods for trade. Soon all were yearning to explore and lay claim to this wealth.

Though the situation grew tense, the Wayfarers held to their accords and averted open war. Land was parceled out, and came to be ruled over by those who could sustain their own cults of

personality, known as “Trade Princes”. These Trade Princes would continue to drive expansion, spreading resources to avoid accumulating enough Potentia to attract deadly monsters. An individual Trade Prince may direct hundreds of individuals, with the most influential overseeing over one thousand individuals across several outposts. All told, the Wayfarers and their affiliates number between six and eight thousand. Trade Princes often bicker and seek advantage against one another, but those who declare open war would be struck down by a united front.

Recent advances in the use of Potentia enabled the Wayfarers to explore further, and in time they discovered other people. Rather than wild tribes, these groups would sometimes constitute entire developed societies. Over the past two years, Trade Princes have seized on this opportunity to establish further trade and expand their current influence.

Expansion entails that a Trade Prince must relinquish some control; they can't administrate everything at once. When an Outpost grows too large, the materials there are portioned out, with some quantity taken by a declared Second who will either take over the existing Outpost or be responsible for establishing the next. This relationship of partnering and apprenticeships is also utilized in lower stratas of Wayfarer society, with businessmen and artisans similarly declaring 'Seconds' for their trade or craft.

The shift to mercantilism in the Wayfarers has led to a rise in the rule of law and the practice of contracting. Ironclad word worked into potentia can become supernaturally binding, but there are limits to what can be enforced in this way. A contract can only be enforced to the extent which it is fair, an unfair contract will bleed away its power or be subject to nullification by those sufficiently willful or skilled. Actions such as theft, murder, betrayal, and trespass create a 'karmic ledger' that a contractor can draw upon to create bounties or enforce punishments. A punishment in excess of this balance will fail to hold. It's hard to say if this karmic justice is the judgement of the Storm, the people, or some other great will.

Garb and Lifestyle - The Trade Princes

Wayfarer garb and lifestyle has diversified under the purview of each trade prince. Some hold true to an older identity of clan warfare, using hides, furs, simple metal armors, and bold heraldry. Others have adapted through prevalence of trade to use more complex fabrics and patterns, and a less militarized lifestyle. Yet more have adapted to a locality, outfitting for seafaring or jungle survival.

Trade Prince Cynwrig - reckless and optimistic. Cynwrig believes that everyone can become better than who they are. Abhors stagnation and wasted potential beyond all else. Unlike other Trade Princes, Cynwrig leaves his Seconds behind to run his successful outposts while he explores, seeking out new ventures. Cynwrig can frequently be found in the company of his several advisors. Cynwrig is the founder of three standing outposts, Dragonback Ridge, Redoran, and Crashpointe.

Cynwrig does not personally manage Dragonback Ridge or Redoran. Crashpointe is only loosely managed, with Cynwrig and his companions providing some support backbone and advice to local mercenaries. Though it lacks certain amenities, Crashpointe charges no taxes and offers room and board at minimal costs.

<Bit about Dragonback>

<Bit about Redoran>

Trade Prince Catriona Sionann - calm and patient. Appears as a champion to the impoverished and downtrodden, but rumors suggest Catriona has an extensive network of telepathically linked spies and assassins at her beck and call. Rumors also circulate that she has an inordinate collection of pets each with the mind of a human, so who's to say what could be true? She refers to herself as a Prince - the Wayfarers accept the term as gender neutral. Catriona is the founder of the outposts of Kinbaelly, Rathtyrnan, Bracken Bole, and Fincorrie Valley.

<Bit about garb & lifestyle for Cat's people>

Trade Prince Elidor Emrys - mischievous and clever. Determined to prove superiority through adaptation, many of Elidor's outposts lack defensive structures of any kind. Instead, his people and structures blend into their surroundings and environments. He holds to the following motto: "Do not change nature when you can change yourself. Observe your surroundings and emulate their design, for in this way you can learn from countless trials." Elidor has a greater number of outposts than other Trade Princes, but keeps them smaller in size and scope. Elidor holds the outposts of Giant's Repose, and Crystal Spring. Emrys formerly held an outpost known as the Grove of Bounty, but it has recently been taken by the Trackers of the God Beast.

<Emrys garb & lifestyle>

Trade Prince Phillip Defferels - boisterous and wasteful. Unlike Elidor, Phillip has no qualms about aggressive logging or strip mining. He would often say that "Man will get back to glory when all these damn wilds are gone." Phillip's associates are often like-minded and rowdy, with morale upkept by a steady supply of alcohol and regular carousing. Phillip holds the single outpost of Verdeboste, a large agrarian town with vast farmlands and near-monstrous cattle known as 'Gristlebacks'. Defferels himself is rumored to have the blood of an ogre, and is personally tougher than any single wayfarer. The defense of Verdeboste relies on his personal intervention, which prevents him from expanding successfully despite success in trade.

The people of Verdeboste are well fed and have easy access to woolen clothing. This outpost is also one of the best sources of dairy products within the calm. Defferels has established a trusted relationship with the Protectorate, trading food for guns, as well as the bones of large creatures that are processed in Verdeboste into weaponry, drinking horns, and other scrimshaw novelties.

Verdeboste is often subject to raids by large ogre populations, and by Brennis Boru, who makes a sort of tradition of assaulting Verdeboste warehouses for food through the winter. Boru and Defferrels have an agreement to limit damage to structures and handle the raids as a sort of competition.

Trade Prince Alek Venner - mousy and envious. Alek is a petty sort of cunning. Once a successful Trade Prince, he suffered great losses as a result of revolts among his governed people. He has little land left, but still holds a collection of potent treasures and enough dedicated men to get by. His remaining outpost, Silver Cove, is hidden away and difficult to access, home to many who wish to hide. A *presence* within the waters of the great moonlit sea is given offerings by the townspeople, and disappearances are known to occur there.

Travel to Silver Cove will require an escort for all but the most talented pathfinders, except for certain seasons when the mists part and one can more easily traverse the caverns that lead to the cove. Those who have visited are almost certain to mention the 'Fish' Market, where all manner of things are for sale. It's easy to distinguish that a criminal element is present in the Cove, but the people there would not take kindly to hearing attention called to this. A thief recognizes a thief, and there is a certain decorum in requesting nefarious services.

In recent years, Venner has withdrawn from any direct governance, leaving the people of Silver Cove to their own devices, and interacting only with a few close associates who maintain influence through fear. An observatory by the sea looms over the cove, known to be Venner's residence, but few are allowed to enter. It's said to be full of treasures but guarded by occultic defenses.

The mood in Silver Cove is heavily influenced by the moon and the tides, in a manner almost like a code that the people of the outpost know very well. One item of advice is shared freely with outsiders - do not set out on the sea when the waters are still. When the moon reflects perfectly on the water, the sky and the sea become the same, and your vessel will be taken Elsewhere.

Trade Prince Brennis Boru - ruthless, and a little crazy. Brennis holds to the old raiding culture of the Wayfarers, but keeps to agreed rules for this warfare when engaging with other Wayfarers. Brennis has declared open war on the ocean for some 'slight' that most are afraid to ask about. In this pursuit, he has dedicated many resources to the construction of a great ship. Despite these extravagances, Brennis' outposts enjoy the order and structure set down in Brennis' earlier days, and remain a good home for fighting men, or those who seek military protection. Brennis holds the outposts of Andlang and Vidblain.

Civilians in Brennis' lands are expected to pay taxes for their safety, and are entitled to only a secondary portion of the spoils of conflict. Militant persons are called upon to join in raids and hunts directed by those closest to Brennis, with greater honors entrusted to those who prove themselves in combat.

Brennis hosts fighting competitions among his own, and plays these fights for spectacle. Competitors are augmented with alchemical substances and inscribed runes to prolong the fights and heighten the drama. Both armed and grappling contests are held. Outside of the arena, these substances and augments are offered commercially, sometimes personally advertised by Brennis as the fuel behind his 'berserk' warriors.

Downtowners

The Downtowners are a loosely affiliated collective with an unclear population somewhere between 150 and 300 individuals. Downtowners maintain a settlement known as Alleyway Junction, and some small warehouses and ruins that are difficult to find. Downtowners are often skillful with regards to pathfinding and obfuscation, and the only group apart from certain Wayfarers who are known to ambush and raid. Downtowners are often skilled in the use of Scrap, Umbral, and Tempestuous essences, and most comfortable in Urban environments.

The origins of the Downtowners are not well recorded. Groups of scavenging urbanites began to come together some decades ago, including some members of the Wayfarers and the Protectorate, indicating some connection that predates the Age of Discovery.

Downtowners couch their identity as a singular group by virtue of shared space and attitude, but little in the way of leadership and rules. The larger collective exists as an affiliation of gangs that agree to mutual non-aggression. A gang within the downtowners may have rules of its own, especially regarding recruitment.

The rule that does unite Downtowners is "family first". Members are expected to side with and support other Downtowners more often than not, prioritizing the community over individual jobs or other loyalties.

Downtowners are not conflict averse, but take care not to let hostilities last. Disagreements are typically settled with games or challenges such as footraces or dance-offs. The most commonly accepted method of settling a disagreement is a one-on-one knife fight between unarmed combatants. Even this is kept nonlethal and impermanent - the community looks poorly on those who seek lethal resolution, or those who refuse to honor the outcomes of fair competition.

Lifestyle and Garb

Downtowners acquire most of their foodstuffs and materials through scavenging, trade, and banditry. They mostly subsist on dried meats, root vegetables, and ancient canned goods. There is an old brand of sugary confection said to be capable of surviving any manner of apocalypse, and Downtowners sometimes trade in these individually wrapped preserved snacks.

Downtowner garb is similarly taken from a myriad of old ruined storefronts, and can appear similar to the popular wear of eras past. It isn't clear how this stuff is reliably found; many would consider these garments to be lost age relics, but Downtowners seem to handle the whole thing with nonchalance.

Notable Gangs

The Stitches - Lead by Doc Stitcher, said to be an Ex-Transcendence Downtowner. The Doc is said to be able to fix “whatever ails ya” but often for a steep price. Those who can’t afford the treatment can volunteer as subjects for experimental surgeries. Many members of the gang have also gone under the knife at one time or another, sometimes still bearing scars or stitchwork. If you slice one of them open, you may find extra parts. Members all wear surgeon’s masks and use ‘Nurse’ when referring to one another.

Alley Cats - A gang of brokers and fixers connected with the enigmatic Mr Alleyways. This gang is said to contain some of the Downtowner’s best occulters. Their numbers aren’t well known, but they are said to have their fingers in just about every pie in Alleyway Junction. It’s said that the Alley Cats recruit from the most light fingered grifters, and that experienced Cats can showcase spectacular sleight of hand.

Rat Pack - This splinter group largely sticks to sewers and caves, and does not boast the same pathfinding skill that is renowned across most downtowners. It’s unclear whether this group originated from “ordinary” downtowners or if a group of ratlike humans was integrated, but today this group is composed of humans with varying degrees of rodent traits, most commonly oversized ears, whiskers, and tails. The Rat Pack is denigrated by many other downtowners who decry them over differences in culture and supposedly, civility. The average rat is certainly less “stylish”, often sporting tattered clothing or slick with some industrial grime.

Dead Letters Office - Housed in a remote locale, this assembly of couriers and parcel-folk attend to lost mail. While theoretically innocuous, their task is actually insurmountable. Letters arrive at the office from seemingly all walks of life, all manner of cultures, and sometimes there aren’t enough stamps! Who can say if the gang accepts this curse by way of curiosity or boredom? Perhaps the delivery of mail is an inescapable calling, and some are drawn to the gang by the same strange force that causes lost mail to accrue there.

Away Team - A fairly small gang of capable pathfinders, the Away Team focuses on making deliveries and collecting payments far away from Alleyway Junction. Primarily employed by other gangs, they never take contracts against other Downtowners to avoid inter-gang political entanglements.

The Wheelmen - With narrow purview comes many opportunities for mischief. The visionary tinkerer Wheels employs his gang in gathering old ruined structures and hijacking unused buildings from outposts that have been abandoned or imperiled by outside forces. The wheelmen are said to run a chop shop that chops shops, and are responsible for installing spoilers on a number of buildings and irresponsibly ditching them at scenic vistas or behind billboards outside town.

Underground Railroad - These serious and dutiful Downtowners consider themselves responsible for bringing the captive to freedom. A recently formed gang, they search for new groups of people with poor knowledge of pathfinding and help them in escaping any servile or feudal arrangements.

Afternoon Tea Time - With an affectation that suggests faux class, the members of this gang prize and pursue items of lost luxury, especially tea, coffee, and fine liquor. Frequenting the upper floors of Alleyway Junction, this club is often distinguished by lacey or dapper accessories including top hats, monocles, opera glasses, silk gloves, delicate umbrellas, and other substantially out-of-place garments.

Back Alley Boomboxers - Analyzing various styles in pursuit of the height of dance, these Downtowners form more of an interest group than a gang. Though it may seem difficult to link dance with one's survival prospects, the gang profits handily as some of the most capable scavengers of lost music. Lately they have commit more time and resources to travel, seeking skilled dancers among other cultures, and meeting some small groups as of yet unknown to the Wayfarers.

The Scream Queens - An amenable but somewhat flashy gang, The Scream Queens are enthusiastic about old media and culture, especially old horror films. An older gang, the Scream Queens don't often make waves but have noteworthy cultural influence and an uncannily relevant degree of genre savvy.

The Lost Boys - The premier Downtowner footrace crew, this gang prides themselves on quickly navigating rooftops and clotheslines. Tryouts to join the gang are tough, and they will drop members who can't keep to a certain speed, especially those who get too old.

Geek Squad - A crew dedicated to scrounging and repair of old electronics. They mostly keep to a small hideout with fiendish security. They are said to know things about tech that rival the great minds of other factions, and these secrets are jealously guarded. Most communication with the Geeks is handled through old terminals that can be found from time to time in Alleyway Junction. Power draw to their territory sometimes knocks out power for the nearby buildings.

Quilting Circles - Downtowners have an insatiable demand for patches and custom clothing. Skilled needle-workers gather in the heights of the alleys, bantering back and forth as they chatter across balconies and display their latest patches, embroideries and crochet. Membership in a quilting circle is not exclusive with other gangs, and gossip is often traded between the stitches.

Notable Locations

The confounding side-streets of Alleyway Junction may be difficult to conceptualize, especially for an outsider, but the residents of this concrete jungle navigate with a keen understanding of the sub-districts that make up the greater whole.

When entering Alleyway Junction, you will generally find yourself walking the **Main St Promenade**. This straightforward path contains a number of storefronts but also connects to several side-streets. If you keep going straight, you won't get lost, but you won't find anything particularly secret or secure.

Most long-term residents live in the **Alleys**, the namesake of the overall location. Alleys link everything together, and most apartment windows or balconies lead back out to the Alleys. Look up and you'll see a network of fire escapes and clotheslines, with Downtowners hanging from windows to exchange gossip.

Behind storefronts or beneath many other buildings are the mazelike halls of **Boilerville**. A mess of pipeworks and power lines run through these back rooms and into the buildings of Alleyway Junction. The layout here isn't even slightly sensible, with each set of industrial equipment bleeding into the next, and HVAC systems criss-crossing throughout. This area can be a hotbed for graffiti, and is a popular hideaway for those on the run. Among the pipes are hidden caches of guns or bizarre composite essences.

Industrious Downtowners are still mapping out the **Wherehouses**, a series of isolated resource-rich holding locations. A warehouse, when first found, is crammed to the brim with goods accomodating a given theme, be it home improvement or fancy napkins. Locating and accessing one of these locales may require clipping coupons, frequenting the same storefront, wearing an ID badge, picking a series of locks in a specific order, or forever swearing off of smooth jazz. Once a warehouse has been emptied of shoes, hair products, ottomans, or whatever else, they are co-opted for work or sport.

Above the shops and alleys sits **Chimneytops**, a rooftop scene often rife with conflict. Pathfinders use these open areas to run deliveries, and gangs sometimes gather here to settle scores with foot races and gunfights. Steam or smoke rises from ventilation systems and exhaust pipes, and billboards break up the field of ceilings. The advertisements range from the well-known to the unnatural, with posters heralding nonexistent products and films.

Well-off Downtowners congregate in the lounges and derelict office spaces of **Penthouse**. Though still somewhat run-down, this place is naturally exclusive, and cannot be reached by those lacking in prestige or those poorly dressed unless they are invited or escorted. There isn't much in the way of resources up here either, but sometimes fine liquors can be found.

Higher still are the inhospitable heights of **Skyglass**. Flying monsters roost here amid unfinished skyscrapers and behind shattered windows. The air is a tad thin, and looking out from here you can see clouds below. When you cast your gaze to the horizon, you can see skyscrapers further out than Alleyway Junction itself stretches, some with twisted or tilting designs.

Back to the bottom, certain service entrances and manhole covers lead down into **Sewercross**, the undesirable muck-ridden passages beneath Alleyway Junction proper. The multi-story

stonework here isn't reminiscent of a modern sewer, nor is it reasonably navigable. Getting lost may be less concerning than tangling with the sewer's denizens - mutated gators, monstrous rats, and teeming roaches.

Bordering Sewercross are a few carved out safe regions collectively known as **Undercity**. Largely built into underground parking lots inexplicably crossed with subway stations, the de facto "owners" of Undercity are the Rat Pack. The area is also home to some raggedy downtowners, and a small community of busking performers.

It's rumored that somewhere within Alleyway Junction beats the **Heart of the City**. They say the Heart draws the city together and turns monsters away. Skilled pathfinders sometimes claim to feel "the pulse" when drawing closer to a big score.

Knights of the Wave

Those who would become the Knights of the Wave were a people truly menaced by the storm. Oral history claims that their ancestors had a great mastery of technology, but that their information was wholly stored through ancient means - bound up in electricity, and magnetism; transported through the air and by light. These records and technology were lost when great and unending storms tore society apart. People struggled against floods and wildfires while twisted air took the form of great beasts and descended with intent to devour. The meaning of the old world was lost, left to the crude interpretation of those who would later try to piece old knowledge back together.

People huddled in ruins learned to survive by harnessing potentia and using it to communicate. They shared warnings and learned how to direct resources, scavenged when the storms abated and rescued those who would otherwise be lost. Those who practiced this skill could raise information to the air as was once done with old technology. Beacons and relays were created that could extend and improve the normal function of Bonds to communicate over greater distances, and additional tools were created to receive messages without necessarily weaving a Bond. These pioneers of mystical radio dubbed themselves the Knights of the Wave, and dedicated their practice to the safeguarding of humanity and the unification of their scattered peoples.

The Knights dedicated themselves through three roles. **Seekers** who would perform reconnaissance and field rescue operations, **Keepers** who would use Shaping to fortify locations and support communications, and **Oracles** who would organize greater efforts and act as central mouthpieces for the organization. The Oracles select one of their own to act in an honorific position known as 'The Source'. This individual rescinds their individuality in service of the order, offering up their personal identity as a sacrifice to sustain the Knight's Bond. In turn, they are the final arbiter in times of disagreement between Oracles. Many others have survived as civilians leaning on the Knights for support, and providing resources in turn.

In the history of the Knights, there was an Oracle who lead others against the community and towards his own ends. His followers prioritized their own survival over that of others, and

hoarded resources despite the needs of the hungry and homeless. Seekers under the charge of this Oracle came to despise him, and worked to undermine his messages. They spoke to the people of every misdeed, and disregarded those orders they knew to be wrong. The Oracle was enraged, and lashed out against the “traitors” of his Bond. They felt his will crackle and sear in their minds, and in their dreams saw him with eyes that flashed like lightning. All knew him then to be The Great Deceiver, and his support waned. The Deceiver was not apprehended, and faded into obscurity.

The idea that an Oracle could be turned against the good of the people created a deep suspicion that lasted long after The Great Deceiver. To this day, Knights of the Wave emphasize transparency in all things, and consider humility to be a great virtue - Keepers work to exalt this trait in their service to public utility and defense. The duties of a Seeker naturally demand charisma, and finding balance between these qualities is essential for an aspiring knight. A would-be Oracle is expected to spend time as a Seeker and as a Keeper in order to learn each of these traits, and this practice helps Seekers and Keepers to respect the office of Oracle. An Oracle’s duties demand that they act as mediator and broadcaster, and this social balancing act sometimes gives way to eccentric personalities and some measure of celebrity.

Knights in the Age of Discovery

It is contended that the Knights found the Wayfarers, rather than the other way around. The truth is likely that scouting parties from each encountered the other. The Age of Discovery is a dizzying implication for the Knights, and constitutes a great inflation of the scope of their duty. The Knights are increasingly spread thin as they seek to communicate their message and their ideals to new corners of humanity, while simultaneously seeking to learn of new cultures and findings. The Knights have been active in recruiting Squires from among other factions, though not all of these new recruits share in the noble mindset forged by the hardships the Knights have faced.

Some Wayfarers have welcomed the capabilities of the Knights, and offer a tithe to the organization in exchange for hosting a Keeper within their outposts. This allows the citizens of Wayfarer outposts to tune in to “The Wave”, a name given to the Oracles’ regular broadcasts. Not all consider a better informed populace to be a good thing, and knights have been rebuffed or chased out of societies that would prefer to control the information their people receive. These groups are eyed warily, but aggressive action is typically outside of the purview of the Knight’s mission.

Currently, the Knights have no outpost of their own, with their largest grouping hosted in the outpost of Kinbaelly under the auspices of Trade Prince Catriona Sionann. From here, The Wave broadcasts news, entertainment, and wholesome advice via the Oracles Tori Komori, Midnight Tanaka, and others. A recent collaboration with the Order of the Exalted Codex has restored a lost communication tower, steadily increasing the Knight’s independent infrastructure and reach.

Lifestyle and Garb

Garb varies by role to a degree within the Knights. All prize preparation and tend to carry emergency supplies, but this means something different for a Seeker who works with people than it does for a Keeper who will often work with materials and devices. A knight is liable to be scolded if they fail to carry some sort of writing material or recording device, regardless of rank. With a long history of scavenging, Knights tend to prize equipment and work carefully to maintain it. A kit may be composed of mismatched pieces, but is often well-worn and well cared for. Tools and weapons are sometimes passed down as a matter of ceremony, and knights often record the history of objects or the special occasions when they are rewarded. This practice reflects their journalistic tendencies, and Keepers especially tend to be meticulous in recording. A Seeker who is seen to enjoy books more than people is likely to be transitioned into a role as a Keeper, and this is not uncommon.

Knights sometimes become accustomed to rough living, supplied only by the sparse amenities offered by their remote hosts. Keepers especially have a tendency to acclimate to the culture in the region of their assignment.

The Order of the Exalted Codex

Transcendence Incorporated

REPORT NEWLY UNCLASSIFIED - PUBLIC ACCESS AUTHORIZED

Authority of Director Savage, A.O.D. 6

Transcendence Inc. exists as a merger between two previously competing entities. In the Age of Strife, both Rainworks and [Inhuman Beginnings] were [among several companies] established by refugees driven underground as a result of toxic elements on the surface (see Appendix A - Inert Toxic Elements, REDACTED). The progress of medicine steadily enabled them to further develop, and eventually to interact with one another. The ~~two~~ groups began to compete for resources, but individual researchers found opportunities to meet, exchanging findings and making deals. The prevalence of supernatural espionage lead to a rise in draconic policy, but methods for information security often lag behind the methods of thwarting security.

Rainworks continued to endorse risky experimental methods as a means of furthering research. Members of their group were subjected to testing in order to move forward, and many deteriorated. Their culture incorporated a trial-by-fire sort of spirit, and they keenly understood that individual willpower could result in deviations due to the influence of potentia. Force of will became a defining element in their efforts, and this was demonstrated through the accomplishments adapted by their people; who tended to grow spines, fangs, horns and scales.

[Inhuman Beginnings] operated with a focus on validity and reliability in the results of their experiments. Human beings proved to be a confounding variable when manipulating potentia. To control this variable, they worked to measure and control human perception and

assumptions. Through various testing methods, they made strides in understanding the ability to weaponize the human form. Many advances made by [Inhuman Beginnings] were achieved through reverse engineering Rainworks' successes. Despite denying the full capacity of potentia, their dedication to the scientific process formed an unquestionable foundation for future developments in the field.

Both groups anticipated sabotage and began to escalate in military capability, but before open warfare emerged, Rainworks collapsed. Surviving personnel describe a litany of horrors, the crossing of an 'event horizon', and the discovery of a landscape REDACTED. [Inhuman Beginnings] took in the survivors and conducted an inventory of abandoned facilities. Some recovered materials have included a self-motivated needle that seems to prick people in the night, a chair that gently caresses and massages any who sit in it, REDACTED, and a coffee maker with a face that insists it was once named Jeremy Kane. Jeremy doesn't need power, and makes splendid coffee. It has been suggested that [aggressive ex-human creatures are still active in Lost silos]. Exploration of abandoned facilities resulted in the recovery of corpses with a variety of peculiar wounds, detailed in the attached Appendices C-E.

Wayfarer scouts made contact with agents in secured territory Echo-4. In debriefing it became clear that non-toxic habitable space was available aboveground, and a relocation effort began.

In relocation, it became evident that some members of the research team were uncomfortable with the imposition of regulations by [the coalition newly dubbed 'Transcendence Incorporated'] . Several scientists set out on their own, with mixed results. Recovered researchers are listed in appendix J - RECOVERED PERSONNEL. Dr. Iador Stempko was found to have mutated into [tactical designation Ettiin-D']. Further modifications were enacted through process REDACTED. His disappearance is considered unrelated to Wayfarer contact and relocation.

To facilitate relationships with newly encountered demographics, remaining membership rebranded "Transcendence Incorporated", with the stated mission goal of "Utilizing science for the realization of possibility". Administrative personnel were re-designated and tasked with establishing public relations and accomplishing damage control. Research standards were re-evaluated to suit larger available sample sizes, and research priorities were adjusted to suit public application.

Today, Transcendence Inc. is at the forefront of medical understanding and manipulation of Wild potentia. Facilities are open for touring, and partnership with enterprising Wayfarers has established a few rudimentary spas for facilitating personal modification, both cosmetic and functional.

Organization and Locations

Transcendence organizes in a series of small teams of researchers and operatives, and has a number of personnel strictly dedicated to maintenance and upkeep. Oversight is handled by a board of **Directors** composed of citizens with seniority and important responsibilities, generally the heads of the largest teams in conjunction with lead maintenance personnel.

Young or new members will act as apprentice researchers or apprentice to maintenance workers. This can begin as young as 14.

Each team within a department will have a **Team Lead**, this role will sometimes rotate as a team transitions through various endeavors. Each department has one **Department Head** as a title of responsibility, though functionally a department head is not very different from a director, the actual responsibilities and powers largely overlap.

Any individual recognized by the community as making substantial contributions and possessing sound judgement can possibly be named a director. Wealth and speaking talent are very valuable in this role, leading to an overrepresentation of the Relations department. There are currently eight directors forming the board that controls the company.

Transcendence has publicized the existence of three outposts. Headquarters is located within Silo 47, codenamed 'Erlenmeyer'. Access is restricted for Silo 21, codenamed 'Crucible'. A more recently established forward outpost is codenamed 'Alembic'.

Lifestyle and Garb

Much of the diet available to those in the underground is based on carefully cultured fungi, offering only slight variety. Occasionally some mole-like creatures will breach portions of the facility, these provide some availability of meat. In more recent years, above ground agriculture has expanded, additional crops have become available and foraged fruit has become staple in primary facilities.

Materials were somewhat scarce throughout the age of strife, leading the culture to focus on cleanliness and renewability. It isn't peculiar for a given member of transcendence to be somewhat thrifty or environmentally conscious. This trait is less prominent among former Rainworks employees, and it is rumored that some advanced fabrication technology is still lost in old Rainworks facilities.

There are three broad trends of clothing in Transcendence - practical garb suited to experimentation, maintenance, or combat operations; professional outfits such as button downs, ties, blazers; and avant-garde or comfort oriented styles inspired by modern art or meditative cultures.

Trackers of the God Beast

The entirety of Tracker history is kept through stories passed down from parent to child and often features various totemic animals in moral-driven fables. Given the nature of this form of record keeping, inconsistencies and variations abound. The following is a compilation of the commonalities between several different versions of a Tracker creation myth. Inconsistencies, personal insertions, and explicit content has been omitted.

"It was Man's hubris that called the Godbeast into being. Gentle and fair the Godbeast graced man with the Truths, asking nothing in return save a domain of harmonious tranquility. In his

greed Man divided and butchered the Truths so that each would have their own severed slice. Yet these partial Truths were incomprehensible before Man's impatient logic. In frustration Man sought to add to their own piece of Truth. Some sought to graft their own ideologies into a Truth while others waged endless war to steal fragments of Truth from others. But these shattered Truths, once forged by a God, could not be remade by Man, their divine spark extinguished by arrogance and cruelty.

Saddened by the sight of so much conflict and angered at the fate of his Truths, the Godbeast rampaged across the works of Man. It destroyed everything man of uncaring stone or unfeeling metal, unmade weapons of impersonal destruction, and erased the bars of infrastructure used to cage untold millions. When its rage subsided, the Godbeast surveyed the devastation left in its wake, the ruins of its frenzy. With its anger gone, no feeling remained in the Godbeast except heartbreak and it wept. For seven years its cries could be heard around the world.

Our seven ancestors, ancient and wise though their names are lost to the ages, did not sit idly by while the Godbeast suffered so. They each traveled far and wide to find a treasure. Sifting through the wreckage of the Old World they each found a wondrous artifact, not something of Man but something before Man's time, something wild. Although they searched apart, each of our ancestors abandoned their cloak of Humanity in exchange for something different. Humbly, our ancestors presented these gifts to the Godbeast, offering up the sum total of their tribulations and trials. They wished to share with the Godbeast what each believed was their greatest discovery, their greatest personal Truth.

The Godbeast was moved by their display. Although their Truths were warped and primal, the Godbeast saw something else within them, a new Truth that it had never noticed before, the unflinching desire to seek challenge and overcome all obstacles. The Godbeast had realized the seven misshapen creatures before it hadn't come out of hope, greed, or to request its mercy or power. They came out of pride, to show off what they accomplished! The Godbeast roared with laughter, much to the bewilderment and dismay of our ancestors, such was the relief it felt! The Godbeast gracefully clarified to our ancestors that it had taken so much from Man and yet a mere seven years later, there was still so much pride left in him. Our ancestors grew offended, and it was the Godbeast's turn to be confused as they explained that they no longer wished to be named as Man. They would take on the namesakes of the world's innocent victims, caught between Man and God, countless of the world's floral and fauna were obliterated. The Godbeast was forced into a moment of stunned silence, it was Man that had summoned It, Man that hoarded its Truths, and Man that It had decimated. It was their cruelty, vanity, and avarice that It had reviled, but had it missed their capacity for compassion, love, and generosity?

Stoically our ancestors awaited the Godbeast's response. When it finally came, the Godbeast that bowed to our ancestors, It would resurrect the Truths in the animal and plant forms of the Old World and named them Heralds. The world would heal, life would return to even the most caustic and irradiated landscapes, such was the power of the Godbeast. Once our people reclaim all of the wild Truths the Godbeast will reveal itself once more so we may open the next stage of our story.

Each of the seven ancestors spread their teachings, their personal Truths to as many as would listen. They formed the seven tribes, including Predator and Prey. The other five have been lost to their own hunts.”

Lifestyle and Garb - The Tribes

<Placeholder>

The Protectorate

Exact details about the founding of The Protectorate are a guarded secret of its inner circle. What is most readily known from the outset is that the Protectorate boasts profound defenses and technology, a semblance of modernity absent in other areas. Upon approaching the walls, one can feel power thrumming from the city, though their admittance of lumber and coal can't possibly amount to this level of energy. Representatives of The Protectorate will insist that their society is sustained through the strength of their community - and it's true that citizens give their Potentia entirely over to the city in exchange for protection.

The Protectorate was settled 80 years ago by a great figure known as “**The Founder**”. He knew and understood that the greed of the individual was the greatest obstacle to peace, and so he established The Protectorate as a community focused on cooperation and furthering of the common good. The Founder did not wish to be revered as an individual, and worked to ensure that his name was not recorded. He sought a history upheld by ideas rather than people.

After the walls were built, the Founder sought to disperse/diffuse power and achieve stability in communal leadership. He convened the **First Council**, a delegation formed of those most qualified from three aspects of society: **Architects** - builders and artisans dedicated to furthering construction and public works; **Sentinels** - defenders concerned with keeping the peace and patrolling the walls; and **Citizens** - the labor force, and the frontline of the bureaucracy and public health. These delegates would give voice to the will of the people, and act swiftly as necessary to maintain the well-being of The Protectorate. When the First of an organization would seek to retire, the remaining council will select a successor from a pool of qualified Citizens of exemplary character. High ranking individuals may be titled as “Second” or “Third”, and there may be several seconds and/or thirds at a given time. An indication of branch is followed by indication of function, and so the full title of an important individual may be Third Citizen Surgeon, or Third Sentinel Wallsman. The full title is often used in place of the name, so “Samuel Rogers” may be “Sentinel Scout Rogers”.

The Protectorate has been besieged by beasts of the Wild almost since its inception. It is said that The Protectorate only first made contact with other civilized peoples after the death of the Founder, about 40 years after its founding, notably prior to the Age of Discovery. These visitors were nomads from among the Wayfarers, who were not yet under the sway of a Trade Prince. In homage to the ideals of the Founder, the First Citizen invited these wanderers into the walls, but they were folk accustomed to a hard life of scavenging. They sought to glean the secrets of

The Protectorate's technology, and absconded with resources in the night. As Sentinels cornered the last of them, the remaining wanderer lashed out with wild strength and brought a building down upon himself. Despite the danger of it, these events were tantalizing. The promise of power and possibility of survival outside of the walls gave birth to a desire for independence among those who had never previously considered something of the sort.

In a guarded council it was determined that the will to explore would undermine the community, and the best decision was to let it run its course. Those who wished to leave may do so, and those who wished to join would need to prove themselves dedicated to The Protectorate. Sentinels took on the role of interacting with any travelers for the safety of the citizenry, and Assemblers would sometimes conduct trade outside of the walls with outsiders who showed proper deference. In time, some Wayfarers would establish dedicated trade agreements with The Protectorate, and Citizens tuned their industry towards refining raw materials provided from outside.

Recent councilors have been burdened to address more complex relationships with outsiders. Within The Protectorate, the culture has become decidedly nationalistic and somewhat propagandist. Established bureaucrats are fiercely loyal to The Protectorate, but Sentinels are often "misled" by their communications with outsiders. Constant threat of monstrous attack and a heritage of isolation lead many to treasure comfort within the walls, although citizens of rank are working to improve the admittance of outsiders who would seek refuge.

The Founder is memorialized within The Protectorate as a statue without a face. He is depicted laying mortar as smaller figures, a young boy and a young girl, lift up bricks to assist. A plaque reads "The Founder, laying the foundation of our community". Would-be architects often visit the statue before their exams, and rub the tip of the Founder's boots for luck.

Citizens of The Protectorate regard the walls with an almost supernatural significance. They refer to the outer walls collectively as "The Vanguard", and insist that the spirits of their forefathers dwell within, watching over the safety of the people.

On a day-to-day basis, citizens of The Protectorate do not weave Patterns or utilize much Potentia at all. Most work within the city is manual labor or operation of simple machinery. The Protectorate operates on industrial-age technology similar to the 'cotton gin' and the steam engine, but with some anachronistic use of electricity or somewhat advanced machinery. Citizens generally wear matching jumpsuits and dwell in matching homes. Those who have left The Protectorate will often seek to individualize their garb, building up from a very plain baseline. Because Protectorate industry is predisposed towards textiles, Protectorate clothing is more likely to feature quality sewing, collars, zippers, and other features. Trade between The Protectorate and the Wayfarers has introduced clothing of finer quality to groups outside of The Protectorate, but Citizens within the city tend to wear working jumpsuits or blue collar fashions, taking pride in their identity as a united force of industry.

It is rumored that The Protectorate has stockpiled bizarre materials as a result of conflict with highly dangerous monsters, but as of yet no outsiders have secured these materials in trade. If such things are stored within the city, they remain a secret as guarded as The Protectorate's continued advantage in technology.

Lifestyle and Garb

The Protectorate boasts a unique advantage in technology. Indoor plumbing and electricity are the norm, and they are capable of utilizing machined industry including steam-powered cotton mills and early 1900s era printing presses. Most members of the Protectorate work in this capacity, offering the fruits of their labor to the community.

The walls and streets of The Protectorate are laden with propaganda-like statements exalting the Sentinels, and asking that every Citizen do their part. These posted will often feature large stylized monsters confronted by lines of gunmen. Others feature caricatures of "the outsider", often portrayed as a savage or devil, but generally with a round head, long pointed nose and thick monobrow.

The Protectorate does not have a large amount of food relative to its populace, so institutes strict rationing. The last two decades have seen the emergence of a secondary class of "citizen" that lives outside of the walls growing food which is traded to The Protectorate. These entrepreneurs face heavy damage when large creatures come to attack, many using bunkers and panic rooms to see to their personal safety. The most common foodstuff in the protectorate is a nutritive block or paste mostly composed of starch, nuts, and/or ham. Other common foods include cabbage and potato.

Though the Protectorate is capable of creating more sophisticated clothing than much of the region, local culture puts community ahead of individuality. Many citizens wear plain clothing or work clothing, with a penchant for light-blue collared shirts. Citizens filling more distinguished roles, such as the Communicator's office or the Coordinator's office, are more likely to wear business apparel or a button-down with vest. These citizens only leave the walls with very specific business, and always with escort. Sentinels focus on light infantry tactics, often using light armors in conjunction with guns, spears, shields and swords. Depending on a sentinel's role, their garb may include camouflage or other wilderness gear. Sentinels manning the wall prefer long coats in blue, grey, or tan colors. Protectorate garb only seldomly features precious metals, and only in very small amounts.

The Sentinels

Among the three major responsibilities in The Protectorate, Sentinels are those who see combat, and have the most exposure to the world beyond the walls. Sentinels candidates are selected in routine voluntary trials that test physical fitness, judgement, and most importantly - loyalty to the Protectorate.

Titles and Roles

Title among Sentinels is more rigid and important than it is among the Assemblers, but less specific and bureaucratic than it may be in Citizen offices. The motif of First, Seconds, and Thirds still apply. The First is the commander-in-chief of the Sentinels, and the military authority of The Protectorate. Seconds are similar to Lieutenants, and Thirds are similar to Sergeants.

Supplementing these rankings are classifications that describe function. The most numerous are Wallsmen and Pikemen. The former specialize with firearms and the use & maintenance of stationary weaponry. The latter ground fight in teams, using powerful strikes with long polearms to deter large monsters. As an example of the naming convention, a Third Pikeman is a field command role, generally coordinating a squad of armored spearmen to deter monsters from directly assailing the wall, or sent to pursue creatures wounded by the wall's heavy firepower.

Other roles include:

Peacekeepers - these sentinels work inside the wall to keep peace and order. Presence of these figures is often more symbolic and comforting than it is actually necessary.

Non-numbered peacekeeping is a rotating duty, giving time off the front lines. Second Peacekeepers and Third Peacekeepers are generally "retirement roles", honoring those who have given years of service. In the event of wrongdoing, judgement and sentencing are the responsibility of the Citizen's office.

Scouts - operatives trusted in ranging into the wild to gather intel on outsiders and monstrous threats. Often also used as couriers.

Rangers - a skirmishing role that emphasizes solo operation. Rangers go through firearms training with Wallsmen, but develop a wide range of skills in order to reinforce and support as necessary.

Quartermen - official traders who handle communication with tolerable outsiders and manage supplies.

Medics - Potentia eliminates the need for most traditional medicine on a battlefield, so a "medic" is generally a very burly Sentinel who will physically move the wounded and weary from the front lines back to safe positions. More extensive or corruptive injuries would be referred to a Doctor within the wall.

The Protectorate is heavily nationalistic, and The Sentinels are no exception. Experiencing the realities of combat may dull this fervor. Some sentinels adopt a superior attitude when dealing with more sheltered members of The Protectorate. Others learn that certain Outsiders are trustworthy or even altruistic, and become jaded regarding The Protectorate's teachings.

The Citizen's Office

While “citizen” is a general term that refers to the denizens of the protectorate, the Citizen’s Office is also one of the major pillars of Protectorate society. High ranking officials within the office are titled as Third Citizen or Second Citizen. The head of the office is the First Citizen, and this individual is the foremost in a triumvirate leadership alongside the First Sentinel and First Architect.

There are many roles and functions within the Citizen’s Office, and joining the office is a routine job with a basic application process. The Office is a thorough bureaucracy with extensive power, and is involved in many aspects of Protectorate life.

Functions of the Citizen’s Office

The office handles several matters of license and ownership, certification for work related to heavy machinery, records of education, marriage certificates, and childbirth approval. The office also handles medical records, birth, death, and various complaints. Senior officials can be asked to resolve disputes or perform counseling. Finally, the office handles the collection of potentia dues, sending collectors to each home every month to gather potentia from the people of the Protectorate.

The government’s broad involvement also pertains to matters of news and propaganda. The Citizen’s office compiles and publishes articles about sport and games, class graduations, obituaries, and military victories over the monsters outside the wall. High ranking officials are often interviewed to share statements of their inspiration and adoration towards the community and the walls. Taking full advantage of the printing press, the Protectorate has state sponsored pulp fiction novels that satiate the needs the average citizen might have for juicy, horrifying news of the outside world. They usually feature the adventures of a brave Sentinel who has dared to go beyond the wall, assisted by his (or her) noble but savage outsider companion.

A Third Citizen manages a branch within an office, and has an additional title of function regarding their branch. A Third Citizen Coordinator is a counselor or is charged with tasks related to public affairs and communications. A Third Citizen Physician would be in charge of several less experienced doctors. A Third Citizen General is in charge of the office itself. Second Citizens handle coordination between offices within regions of the Protectorate, and offer counsel to the First Citizen for matters of great import.

Culture and Attitudes

The Citizen’s Office is an unavoidable aspect of everyone’s life. Most try to be chipper about it, but paperwork is essentially dull, so a dreary attitude is unavoidable. Advancement within the office is closely related to customer interactions, so many clerks endure the stress of forcing a smile. Many prefer clerical work to the toil of manufacturing, so work at the Citizen’s office is seen as privileged, and cushy. Educated citizens who fall short of becoming an Architect often aim for the Citizen’s Office as a second choice.

Journalism in the Protectorate is a difficult but valued task. Despite an intense pressure to produce uplifting or entertaining stories, life in the Protectorate is fairly mundane. Sentinels are

celebrated for victory, but the true harshness of combat is withheld. Tales from outside the wall are employed as needed to maintain appropriate wariness. Journalism often entails the generation of propagandist media in the Protectorate's colors of blue, white, and dark grey.

The Architects

More than a simple collection of planners and builders, The Architects bear a significance in the Protectorate similar to a priesthood. Even the low ranking among the Architects are intelligent, loyal, and dedicated. Those with greater titles draw crowds to grand openings and ribbon cuttings, giving sermons to celebrate the addition of new facilities and fortifications.

Becoming an Architect

The screening to become an Architect is more strict than that for a Sentinel or the Citizen's Office. The test includes elements of spatial reasoning, mathematics, history, and creative writing. As demand for new buildings rises, Architects compete amongst each other to determine who may have the honor of performing the work.

Roles among Architects

Lower ranking Architects are responsible for maintenance, plumbing, and electrical work. The people are bound to respect visiting Architects, and may be asked to leave the home if their presence is determined to be disruptive.

Architects oversee much of the Protectorate's manufacturing, establishing the standards of production and innovating on designs. Through assembly line specialization, The Protectorate is able to apply unskilled or moderately skilled labor towards complex final products. Workplace safety is a paramount concern, but equipment does periodically fail. The design of the Protectorate is cramped such that industrial accidents may leave workers with no place to flee, and fatalities sometimes occur. It is said that a fatality "sours" production in a facility for no less than two weeks, and results in inferior shaping.

Textile manufacturing is also managed by Architects with design acumen and thorough understanding of tradition. Workers listen to traditional Protectorate anthems and look up to patriotic posters as they work threads spun from Echoes. Second Architect "Gumption" Jenny was once a simple line worker before passing the Architect's exam, and now wears and promotes the "Protectorate Blue" worn by most of the working class. She's featured in many workplace posters.

Architects are responsible for maintenance and repair of the wall. Some Sentinels resent that the architects do not fight, but senior Wallsmen know to honor the stone. Patriotic and dutiful Sentinels and Architects can request burial within the wall if a body remains after their death.

Higher ranking Architects are the elite class in the Protectorate, with the greatest access to luxuries and potentia. Much of their time is spent working on new designs and blueprints, collaborating with one another, and receiving reports from lower ranking Architects regarding maintenance issues or structural flaws to be corrected in future projects.

Culture Surrounding Architects

While some of the work performed by Architects is necessarily messy, they strive to present themselves in a neat and clean manner when in public. To the Protectorate, cleanliness is a virtue. To become lax in their cleanliness would be disastrous for the large population living within the walled city.

Architects also establish and are responsible for media cable connections running into every citizen's home. Audiovisual broadcasts consist of the news, educational broadcasts, children's programs, sports events, and made-for-tv movies, usually dramas. Popular music ranges between folksy and orchestral.

The League of Exploration and Artifact Preservation

The League of Exploration and Artifact Preservation was formed by a collection of Lost persons who stumbled into or otherwise found themselves within "The Great Labyrinth". The Labyrinth is an endless sequence of chambers and halls riddled with traps, puzzles, and monsters. It features several amenities and wonders, and mimics various climates within its twisting paths. The labyrinth shifts and changes, inevitably offering greater dangers and rewards the further you traverse.

The League operates from a chamber known as the Grand Library, and from here they explore the labyrinth and gather its treasures. Because death is impermanent, exploration is often individual and competitive. Successful adventurers build a cult of personality, while others take up facilitating roles, or act as students (or sycophants), cataloging the mysterious objects and various puzzles of the labyrinth.

The Age of Discovery presents many new opportunities for knowledge, and Wayfarer Trade Princes have been fairly accommodating towards LEAP in consideration of the information and unique resources they can supply.

Minor Factions

The Gravebound

The Mechamen