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INTRODUCTION

Darwin's World is a role-playing game set in the wild inhospitable world of mankind's ruin, decades after a series of devastating wars that brought the human race to the brink of extinction.

In a world where radiation altered the very course of nature, mankind ceased to exist in its current form. Mutations and genetic variations are the edge separating a species from life and death.

In Darwin's World, only the fit shall survive!

THE TIME LINE

Darwin's World is set in an alternate reality, a world where certain historical events did not occur, and where others did. In Darwin's World, it all began at the close of World War II...

1945: World War II effectively ends with the detonation of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. America, and much of the war-torn Western world, rejoices at the end of the long hard struggle for liberation.

1946-1952: Years of Re-growth. After World War II, the United States reverts to its isolationist policies, withdrawing from the rest of the world, which is desperately trying to rebuild after the war. During this period, the government of the United States tries to maintain a false facade through the years - the nuclear family, baseball and "Leave it to Beaver", good old Yankees, etc. Life at home becomes detached - no one knows Big Brother is twisting the truth about the outside world. Outside of America, the nations of the world are only slowly rebuilding, as countless minor wars are sparked over resources, division of the defeated German state, etc. Without America's presence (for better or worse) in world politics, the course of history proceeds down a much different path. A growing spite and jealousy of the average American's naivety and splendid way of life is felt by most foreign nations, who during this period live in absolute squalor and oppression.

1953-1973: Years of Bliss. Isolated America grows in strange new ways; advanced in some, dwarfed in others. Technology advances at a phenomenal rate, but a dwarfed, insular culture shapes all products (it takes over 50 years for the culture of America to progress from the 40s to the 50s, though technology has advanced in leaps and bounds). Although the technology of the world has reached futuristic proportions, everything has a distinct "aged" cast to it. America clings desperately to the "good-old days", forever seeking to live in the bliss of its war victories and economic abundance.

1974-1999: The growing industry of the insulated

United States, combined with the massively-pollutive industries of the fragmented world outside, begin to take their effect. The loss of much of the world ozone layer forces the creation of bio-domes, entire domed cities, and underground shelters across the country as part of a growing national program for preserving the American way of life for future generations to come. Though largely inhabited at first by groups seeking to "start anew", these domed cities and shelters soon become home to larger and larger populations as the ecology gets progressively worse.

2000-2010: Years of Entropy ("when things begin to break down"). America's self-interest and exceedingly naive way of life draws the envy of nations devastated during WWII and in the many foreign wars following that nightmarish war. As a result, America is invaded by a coalition of nations, including a Purist-Re-growth Germany, Neo-Imperial England, and the Great Communist Union of Asia. Nuclear war ensues as America struggles to contain, and then eradicate, the menace to their dreamy world. Millions of Americans retreat to the fallout shelters, domed cities, and other long-term retreats, hoping to wait out the war in their relatively safe isolation. Those communities already in isolation fight to retain their identity and individualism; many seal themselves in deliberately to avoid the masses of refugees. Civilization breaks down.

2011 and beyond: Massive biological and chemical strikes waged by both sides during the Last War devastate the ecology worldwide. Continued and escalating nuclear exchange causes unexpected earthquakes and subtle, then drastic climatic changes. The gradual rise in world temperature causes the polar ice caps to slowly deteriorate, flooding massive areas of the earth in the coming years.

Many domed cities along the coasts are soon destroyed in tidal waves. Earthquakes caused by colossal nuclear strikes decimate cities and entire regions. Many underground fallout shelters are simply swallowed by the earth. Those few secured shelters are now totally cut off from one another.

Those who are hiding out within the complexes, remain within, afraid to emerge. As a result, many progress in strange directions - some advance, some crumble; some pockets give themselves over to hedonistic ways in their underground safety, while others wait quietly for the day they will return to the surface world.

The Present: No one knows how long it has been since the fall of the "Ancients" - it could have been ten years ago, or over two hundred. No one is left to tell the tale. Although mankind's weapons didn't finish the job of exterminating the race directly, their lingering effects essentially did. The ruined world, unable to

support mankind any longer, lets the race dwindle like a withered grape on a parched vine. The world is no longer man's domain. Those men and women who failed to reach the domes and fallout shelters are now long gone, their children having mutated over the generations, creating the various wild mutant races that now roam the earth.

A PHYSICAL OVERVIEW

Massive weapons of destruction - including but not limited to thermonuclear devices - were used in the final wars of mankind. These had the most immediate effect at first, devastating entire cities and states; not only igniting massive fires that burned for weeks but also spreading radiated clouds across the entire planet. This radiation would kill much of the life around the areas of impact, and retard or cause the eventual cancer-death of those even hundreds of miles from the impact areas.

Bio-agents also played a role, being most effective after the nuclear strikes as humans (whose white blood cell count was drastically cut due to radiation poisoning) became weak and frail. The radiation also had the unfortunate side effect of mutating the biological strains used against each side, making their control impossible. New and deadly plagues ran rampant, killing millions on both sides.

Chemical weapons were likely the least effective, but played their role as well, poisoning natural resources (the rivers that the homeless ran to for shelter and nourishment from the radiation fever were undoubtedly stricken with chemical poisons that turned their innards to mush in minutes). These chemicals, like radiation (and the lingering effect of mutated bio-agents) still remain as pollutants in Darwin's World.

Nuclear detonations also served to literally blow holes in the atmosphere, incinerating moisture in the air and tearing entire rings in the ozone layer. Areas where more nukes were concentrated resulted in larger holes in the ozone, which further added to the ending of life in these areas and the mutation of what few beings managed to escape through ultraviolet radiation.

The increased UV radiation permeating the planet's ecosystem from the countless nuclear holes caused a diminishing of most plant life, turning the world into a vast desert with little or no diversity. The elimination of the vast forests and plains allowed the hot high winds (the temperature having increased geometrically with each cluster of nuclear strikes) to ravage the land, carrying dust and sand with them. Soon, almost the entire world was buried in shifting, radiated dust carried by continent spanning sandstorms.

The UV (and the chemical) effect also served to destroy the fragile marine ecosystem of the planet, and the first "species" to suffer near total extinction were phytoplankton of all kinds. The result - a vast reduction in the oxygen recycling capability of the planet.

With an increased worldwide climatic temperature, numerous holes in the ozone layer, the destruction (by fire and radiation) of almost all the world's forests and phytoplankton, Darwin's World can sustain only a heavy, sparse oxygen climate. This increased temperature also resulted in a worldwide diminishing of moisture, which dissipated the once ocean-covered surface to a handful of smaller poisoned seas which were forced to retreat to the lowest altitudes of the planet's surface. Evaporated water was not held in by the thinned and weakened atmospheric gravity, allowing minute quantities to escape into space over the decades. Former coastlines became the frontiers of vast deserts, and the seas that once provided life and sustenance are slowly vanishing over the decades, leaving only dry brittle sand in their wake.

All sorts of strange life forms have arisen in the aftermath of the great apocalypse nonetheless. The drastic mutative effects of gamma and ultraviolet radiations, as well as mutated bio-agents, have created vast aberrancies in man and animal. Mental diminishing and physical mutation seem most common, especially as survival has come to rely mostly on strength and the ability to thrive in the hostile clime of desert and ruin. The population of the world (the very size of which brought about their own downfall) is now drastically reduced - war, plague, and poisoned environs reduced the world population to 1/100 of its former size. The sterility caused by radiation has further helped to ensure all life is dwindling, and dwindling fast. Although every generation at least one "breeder" is born, their ability to reproduce and restock the populace is unable to cope with the threats and hazards of the world climate. It is truly a dying planet.



CHAPTER 1:
SETTING RULES

*“The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”
-Albert Einstein*

*“I do not know what weapons will be used in World War III, but I assure you that World World IV will be fought with stones. “
-Albert Einstein*



In order for your character to eek out an existence in the brutal lands of the Twisted Earth, certain rules additions are needed. The introduction of Tech-levels (Technology Levels) helps to define how effectively a character can use pre-fall items and what he is able to repair. Healing and Repair skills have specific applications, and Knowledge Skills take on a new level of significance. The common Languages of the post-fall world are also presented here.

TECHNOLOGY

The level of technology understood by a character affects his ability to effectively use, maintain and repair precious pre-fall items. In game terms this is represented by having the appropriate Tech-level.

Tech-levels range from 1 to 3 and are granted by a character's Background. They are designed to manage the use and understanding of devices in the post-apocalyptic world. A character's Tech-level can not be increased until he reaches at least Seasoned rank. At that time, he may take the Increased Tech-level Edge. This may only be done once per Rank.

The Technology levels are:

TECH-LEVEL 1: PRIMITIVE

Primitive technology represents early technological advances such as simple weapons and tools, herbal medicines, leather working, farming and agriculture. A character at Tech-level 1 has the ability to understand and use primitive technologies effectively. Examples include: archaic weapons, blacksmithing, carpentry, herbal medicines, leatherworking, and stonemasonry.

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Post-Apocalyptic technology represents the remnants of modern technology, still used by the denizens of the world, but often misunderstood. A character

at Tech-level 2 has the ability to understand some modern technologies. Examples include: electronics, mechanics, modern firearms, and physical sciences. This does not necessarily mean the character can create such technologies, but it does mean he may learn how to use and repair them.

TECH-LEVEL 3: ADVANCED

Advanced technology represents the most sophisticated technology of the pre-fall world including, energy weapons, aircraft and robotics. A character at Tech-level 3 has the ability to understand all of the advanced technologies of the Ancients. He can even learn to create such technologies given sufficient training and resources.

USING TECHNOLOGY

Much of the pilfered gear of the wastelands can be used by any character who knows how. However, a character's understanding of technology affects his ability to use gear effectively. Each piece of gear is classified as one of the above tech-levels. The more sophisticated the gear, the higher the tech-level required to use it effectively.

To reflect this, whenever a Trait roll is needed to use a piece of gear, the character suffers a penalty of -1 for each Tech-Level that the gear is above his.

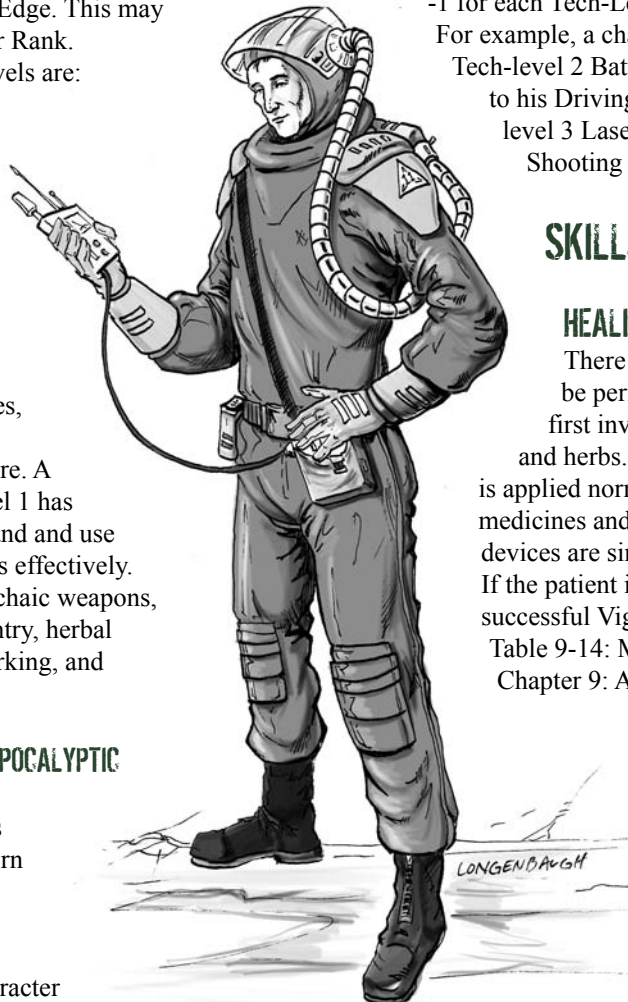
For example, a character at Tech-Level 1, driving a Tech-level 2 Battlecycle, would suffer a -1 penalty to his Driving roll. If he was firing a Tech-level 3 Laser Pistol, he would suffer -2 to his Shooting roll.

SKILLS

HEALING

There are two types of healing that can be performed in Darwin's world. The first involves the use of natural medicines and herbs. In these cases the Healing roll is applied normally. The second involves medicines and technology of the ancients. Such devices are simply administered to the patient. If the patient is a mutant, they must make a successful Vigor roll or suffer an effect from Table 9-14: Medical Incompatibility (see Chapter 9: Artifacts of the Ancients).

A Healing roll may also reduce the effects of a medical incompatibility result on another character; a Success adds +2 and a Raise adds +4 to the number rolled on the Medical Incompatibility table.



REPAIR

Due to the complex nature of pre-fall items, repairing items of a higher tech-level than the character understands is much more difficult than simply using them. The application of Repair to any situation in the game is primarily based on the Tech-level of the device.

The GM should first decide which Tech-level the device is: 1 Primitive, 2 Post-Apocalyptic or 3 Advanced. If the character's Tech-level is less than the device's Tech-level, the Repair roll has a penalty of -4 per level of difference. So a character at Tech-level 1 would make a Repair roll at -8, when trying to fix a Tech-level 3 device.

When attempting to construct new items, the Repair skill can be used. However, in this case the character's Tech-level must be equal to or greater than the device's Tech-level and he must have some level of Knowledge (Technology).

Several characters may work together to build the item, applying either their Knowledge (Technology) or their Tech-level, but all of them must have some level of Repair. The GM should determine the basic materials needed, where to salvage or purchase them from and how long the construction will take. On a large project, such as building a car, the components should be broken down and rolled for separately. For example, the chassis may take two weeks, the engine, 8 weeks, and the body 4 weeks.

Advanced devices (Tech-Level 3) can not normally be built unless the characters have access to advanced manufacturing facilities. They can be repaired following the above guidelines.

KNOWLEDGE

Life in the barren lands of the Twisted Earth is harsh and the ability to survive the many and varied situations a character may find himself in is often dependent on what he knows. To represent this in the game, Knowledge skills play a key roll.

The following Knowledge skills are specific to the lands of the Twisted Earth.

KNOWLEDGE (ANCIENT LORE)

This skill governs the knowledge of the culture, civilization, and basic technologies employed by the Ancients (who are all but gone from the face of the Twisted Earth). A player whose character has this skill can realistically play his character as having the knowledge of what the Ancients did, how they lived, etc. and is not subject to the same "ignorance" as other survivors of the cataclysm. Note that this does not necessarily mean the character knows how to use Ancient technology; it just means he has an understanding of what the Ancients were about. This gives him a better chance of understanding

the significance of Ancient locations, artifacts and technologies.

KNOWLEDGE (BATTLE)

This skill covers the knowledge of battles and battle strategies. The character will have studied or been involved in conflicts of the post-apocalyptic age. See the Savage Worlds rules for application of this skill for Mass Combats. This skill can also be used to glean information about the site of a recent battle, defensibility of an area, etc.

KNOWLEDGE (COMPUTERS AND ROBOTICS)

This skill applies to both the theory and practical operation of computer systems, networked computers as well as computer brains of robotic devices. It also covers the theory and practical application of robotic devices and beings, as well as the field of cybernetics.

KNOWLEDGE (MUTANT LORE)

This skill assumes a great deal of past experience with, or against, mutated beings. It allows the character to potentially understand the mutations possessed by mutants and monsters. This gives the character a better idea of what he is facing. For example, a successful Knowledge (Mutant Lore) roll may allow a character to understand how a mutant race may behave, or what the dark spots on an encountered creature signify. With a successful Knowledge (Mutant Lore) roll, the character will know whether or not a creature is safe to eat.

KNOWLEDGE (TECHNOLOGY)

This skill indicates that the character has some lifelong experience with technological devices, and thus a basic understanding their electronics, mechanics and the sciences. A character with this skill understands the general use of many advanced items and can typically identify them. This skill allows the character a better chance at figuring out artifacts, even ones which he has never seen before, if they are of a technological nature (for instance, he may not know how to operate a gravity car, but he knows it is a vehicle and thus it must have a power source, steering column, controls, etc).

KNOWLEDGE (TWISTED EARTH)

This skill represents knowledge of the numerous factions, cities, locations, and legends of the post-apocalyptic Darwin's World, commonly known as the Twisted Earth. They may know common trade routes, which factions fight over a particular area, which cities are more welcoming (if any), and where rumored treasures of the ancients supposedly lie.

POST-APOCALYPTIC LANGUAGES

So many years after the fall of civilization, a number of offshoot dialects and entirely new languages have developed in the world. Characters begin with a specific Language based on their Background (see Chapter: Characters). The character is considered to be able to both read and write the language, unless he has the Illiterate Hindrance, in which case he can only speak the language.

To learn a new Language, the character must take the Language Edge.

The most common languages employed, in the Twisted Earth, include:

ANCIENT

Ancient is the forgotten language of mankind, the tongue employed by the citizens of America before it fell to nuclear war. This language is actually quite rare now in Darwin's World, for there are few communities remaining who have carried the language on, unbroken (those that do and fail generally end up creating their own version of Gutter Talk instead; see below). Some groups (such as "shelter-folk" or dome-dwellers) may indeed know this language (and this language alone), however. Ancient is a very useful language, for it allows a character to understand the road signs, street signs, Arcanum, and markings left by the Ancients in their numerous ruins. Most importantly, it allows them to read books.

GUTTER TALK

Gutter Talk is closely related to Ancient, and is a preserved form of that speech that has been distorted over time. Various words, for instance, are replaced by the sounds they make (for example, the word "car" may now be "vroom", or "helicopter" might be "chop chop"), and sentence structuring generally has no rules or organization.

TRADE

Trade is a language that has spread throughout the wasteland as a universal "code" of the merchants who ply the caravan routes, mainly developed to communicate warnings of dangers, raiders, inhospitable communities, etc. A special code of markings and "runes" is used to convey thoughts in written form (much like old hobo code), while gestures and slang phrases (which sometimes vary from region to region) are also prevalent. Major trade organizations (such as the Clean Water Clan, Far Traders, Cartel, etc) may have their own variations of this code for secret uses.

OPTIONAL LANGUAGE RULES

For gaming groups who find it frustrating to have characters in the party that can't speak the same language, the GM may choose one of these options:

1. All player characters have spent enough time in the wastelands to have learned Unislang. Give each character the Unislang language in addition to their background language.

2. Since Guttertalk and Unislang are derived from Ancients, characters may make Smarts rolls to try to understand someone speaking another language. The following modifiers apply:

Ancient/Guttertalk: -2; Guttertalk/Unislang: -2; Ancient/Unislang: -4

UNISLANG

Unislang is the true "common" tongue in the wasteland, a mix of English, evolved slang, and simple hand gestures. It is much like Trade. Unislang, however, can be highly dialectic, with wild variations being a widespread phenomenon. Universally understood symbols are used to represent ideas or signs (much like cuneiform, or basic picture writing), often as simple as drawing the image of a monster in the area to warn off others. Though the wasteland is seldom a place known for brotherhood, it is generally accepted that those who know Unislang should and will leave markings for others "in the know" to avoid walking into hostile territory or dangerous regions.

COMMON PHRASES

The following is a brief listing of some of the most common phrases and colorful words of Unislang, the universal banter of the Twisted Earth's many varied peoples.

Amazons - female raiders or xenophobes who either hate men or fear them

Ancients - the mythical, deified, and sometimes demonized inhabitants of Earth before the Fall

Breeder - anyone (male or female) capable of breeding

Brethren - militant mutants or cultists who seek to destroy all remnants of the past

Broken Ones - mutants, specifically those with physical deformities

Bronze - someone bringing law and order to the wasteland; usually a law-enforcing member of a community but sometimes a solitary wanderer with a self-styled "vision"


Corium - melted graphite, uranium fuel, and metal from a nuclear core meltdown; often hangs like stalactites in the melted core chamber; valued in the wastes because it is often used as "money"

Domes - biodomes, legendary sealed environment shelters where pure strain humans are said to hide
Freak - a mutant with mental powers
Furniture - a woman
Gangers - sometimes raiders, but more often just loose “gangs” in the urban ruins
Ghoul - any cannibalistic mutant or creature
Graveyard - a ruined city of the Ancients
Grub - a child or something to eat
Gutter Talk - the language of those who have tried to preserve the language and customs of the Ancients, but who have fallen short in one way or another
Lost, The - mutants
Mech - a person who knows how to fix machines
Meds - any kind of medicine, though usually used to refer to narcotics
Mink - a particularly beautiful but deadly female
Mutant - any mutated being
Necropolis - a ruined city
Phantom - a loner or wanderer who does good for the common people
Psionic - a mutant with mind powers
Purist - non-mutants, those of original human stock, usually xenophobic but sometimes tyrannical and racist
Raiders - any kind of brigand, bandit, or highway road gang
Razors - particularly vicious or malevolent gangers
Retard - disdainful term for a mutant with mental powers

Ruin - a ruined city
Sandwalker – a wandering storyteller; usually a merchant or trader (but not always)
Scag - wasteland scum; typically raiders or community outcasts
Scav - a wanderer who lives by scavenging; usually a killer and thief
Stick - a gun, especially a rifle
Terminals - mutants, specifically mutants who are unintelligent or cannibalistic
Toilet Paper - disdainful term for the paper money of the Ancients
Trade - a language used by merchants, full of secret codes and pictograms
Trash - a ganger, bandit, or loner with poor potential and little value
Tribal - a member of any primitive or savage tribe
Twisted Earth – a common nickname for the planet
Ultraviolence - violent acts, usually undertaken for “fun” by miscreants and gangers
Unislang - the universal language used to communicate in Darwin’s World
Vault - a hidden shelter for Ancients; also a term for a great cache or trove
Wildcat - an insane or particularly feisty female
Xenophobes - communities of people who shun the outside world, for whatever reason
Yellow Eye - a generic term used to refer to mutants

CHAPTER 1: SETTING RULES





CHAPTER 2:
CHARACTERS

*"The survivors would envy the dead."
-Nikita S. Khrushchev*

*"For the first time in the history of mankind, one generation literally has the power to destroy the past, the present and the future, the power to bring time to an end."
-Hubert H. Humphrey*



CHARACTER CONCEPT

Creating your character for Darwin's World requires a few more steps than in the core Savage Worlds rules. First and foremost, you should decide on a character concept. This is really the most important step of the character creation process as it can guide you in selecting his Background, Attributes, Skills, Edges and Hindrances, and usually Mutations and Defects. Take a moment to think about the type of character you want to play:

Will he be a feral mutant wanderer who has managed to survive using the power of his mutations? Then he will most likely have the Feral Background, high levels in skills such as Stealth, Survival and Tracking, as well as mutations that help with survival such as Extreme Resilience and Multiple Stomachs.

Is he a sharp tongued Trader attempting to gain the precious items his community needs to survive? Perhaps he has the Degenerates background, a strong Persuasion skill and the Silver Tongue Edge.

Was she a prisoner and concubine who used her wiles escape to freedom, only to be ruthlessly hunted by the raider gang leader who had kidnapped her? Make her a pure human that has the Advanced background. Give her the Attractive and Very Attractive Edges, as well as high Smarts, Vigor and Persuasion and the Enemy (major) Hindrance.

You get the idea. Strong character concepts, such as these, help to build a better character and make the next steps easier.

CREATING CHARACTERS

The following checklist will guide you through the process of creating your character. You will want to familiarize yourself with the rest of the player's guide in order to make some of these decisions.

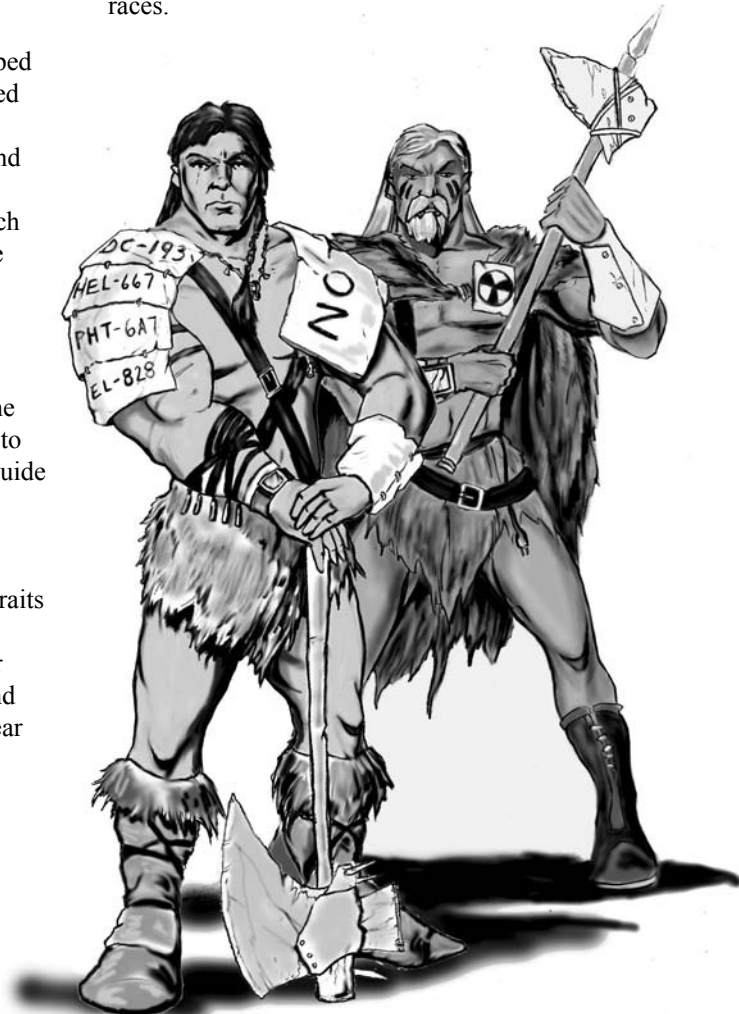
1. Choose your Race. Will you be one of the rare pure-humans or a First, Second or Third Generation mutant? Note the specific racial traits your character will have.
2. Select a Background that suits your character concept. Note the Tech-level, bonus Skills and Edges, default Hindrances, Language and Gear you will receive.
3. Select your Attributes using the standard 5 attribute points.
4. Select your Skills using the standard 15 skill points.
5. Select up to one Major and two Minor Hindrances. Use those points to gain extra Edges, Skill points or to double your starting funds.

6. If you are a human select a bonus Edge. If you are a mutant, select your mutations and defects (see Chapter 3: Mutants and Mutations).
7. Your character begins play with 500 cp (Corium Pieces) to buy his gear. Purchase your starting gear (see Chapter 4: Gear and Equipment).
8. Calculate your derived stats: Pace, Parry, Charisma and Toughness. Don't forget to apply bonuses and penalties from Edges, Hindrances, Mutations, Defects and Gear.
9. Consider your character's Occupation (optional).

RACES

While the planet Earth is strictly a human world, the Fall of mankind and his ravaging wars of radiation have given rise to numerous mutated species to take the reigns of conquest and dominance. Race is an important feature of character identity in Darwin's World. Race dictates, not only a character's physical appearance and capabilities, but also the degree to which he has been "altered."

One of the first choices you will have to make when creating your character is to what degree he or she has been mutated. Choose one of the following races.



HUMANS (“NON-MUTANTS”, “PURISTS”, “HOMO SAPIENS”)

These fortunate souls are a rarity in the radiated lands of Darwin’s World - they are the few men and women who have somehow managed to avoid the slow curse of mutation over the decades. Communities secluded in forgotten biodomes, or secured in sealed vaults, come under this category.

Having avoided the outside world in their sheltered communities, people from these areas start with no degeneration, or enhancement, whatsoever. Those players who chose to make humans should realize that these are people with no mutations whatsoever. In a world of rampant genetic modifications, degenerations, and enhancements, this is a potential weakness. Mutation allows the character an edge in surviving in the wasteland, while remaining “pure” has only limited gains.

Still, unaltered humans do exist (though certainly a rare breed), and their special abilities are subtle but effective.

Personality: While long ago humans were the only breed of man on the Twisted Earth, they have long since lost their foothold on the world and become the outnumbered minority. Pure human enclaves are extremely rare, their very existence often believed “mythical.” Most humans left alive are reclusive, seeking only to preserve their own genetic strength

and stability through ruthless isolation. As such, most humans have a mind-set of wariness if not downright racism towards mutantkind.

Due to their squandered numbers and dwindling presence in the world, human communities typically prefer secrecy to conquest, and pick their battles carefully, engaging only if they must.

Physical Description: Simply put, humans run the gamut from roughly 5 feet to 6 feet in height, with weight ranging from 125 to 150 pounds, though prolonged starvation often decreases both attributes. Skin shades run the entire natural range: nearly black, very pale, etc. Humans typically attempt to preserve the legacy of their forefathers (the Ancients) in manner and dress, fiercely clinging to customary clothing and mannerisms.

Relations: Humans are a widely feared and worshipped people. They are so rare that they are often believed to be no more than a “fairy tale”, having been replaced by rampant mutantkind the world over. Often, however, human communities are xenophobic or ruthlessly racist (attempting to re-take the world that was once theirs), so generally speaking humans are hated and not trusted throughout the Twisted Earth.

Human Lands: Humans are not known to hold any traditional region of the Twisted Earth, though certainly once upon a time the entire planet was theirs to rule. Now, however, their presence is all but erased,



lost in the sand and dust of time and war. Still, rumors persist that humans cling to some legendary sites, perhaps areas that were important to their people in ancient times. These include the hearts of old ruined cities, or the legendary “fallout shelters” and “domes” thought abandoned throughout the desert.

Names: Human names generally resemble the names once used by the Ancients, since human groups almost universally attach themselves proudly to their lost heritage. Names such as “John”, “Steve”, “Robert”, are typical of this race. Last names are also identical to those before the Fall, though some variations have been known (examples might include “John Far-Shot”, or “John Mutantslayer”).

Adventurers: Human “adventurers” are uncommon to say the least. Being weaker than the mutants outside their secret enclaves and hideouts, a lone human stands little to no chance of surviving in the Twisted Earth. Still, some humans do choose to leave, for any number of reasons; one might seek to find a new home for his people, or secure a new source of dwindling stocks, or she might be sent as a scout to keep tabs on the mutant communities in the area and ensure they pose no “threat” to her human brethren.

HUMAN, RACIAL TRAITS:

- ❖ **Adaptable:** Because humans are quick to master specialized tasks and are varied in their talents, they gain a Free Edge at character creation.
- ❖ **Medical Compatibility:** Humans never run the risk of complications with medicines or medical devices of the Ancients.
- ❖ **Backgrounds:** Human characters can choose from any Background.

FIRST GENERATION MUTANTS (“FIRST GEN”)

The first generation of mutantkind is by far the worst off. Persons from the ranks of the “first generation” are most often mutants whose parents were non-mutants that were poisoned or radiated before or during pregnancy. Radiation or chemical poisoning often results in useless and deformed mutations (defects), making life difficult for the fledgling mutant.

Medicines of the Ancients were tailored to human bodies, and first gen mutants are pretty close - they will probably affect you the same as they would humans. This is a huge plus when healing meds are concerned. Those of successive generations will suffer odd effects from medicines and drugs tailored for human-kind ... sometimes incapacitating or even fatal!

Personality: First generation mutants, often as not, are outcasts of their own people. Generally speaking, mutants of this kind most likely originated from a pure human community, only to show (at birth, or later on in life) the beginnings of mutation in his physical body. Shunned as being “changed”, the mutant is most often run-out (if not “mercifully” killed at birth) and left to fend for herself in the wilds. Such ostracism

tends to leave characters of this type detached and hard-natured, prone to a ruthless and pragmatic demeanor. Survival becomes the key to her existence, not love of fellow man or loyalty to any given community. Oftentimes, the actual physical pain of her own mutated form turns the first generation outcast into an awful, vengeful villain.

Physical Description: First generation mutants typically resemble their forefathers in shape and size, though mutation often makes slight or subtle alterations – hard to distinguish from humans by more mutated specimens, but easily spotted by pure humans with disgust. Example features might include mottled or discolored skin, thin or patchy hair, additional digits (fingers or toes), etc.

Relations: Most mutants of the first order tend to be loners, drifters, and survivors, tending to favor a solitary existence of reliable loneliness to the company of others, whether human or mutant.

First Generation Mutant Lands: Certainly none. First generation mutants are never organized, since they are quite rare (as stated, most are killed at birth to prevent the spread of mutation through breeding), and their own demeanor usually prevents them from bonding for long with others.

Names: A first generation mutant will typically carry a true human name, though terrible and hurtful nicknames are often tied to her as well. Examples might include “Jim The Hunchback”, or “Ralph The Retard.”

Adventurers: First generation mutants are typically scavengers, pure and simple, though sometimes one will find himself in a community where he will sell his services as a guide, hunter, or even bountyman. Since such mutants generally consider no one place “home”, they are by far the most “adventurous” breed of all.

FIRST GENERATION MUTANT, RACIAL TRAITS

- ❖ **Mutated:** First Generation Mutants gain one Major and two Minor Mutations (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Defective:** First Generation Mutants have one Major Defect (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Medical Incompatibility:** First generation mutants are changed and thus do not benefit as easily as humans from ancient medicines. A first generation mutant must make a Vigor roll when using medicines of the Ancients, in order to resist a Medical Incompatibility result.
- ❖ **Backgrounds:** First Generation Mutant characters can choose from any Background except for Hedonists.

SECOND GENERATION MUTANTS (“MUTANTS”)

The so-called “second generation” mutants are those whose parents were early mutants themselves, whose deformities have now become useful, evolved tools (for example, a mother’s limp, finger-less arm has evolved into a prehensile tentacle in her offspring).

Mutants of this order are by far the most common in the wastes, their predecessors having survived against the odds to create a stronger, healthier generation. Second generation mutants run a wide range of shapes, sizes, and colors, combining all manner of bizarre, useful, or simple grotesque mutations and body changes.

Throughout the remains of the Twisted Earth, mutants have risen to retake what was once the world of a great and venerable species – humankind. Small settlements of wood and brick rise from the hollow shells of ancient cities, now populated by deformed and changed species of all kinds. The second generation has proved worthy and multiplies slowly, their numbers gradually increasing despite the retardation of reproductive ability in most of their kind.

Personality: The actual personality of a second generation mutant is by far the most open to player creation. Second generations are the majority species of this world, though they themselves compose a vast collage of types, forms, and aberrations. Some remain as outsiders and desperate survivors in the dry deserts and mountains, while others realize that their future is now and have come together to form communities, settlements, even cities.

There are good among them, and certainly the bad, with mutants seeking to re-establish law and peace, or others wishing only to prey off the weak for all eternity.

Physical Description: The physical appearance of a second generation mutant is entirely dependent upon her mutations. Generally speaking, however, second generation mutants usually resemble their human ancestors at least in shape and size – though again, this also can vary.

Relations: Being the vast majority of peoples struggling for survival in the wastes, mutants of this order must learn to tolerate each other, if not other races. Though one community of second generation mutants may look like an entirely different breed than the next, they often work hard to put aside their prejudices, at least for the sake of trade and peace. Still others defy this general “law” of the wasteland, and instead seek to make their own race dominant among all the peoples of the earth.

Second Generation Mutant Lands: As said before, mutants of the so-called “second generation” persist throughout the Twisted Earth, wherever life has a chance to survive. Several famous communities exist where second generation mutants make up the majority populace; these include the legendary Free City of Styx, the brutal rabble infested Barter Town, and the hub of desert trade, Free Water. Still many others are known (or rumored) to exist all over the desert, connected by fragile trade routes served by the rare water or food merchant plying the sands.

Names: The second generation of mutantkind

have, almost universally, cast off the raiments of their human ancestry and begun to invent their own names, nicknames, and regal family houses. Names can be virtually anything, from sounds the individual is known to make (for instance, “Cuff The Sickly”, or “Hack The Mustard-Spitter”), to descriptive tags (“Ugly”, “Girth”, “Scale”, “Razor-Jaw”, etc). Some mutants of this type instead try to pluck names from the Ancient buildings and signs they see, considering such a title more “regal.” It is not uncommon to have mutants named after car companies, popular cigarette brands, candy bars, etc..

Adventurers: Second generation mutants can seek adventure for a number of reasons, including searching for new supplies for her people, seeking to explore uncharted or unknown regions for expansion, or simply for personal gain, pleasure, and profit.

SECOND GENERATION MUTANT RACIAL TRAITS

- ❖ **Mutated:** Second Generation Mutants gain two Major and one Minor Mutations (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Defective:** Second Generation Mutants have two Minor Defects (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Medical Incompatibility:** Second generation mutants are changed and thus do not benefit as easily as humans from ancient medicines. A second generation mutant must make a Vigor roll at -2 when using medicines of the Ancients, in order to resist a Medical Incompatibility result.
- ❖ **Backgrounds:** Second Generation Mutant characters can choose from any Background except for Guardian, Hedonists and Advanced.

THIRD GENERATION MUTANTS (“NEO-HUMANS”, “SUPER MUTANTS”, “HOMO SUPER SAPIEN”)

The members of the “third generation” are also known as “neo-humans” or “super-mutants” - mutants who have fully evolved in more advanced ways than any of their predecessors. Though few third generation mutants actually exist in any number (or so it is believed, anyway), those that do, possess mutations that are far more advanced than mere deformities or primitive additions to the human anatomy. Full mental powers - awakened by agitated evolution - as well as strange new bodily features, create completely new species of creatures that will no doubt one day repopulate the radiated earth, dominating their lesser cousins (perhaps even the few remaining human enclaves) into servitude.

Third-Gen Mutants are considerably better off than the other mutant races, as their mutations are fully developed.

In addition, certain powerful abilities, dormant or nonexistent in other species, may be awakened or developed in these highly-evolved beings.

Personality: Third generation mutants are of a breed of new beings (of all manner of bizarre and

mind-boggling colors, shapes, and body forms) that are certain to inherit the earth. They are the end product of mutation, the refined spawn of the radiation that wiped out man from his own planet. Having bred out the deformations and useless aberrancies of their predecessor generations, those who have been born into this fold are a truly rare – but blessed – kind. This is not often lost on third generation mutants, who almost universally hold themselves to be the inheritors of the Twisted Earth. Given powers and abilities beyond any other race, they are often arrogant, unforgiving, and restless creatures that seek only to take from the lesser species. They are truly a force to be wary of.

Physical Description: Absolutely no generalization of the third generation’s abilities or appearance can rightly be made, since they are only now beginning to appear. However, unlike many mutants before them, when a family of third generation mutants breeds, their offspring are identical to their parents, and thus entire clans, groups, or societies of the same makeup are the rule.

Relations: Aggression, oppression, domination, and ruthless tyranny are rampant among those few species that call themselves “third generation.” Borne with an ingrained sense of superiority over both their petty mutant ancestors (first or second generation), and a hatred or jealousy of the Ancients who they now think inferior, they know no rival among the races of the world. As such, communities of third generation mutants are often unable to even consider peace or coexistence with lesser people, unless they of course are the dominant ruling partner (in other words, on top of the heap). More likely, third generation societies seek only to conquer, plunder, and exterminate the inferior breeds of the earth.

Third Generation Mutant Lands: A number of lands are known to be inhabited by hateful and war-like third generation races all over the Twisted Earth. These are, invariably, dangerous places to visit, since intrusion upon such “neo-human” lands is seldom tolerated. Known examples include the great “sorcerer-priests” of the Savant Empire of the Grass Plains (in what was once Texas-Arkansas), the mutant arachnids of the insect Hivecity of Old Los Angeles, and the vast jungles of the distant South where serpent-men and intelligent apes are known to rule with absolute hatred of humankind and the curse it left on the earth.

Names: Third generation names are certainly the most creative and unique, being borne of new languages and body types capable of strange noises and vocal utterances. Some names are completely unpronounceable to all but their own kind; others are simply nicknames taken or given for whatever reason.

Adventurers: Certainly uncommon, third generation “adventurers” would most likely be scouts for their own people, attempting to keep an eye on the

pitiful races of the world and looking for any possible threats. Others might be outcasts of their own race, harbouring a grudge or vendetta against the powers-that-be, involving “lesser species” (i.e. fellow party members) in their affairs of revenge.

THIRD GENERATION MUTANT RACIAL TRAITS

- ❖ **Mutated:** Third Generation Mutants gain three Major and one Minor Mutations (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Defective:** Third Generation Mutants have one Minor Defect (see Chapter 3)
- ❖ **Medical Incompatibility:** Third generation mutants are vastly changed, and thus do not benefit as easily as humans from ancient medicines. A third generation mutant must make a Vigor roll at -4 when using medicines of the Ancients, in order to resist a Medical Incompatibility result.
- ❖ **Superiority Complex:** Third Generation Mutants consider themselves superior to others. They begin with either the Arrogant or Overconfident Hindrance
- ❖ **Backgrounds:** Third Generation Mutants characters can choose from any Background except for Guardian, Hedonists and Advanced.

BACKGROUNDS

Every character comes from somewhere, whether a civilized dome protecting the lost culture and technology of the Ancients, or a rugged desert community that rose (and perhaps vanished soon after) in the shifting desert sands. Was the character a feral boy who was raised by mutant wolves? Or did he live in a sheltered, technological society that protected the remnants of Ancient technology before vanishing into history?

The origins of a character serve a number of purposes; first and foremost, they define him and set the stage for his behavior, beliefs, and ethical code. They also determine his knowledge, to what degree he understands technology, language, and culture - and the form in which it has become known to him (which will invariably be a little off-kilter from that known to the Ancients, even in the most advanced communities).

Each player must choose a background for his character. The background defines bonus skill levels, bonus Edges, default Hindrances, the character’s Tech-level, and any special items that the character starts with.

FERALS

A character with this type of background is truly wild. He probably grew up alone among the ruins, with no home or community, and with little or no technology. Such characters typically know nothing about the Ancients, the cataclysm, their culture and language, or anything beyond their immediate needs. Many such

characters do not even know how to talk and will often find inappropriate or bizarre uses for the items they scavenge (using a stop sign as a shield, for instance, or using a rifle as a club instead of firing it). Characters with this type of background generally have no concept of compassion or mercy, being concerned solely with survival.

One example of such a character would be someone who grew up alone after his parents died from disease or starvation in the wasteland. Another example would be a character from a more advanced community whose caravan was raided and destroyed when he was still a child. In both of these cases, the character was forced to grow up in a harsh world, unaware of his true origins or birthright, evidence of which might still exist somewhere in the rubble.

TECH-LEVEL 1: PRIMITIVE.

Bonus Skills: Ferals begin with a d6 in Guts, Notice, and Survival.

Bonus Edges: Select one of the following Edges (you must meet the normal requirements): Alertness, Conserve, Danger Sense, Feign Death, Filthy, Scavenger, Thief.

Default Hindrances: None

Language: Guttertalk

Special: Feral characters must spend all their money on starting gear. Any corium pieces remaining after purchasing their gear is lost.



TRIBALS

The tribal character comes from a primitive community, probably dominated by a central family figure or group of close-knit family heads. Technology in such a culture is generally limited to what a man can do with his bare hands (animal skins for clothes, stones as tools, etc.). Caves are the most likely shelters for this type of community, though some might possibly use burnt-out vehicles or some other “shell of the Ancients” (without any knowledge of its former use, of course). Warriors typically form the upper ranks of such a community, as they alone can protect it. The tribe would tend to frown upon pursuits not directly related to survival, seeing them as wasteful and capricious. Science and non-religious art would be considered worthless in such a group.

An example of a character from such a background would be someone whose tribe was destroyed by raiders and now seeks either revenge upon the murderers or knowledge of the marvelous world that exists “out there.” Another example would be a character that has been sent on a quest (perhaps to find some legendary “magical” technology) whose successful completion will help to ensure the survival of her tribe.

TECH-LEVEL 1: PRIMITIVE

Bonus Skills: Tribals begin with a d6 in Fighting and Survival.

Bonus Edges: Select one of the following Edges (you must meet the normal requirements): Berserk, Gladiator, Juju Medicine, Quick Draw, Steady Hands, Strong Willed, Sweep.

Default Hindrances: None

Language: Unislang

Special: Tribal characters start with a free primitive weapon or mount.

RITUAL PRESERVATIONISTS

Characters of this background come from communities who know how to use the technology of the Ancients but have lost the understanding of why that technology works. Advanced electronics and weapons, though still usable by the community, are viewed as religious relics or treasured artifacts and are sometimes even worshiped. Communities of this type are generally led by their scientists, who only barely manage to keep the technology running sufficiently to wow the masses. Technology that is destroyed cannot be replaced, as these people only know how to use the stuff, not repair or recreate it.

An example of such a culture would be a group of pirates who know how to operate the equipment on a derelict aircraft carrier off the coast. They might raid the local primitive tribes with their unholy “flying machines,” inspiring fear, awe, or worship. An example of a character from such a background would be a survivor who learns of the former Boy Scouts

(by reading a discovered piece of Arcana) and sets out across the land in a cobbled-together scout uniform, redressing wrongs in what he believes to be the spirit of these long-lost “warriors of virtue.”

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Bonus Skills: Ritual Preservationists begin with a d6 in Knowledge (Technology).

Bonus Edges: Scholar, Artifact Cache

Default Hindrances: Vow (major): Save Ancient Technology

Language: Gutter Talk

RESENTFULS

Characters of this background come from communities who despise the Ancients for their mistakes. They blame the Ancients for the destruction of the world and now seek to rebuild and preserve it by progressing only to a point they deem “natural.” They use hand-woven fabrics and natural weapons and tools. Such groups either shun pre-war technology and culture or actively strive to eradicate it.

An example of such a culture would be a group who suffered greatly from the Fall, perhaps from biological warfare and mutation, and who have cast off the “curse” of technology by destroying all high-tech items. Another example would be a “druidic” cult that dwells in the wilderness in relative harmony with mutant plant and animal life, monitoring and protecting the wildlife from intrusion by technologically advanced groups.

TECH-LEVEL 1: PRIMITIVE

Bonus Skills: Resentfuls begin with a d6 in Knowledge (Ancient Lore), Knowledge (Twisted Earth) and Survival.

Bonus Edges: Select two of the following Edges (you must meet the normal requirements): Beast Bond, Beast Master, Healer, Juju Medicine, Nerves of Steel, Strong Willed, Troglodyte.

Default Hindrances: Vow (major): Destroy Ancient Technology

Language: Unislang

Special: If a Resentful character takes the Increased Tech-level Edge, he loses his next level up. In addition he is no longer considered a Resentful.

RADICALS

Like the Resentfuls mentioned above, communities of Radicals blame the Ancients for blowing up the planet and creating mutation. They bitterly resent the destruction of civilization and actively seek to destroy all remnants of their forefathers. Unlike the Resentfuls, however, they may use the technology of the Ancients to further their own ends.

An example of such a group would be a chaotic and merciless group that fights constant war against others like it in the shell of an ancient city. Technology is hoarded wherever it can be found and turned against anyone who trespasses on the community’s territory. Old locations of culture—city parks, theater halls, and memorials—are now hunting grounds, and gang headquarters.

Another example would be a group of anarchist raiders who deliberately ruin any and all reminders of the past, from road signs to entire communities that shelter lost technologies.

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Bonus Skills: Radicals start with a d6 in Streetwise.

Bonus Edges: Select one of the following Edges (you must meet the normal requirements): Brawny, Command, Demolitions, Natural Leader, Road Warrior, Salvage Expert, Scavenger.

Default Hindrances: none

Language: Unislang

Special: If a Radical character takes the Increased Tech-level Edge, he loses his next level up. In addition, he is no longer considered a Radical.



DEGENERATES

Communities of this type were once—often within recent ancestral memory—capable of fully understanding the technology and culture of the Ancients. Now, however, due to circumstances such as constant war, civil unrest, or a communal need to focus on other aspects of survival, the community has degenerated. A Degenerate community is able to utilize the stuff of the Ancients, even their language and culture, but has lost all sense of context. Very few citizens remember much at all about where this technology and knowledge comes from. Such communities are generally on the decline, and will at some point likely break up or fall apart.

An example of such a culture might be a sheltered city community where the old “police force” runs the place like a military state and where scientists are now gods because they alone can create the drugs that dull the pain and misery of life in the world. Less intelligent people are subjugated and enslaved to serve the “civilized” populace. Another example might be a city ruin ruled by a government descended from the Ancients. Gang wars, crime, and isolation in the wasteland have turned the city into a ruin, and violent youths run rampant, terrorizing those few people who hold respectable jobs (in the power plant that runs the city, for instance, or in city government). Only the elderly members of the city populace (and their families) remember the laws and culture of the Ancients, while the delinquents mock their adherence to tradition and destroy all they can.

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Bonus Skills: Degenerates start with a d6 in Knowledge (Ancient Lore).

Bonus Edges: Artifact Cache

Default Hindrances: None

Language: Gutter Talk

RESURRECTORS

Communities of this type are rediscovering the technology of the Ancients and are beginning to understand the true nature and uses of Ancient devices. They are able to re-activate computer systems, robots, power stations, vehicles, etc. More advanced communities of this type have even developed the know-how to repair and maintain such technology. With the right tools, members of these communities can not only make repairs to many advanced devices, but also fabricate advanced munitions and advanced electronic parts. The situation for such a community is getting closer to the way things were before the Fall, but there is still a long road ahead.

An example of such a community would be one that managed to re-activate a small group of androids that were charged with rebuilding civilization after the holocaust. Another example would be a group that

has taken over a water purification plant and reopened it, selling the drinkable resource to merchants and making a massive profit from it. Yet another example would be a community attempting to reclaim the ruins of their city from mutants, ghouls, and raiders with their newfound knowledge of ancient technologies and manufacturing techniques, hoping to form a “New America” from the ashes.

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Bonus Skills: Start with a d6 in Knowledge (Computers and Robotics) and Repair.

Bonus Edges: None

Default Hindrances: None

Language: Unislang

Special: Resurrectors characters may ignore the Seasoned requirement when selecting the Increased Tech-level Edge.

VISIONARY REINVENTORS

This type of community has moved beyond simply surviving or reassembling pieces of the old world. They are beginning to invent a new future for themselves. Instead of repairing the lost technology of the Ancients, these communities are beginning to create their own technology and build their own civilization. They are developing and using such things as basic metalworking, steam engines, and ingenious but simple devices to not only complement human effort, but also sometimes replace it (steam-powered machines to harvest large amounts of crops, for instance).

An example of such a community would be one that has risen from the wasteland to conquer. Increased slave labor and the oppression of nearby communities have allowed an influx of resources with which the community has increased its ingenuity and invention by leaps and bounds. Such a growing empire has likely developed such things as fantastic flying war machines and steam-powered aqueducts.

Another example would be a community that believes the Fall was destined to occur in order to teach the survivors a valuable lesson. Intent on rebuilding the world with this lesson in mind, the group seeks to spread the word of brotherhood and peace, and has attracted many ingenious people who have contributed in unique ways to the slowly growing society. Yet another example would be a society that has advanced to the point where it is capable of producing new and advanced technology and weapons (gravity beamers, proton emitters, and fusion grenades as new but deadly post-holocaust weaponry). With such unique and advanced technology behind them and with a growing army and potent power base, the community seeks to reestablish civilization in its own particular way, be it democratic, monarchical, dictatorial, or ruthlessly imperial.

TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC**Bonus Skills:** None.**Bonus Edges:** Artifact Cache.**Default Hindrances:** None**Language:** Unislang**Special:** Visionary Reinventors characters may ignore the Seasoned requirement when selecting the Increased Tech-level Edge.**GUARDIANS**

These rare communities are the self-styled guardians of all things Ancient. Such communities fully understand the culture and technology of the Ancients and utilize it to keep the upper hand in the wasteland. They can create, repair, and use advanced energy devices whenever the resources are available.

An example of such a community might be one consisting of survivors in a fallout shelter that has remained undiscovered until the start of the campaign. A character from this community might be sent out to explore the world and report back or find some vital piece of equipment for the sake of the community's survival.

Another example would be a society of survivalists who went underground to wait out the war, only to emerge to a changed world, decades in the future. Armed with advanced weapons and knowledge, they seek to reclaim the surface world from its mutated population.

A third example would be a community in the desert that was set up by survivors of the Fall. These men and women, holding onto the technology (and to some degree, the lifestyle) of the Ancients, have forsaken their democratic ideals and placed their lives in the hands of an elite and ruthless police force, whose souped-up, plasma-fueled vehicles roam the desert highways, ensuring law and order and fiercely battling those who would invade their turf or otherwise threaten their lifestyle.

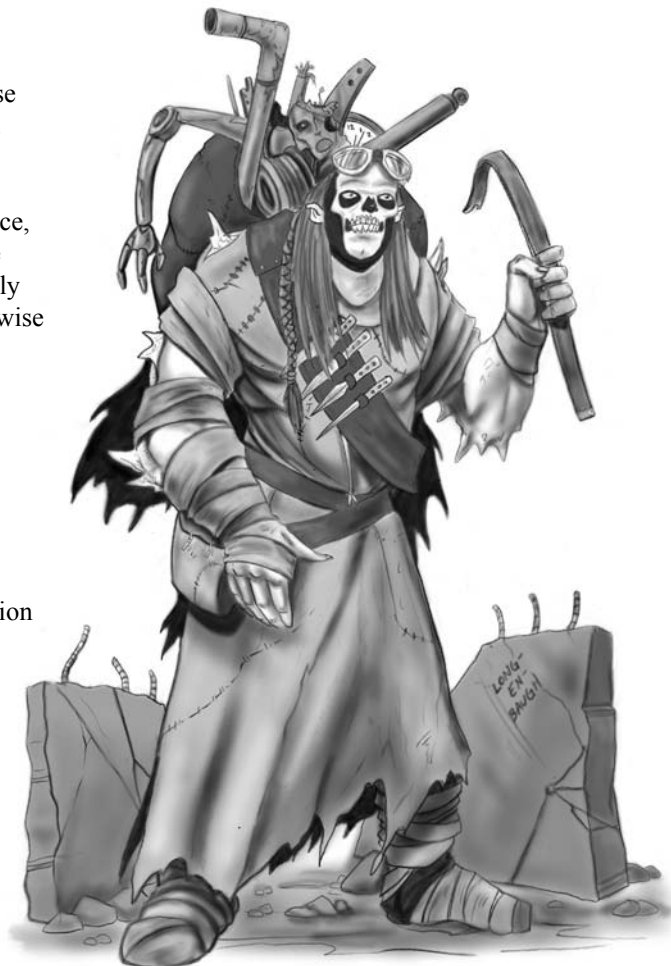
TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC**Bonus Skills:** None.**Bonus Edges:** Artifact Cache, Major Artifact Cache**Default Hindrances:** None**Language:** Ancient**Special:** Guardians may not be 2nd or 3rd Generation Mutants.**HEDONISTS**

Communities of this type never realized there was a Fall at all! Such communities were completely sheltered from the outside world, often in fully automated and enclosed dome cities or similar structures. They have continued

to exist as they always have, in hedonistic simplicity and blissful ignorance. Such communities typically know how to use advanced machines and electronics but have no idea how to repair them. Since they have been kept in relative security for such a long time, they no longer understand how to fight, wage war, or even survive on their own.

A classic example of such a group would be a city inside an impenetrable dome, whose inhabitants have lived in seclusion for generations, cared for and catered to by automated systems and computers, with all menial tasks, labor, and science far removed from them. They live in hedonistic luxury, without a care in the world, until the computer breaks down, and they are forced to leave the dome and find food and shelter elsewhere.

Another example might be a community far removed from the wasteland, where everyone lives in a paradise carefully maintained by their scientists. Aware and afraid of the terrible mutants outside their paradise, they occasionally send spies or explorers out into the wastes to report on the status of the world's ecosystem or the state of civilization in the mutant tribes.



TECH-LEVEL 2: POST-APOCALYPTIC

Bonus Skills: Hedonists start with a d6 in any one Knowledge skill.

Bonus Edges: Select two of the following Edges (you must meet the normal requirements): Artifact Cache, Attractive, Charismatic, Luck, or Scholar.

Default Hindrances: Clueless

Language: Ancient

Special: Hedonists may not be Mutants.

ADVANCED

This type of community has, for whatever reason, managed to avoid the ravages of nuclear war and the ruin of civilization, not only preserving the technology and culture of the Ancients, but also improving upon it over the years. Such exceedingly rare communities will often have even more advanced technology than the Ancients possessed, giving them an increased advantage. Such groups generally scorn the Ancients for destroying the world and consider them weak, ignorant, and even primitive in comparison to themselves. Many communities founded by artificially intelligent life forms are of this type.

An example of such a community might be an underground complex where an artificially intelligent robot has remained intact for decades, recreating and reactivating androids and other robots to do its bidding. Humans and mutants are enslaved by these robotic armies to perform manual labor for the robot legion, producing weapons, maintaining power sources, etc. Another example might be a peaceful community, populated by highly intelligent

researchers, scientists, and thinkers, which fled to a secure underground shelter to wait out the war. Together they have developed advanced technologies (agricultural methods for growing fungi and algae, energy-to-matter replication units, etc.), and now they are beginning to send out scouts to explore the wasteland in hopes of making peaceful contact with other survivors of the holocaust. They believe that if they spread their wisdom, they can help to ensure that the same kind of cataclysm never occurs again.

TECH-LEVEL 3: ADVANCED

Bonus Skills: None.

Bonus Edges: Artifact Cache, Major Artifact Cache

Default Hindrances: Outsider, Clueless

Language: Ancient

Special: Advanced characters may not be 2nd or 3rd Gen Mutants.

EDGES

Most Edges from Savage Worlds are appropriate to Darwin's World with the following exceptions. Characters may not take: Champion, Gageteer, Holy/Unholy Warrior, McGyver, Mr. Fix-It, Wizard, Noble, Mentalist, Rich, or Filthy Rich.

Arcane Background (Psionics) may only be gained by mutants with Neural Mutation. Other Arcane Backgrounds are not used.

Soul Drain requirements are modified to: Seasoned, Neural Mutation, Sprit d6.

BACKGROUND EDGES

ARTIFACT CACHE

Requirements: Novice

Whether due to his background, scavenging or theft, your character has somehow amassed a collection of artifacts of the Ancients. When buying starting gear, you may spend an additional \$2500 on gear from Chapter 9: Artifacts of the Ancients.

MAJOR ARTIFACT CACHE

Requirements: Novice, Artifact Cache

The amount of Ancient gear you have collected is considerable. When buying starting gear from Chapter 9: Artifacts of the Ancients, the amount you can spend is increased from \$2500 to \$8000.

DEFECT REDUCTION

Requirements: Novice, 2nd or 3rd Generation Mutant.

A mutant with this Edge represents the future of humanity. Through natural selection, she has shed the defects of previous generations. She is the next step in human evolution, destined to wipe out lesser races as Homo Sapiens did to the Neanderthal.



This Edge will remove a Minor Defect. This Edge may only be taken at character creation before choosing defects.

FEARED AND REVERED

Requirements: Novice, Human

It is well known throughout mutant lands, that humans caused the destruction of ancient world, though most have no idea how. Since they are so rare, some humans can inspire awe or fear in mutants. A human with this Edge can apply his Charisma (whether positive or negative) as a bonus to Intimidation rolls against mutants.

FILTHY

Requirements: Novice, Charisma -2 or less.

Your diet and poor hygiene have made you resistant to poison and disease. You gain a +2 bonus to all Vigor rolls against poison and disease.

GLADIATOR

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6

You've spent some time as a gladiator in the pits of one slave city or another, and have become accustomed to fighting against armored opponents. When attacking an opponent wearing armor, you ignore 1 point of armor. This Edge does not apply against natural armor.

Note: the GM may allow this Edge after character creation, if the character spends game time in the gladiator pits.

SUPER MUTANT

Requirements: Novice, Mutant

A mutant with this Edge is heavily mutated. Whether through his mutant parents or as a result of the environment, he has more mutations than average. The mutant gains an additional Minor mutation.

TROGLODYTE

Requirements: Wild card, Novice, Smarts d8

You grew up in a fallout shelter or other underground community and have developed keen—almost supernormal—instincts about underground environments. You can intuitively determine your precise underground depth as naturally as sensing which way is up. You add +2 to Notice and Survival rolls while underground.

COMBAT EDGES

BOARDING PARTY

Requirements: Novice, Steady Hands, Agility d6

The character is skilled at assaulting vehicles on the move and is able to leap from one vehicle to another even at high speeds. He adds +2 to Agility and

Climbing checks when attempting to board a vehicle in motion. He may use this ability to leap from a stationary position onto a vehicle that is moving 15" or less per turn, as long as the vehicle passes within 2."

DEMOLITIONS

Requirements: Smarts d6, Agility d6, Tech-level 2+

The character is trained at setting demolitions for maximum effect. When setting explosives, each success and raise on the Trait roll adds 1d6 to the damage done by the blast.

Characters make demolitions rolls using the lower of their Agility or Smarts. A failure means that the explosive does not go off. When diffusing explosives, the GM sets the difficulty for the diffusion. A success diffuses the explosive. A raise indicates that all the components are also intact and could be used again. A roll of one on the Ability die when setting or diffusing means the explosive detonates. Roll damage normally.

HORRIFYING KILL

Requirements: Seasoned, Spirit d8

The character may spend a round attacking a downed creature and causing a horrifying scene. This usually entails dismemberment, disembowelment, beheading, etc. At the end of his action, all opponents or creatures with line of sight to the scene must make a Guts roll. This ability does not work on creatures that are immune to fear.



POWER EDGES

The following Edges are available to mutants with the Neural Mutation.

KINETICIST

Requirements: Seasoned, Neural Mutation (Psionics)
Your psychic control over your physical surroundings is supreme. You gain a +2 bonus to Psionics rolls when using Telekinetic Powers.

PRECOG

Requirements: Seasoned, Neural Mutation (Psionics)
You have mastered your powers of precognition and are confident in your predictions. You gain a +2 bonus to Psionics rolls when using Precognitive Powers.

TELEPATH

Requirements: Seasoned, Neural Mutation (Psionics)
Your insights into the minds of others are second to none. You gain a +2 bonus to Psionics rolls when using Telepathic Powers.

PROFESSIONAL EDGES**ANCIENT JUJU**

Requirements: Heroic, Healing d8, Knowledge (Technology) d10

The healer has learned enough about the medicines of the Ancients to be able to produce one of their miracle drugs. Choose an ancient medicine. The character is able to synthesize this medicine given proper tools (test tubes, etc) and one week's work. Make a Knowledge (Technology) roll. For each success and raise, one dose is made.

This Edge may be taken multiple times applying to a different ancient medicine each time.

DEMAGOGUE

Requirements: Seasoned, Persuasion d8, Knowledge (Twisted Earth) d8, Allegiance

To gain the Demagogue Edge, a character must have an Allegiance to one of the major factions of the Twisted Earth. Upon taking this edge, the character will gain 5 typical followers of her faction. These followers will remain loyal to the character as long as her allegiance stays true. Followers who are killed are not automatically replaced. Instead, the Demagogue must seek out a community in which to recruit new followers. After one week amongst the community, she may make a Persuasion roll. For each success and raise, one follower is replaced (to a maximum of 5).

If the character changes allegiances the Demagogue Edge and the followers is lost. It may be taken again with another faction, but never again with the same faction.

CAPTIVATE MASSES

Requirements: Veteran, Demagogue

The Demagogue is a master of captivating audiences with his rhetoric. The character may make a Persuasion roll, with a success, the all characters within 10", who can understand him, will give their full attention to him, as long as he is speaking. With a raise, the overall reaction of the crowd will improve by one level. If anyone in the crowd is attacked, the effect ceases.

INCREASED TECH-LEVEL

Requirements: Seasoned, Once per Rank

Your character's technology level increases by one. This Edge may only be taken once per rank, starting at Seasoned.

Note: In order to take the Increased Tech Level Edge, the GM must agree that the character has had a reasonable amount of exposure to the new technology. Living in a community of the chosen technological level or higher will suffice. Other explanations may include another character in the group teaching the character or advanced devices such as brain implants or "teaching machines."

INTUITIVE MECHANIC

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d10, Repair d8, Knowledge (Technology) d6

You have a natural knack for fixing mechanical devices. The intuitive mechanic adds +2 to his Repair rolls. With a raise, he halves the time normally taken to fix something.

JUJU MEDICINE

Requirements: Novice, Healing d6, Survival d6

You are an expert in herbal medicine and treatments. Not only do you know how to use Juju, but you also understand the tools of the trade and how to find them in the wild. Given time to search, you can procure enough natural ingredients to build a Juju kit containing any 5 primitive potions by simply searching the wilderness for herbs and other natural ingredients. Finding the ingredients requires a Survival roll and takes 1d6 hours. Creating the potions takes 1 hour per potion type.

You also know how to apply your healing skill to maximize a patient's natural healing. When giving medical attention to a patient, your Medical Attention modifier is +1 (1941 or better).

JUJU MIRACLE

Requirements: Veteran, Tech-level 2+, Juju Medicine, Healing d8

You have perfected the techniques of herbal medicine and post-apocalyptic technologies to provide greater healing capabilities. You may use your Healing

skill to attempt to heal wounds greater than one hour old. A success removes one wound that is more than one hour old, a raise removes two. For Extras, a success heals an incapacitate status. If the roll fails, all current wounds will have to heal naturally.

LANGUAGE

Requirements: Novice

The character has learned to speak, read and write a new language. This Edge may only be taken once per Rank. The character must have a way to learn the new language, such as a teacher.

A character with the Illiterate hindrance only learns to speak the Language.

MARKET

Requirements: Seasoned, Knowledge(Twisted Earth) d6, Persuasion d6

You have an established business practice in a particular location. Pick one large city or small region for the focus of this Edge. When trading in this area, you can sell goods for 10% more and buy for 10% less than market value. This Edge can be combined with the Silver Tongue Edge.

SALVAGE EXPERT

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8, Repair d6

The salvage expert has spent much of his life roaming the vast plains and desert wastes of the Twisted Earth scavenging his needs from wasteland wreckage, junk yards and ancient ruins. As a result he adds +2 to Repair rolls when able to salvage parts. The character may build an improvised toolkit with a successful Survival roll and 1d6 hours work. Repairs made with an improvised tool kit take twice as long, but negate the -2 penalty for no toolkit.

SCAVENGER

Requirements: Novice, Notice d6, Survival d6

You are an expert at living off the ruins of the ancients, finding things that others often overlook—or are too busy to notice. You have become the ultimate scavenger. Your character rolls a d10, instead of a d20, when rolling on scavenging tables (resulting in more valuable finds).

SILVER TONGUE

Requirements: Novice, Persuasion d6, Charisma 0+

You have developed a knack when it comes to convincing others of the value of your basic trade goods. When trading, you sell goods for 10% more and buy for 10% less than market value. This Edge can be combined with the Market Edge.

WEIRD EDGES

FEIGN DEATH

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d8, Vigor d8

The character has the ability to feign death and pass for just another dead body. This talent is particularly useful in avoiding dangerous combats or encounters out in the wild. The character can feign death for up to 30 minutes. The character is assumed, by others, to be a corpse.

Any creature that actively checks the character for signs of life may make a Notice roll at -4. If successful, the creature knows that the character is actually alive.

JUNK ARMOR

Requirements: Seasoned, Feral or Tribal, Tech-level 1

Given access to scrap material, the character may build a set of junk armor. The character makes a Survival roll, with a success armor made from Hides, wood, leather is built, with raise armor made from Metal is built, with two raises armor made from Advanced materials is built. The character may choose build armor of a lower type if they wish. This work takes one day.



Due to the nature of the armor it will eventually wear out. Each time a character wearing the armor takes one or more wounds, the Armor bonus is reduced by 1. When the Armor bonus reaches 0, the armor is destroyed.

JUNK ARMOR TABLE

Material	Armor	Weight	Covers
Hides, wood, leather	+1	10 lbs	Torso, arms, legs
Metal	+2	20 lbs	Torso, arms, legs
Advanced material	+3	40 lbs	Torso, arms, legs

RADIATION SENSE

Requirements: Wild Card, Novice

You have the ability to literally “sense” the presence of significantly harmful radiation. This is not so much a physical sense—like hearing or seeing—but rather an ability to notice the telltale signs: a lack of life in area, a sickness in vegetation, a subtle ionizing glow not noticed by others, etc. You can automatically detect irradiated areas before entering them. This ability is constantly in effect. You can also make a Survival roll to identify the exact level of radiation.



HINDRANCES

ANEMIC (MAJOR)

Anemic is considered a Major Hindrance in Darwin’s World.

BAD EYES (MAJOR)

Bad Eyes may only be a Minor Hindrance for characters with Advanced or Guardians background.

DOUBTING THOMAS (NOT USED)

Doubting Thomas does not apply to Darwin’s World.

PARASITIC INFESTATION (MINOR OR MAJOR)

As a Minor Hindrance, your character has been infested with parasites, and must consume double the normal amount of food and water. As a Major Hindrance, the infestation has also caused bloating and skin discoloration, resulting in -2 to his Charisma.

You may sacrifice a level up in order to reduce the hindrance from Major to Minor, or remove the Minor version altogether.

OCCUPATIONS

Players are encouraged to choose an occupation to help further define their character. If they do so, they should select skills and edges to match with their chosen profession. Here are some common occupations.

ACADEMIC

Academics in this post-apocalyptic world are rare. Few libraries, schools, or universities exist. In a world where survival is the order of the day, the academic life is a very unprofitable one. Most academics come from larger communities where such abilities are rewarded, if only a little.

CARAVAN GUARD

Any valuable cargo is a target for the scum of the wasteland. Many traders hire guards to help ensure their goods arrive safely.

CORIUM PROSPECTOR

Most miners are an unfortunate, sorry lot who find their occupation listed under the title “slave.” Corium prospectors, however, are not like typical miners. They are trained to spot likely sources of the rare metal, either by learning the physical signs left on the land by the catastrophic conditions under which this metal is formed, or by studying the scrolls of the Ancients to learn the most likely locations. As the economy of the Twisted Earth grows, and city-states seek to move

away from simple barter toward hard currency, these prospectors are becoming more and more numerous.

CRAFTSMAN

Not everyone on the Twisted Earth lives an exciting life. Some merely try to survive as people always have, operating shops, repairing vehicles, feeding their families, and trying to stay out of trouble.

DEMAGOGUE

As the people of the Twisted Earth gather into larger and larger groups, forming alliances and building towns and cities, politicians again rise from among them to lead. Many of these “public servants” have no real desire to help the people they lead at all, instead manipulating the emotions of their followers to their own benefit. Many politicians get their start as pamphleteers, writers of propaganda for other politicians, and writers of slander about those politicians’ enemies (including letters and documents, supposedly written by those enemies, which appear right on cue at election time). Some of these pamphlets are evolving into a form strangely reminiscent of the newspapers of the Old West.

FURNITURE (PROSTITUTE)

It is an unfortunate truth that prostitution is one of the oldest and most enduring professions in the history of the world. The Twisted Earth is no different. There are always men willing to pay for sex, and there are always women willing, or with no other choice than, to trade the use of their bodies to make their way in the world.

GUIDE

The deserts and roads of the Twisted Earth are not for the timid, and it pays to have a guide who has traveled them before. These characters lead travelers and caravans through the wastes for a fee, using their knowledge of these areas to avoid danger and keep expeditions adequately supplied.

HEALER

Healers are important members of any community. They often possess only limited skill and experience, but in a world where much medical knowledge has been lost, this makes them comparative experts.

HERDSMAN

As the people of the Twisted Earth begin to domesticate the animals of their world, there arises a need for skilled herdsman to care for the beasts. Herdsmen tend their flocks, whether of desert horses, fraxx steeds, or even the occasional gront.

MERCHANT

Trade is an important part of life for the denizens of the Twisted Earth. Resources are scarce since the Fall, and trade often the only way to procure goods essential to survival.

MILITARY

The term “military” in post-apocalyptic Earth could mean anything from community militia to members of military-based pseudo-society.

PREDATOR

Predators are those who prey on others for survival. This could be raiders that pillage, thieves that steal, or ghouls that hunt humans for food.

REPAIRMAN

Like healers, Repairmen are valuable community members who possess a much-sought-after ability. Even the most limited fixer is an asset to any group.

SLAVE

Unfortunately, the ancient practice of slavery is alive and well in the Twisted Earth. People own slaves for a variety of purposes, the most common of which are manual labor and “entertainment.” Characters with this occupation are assumed to have escaped or been freed.



SLAVER

Few slaves go willingly to the block. Slavers are the people who fill the pipelines of the Twisted Earth with the free manual labor many struggling city-states need to survive.

WANDERER

Whether through wanderlust, a desire for the new and different or a state of exile from his home, the character has been on the move for most of his life and is comfortable staying that way.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS**RICHARD FENTON**

Race: Human

Background: Advanced

Tech-Level: 3 Advanced

Languages: Ancient

Agility d6, **Smarts** d8, **Spirit** d6, **Strength** d6, **Vigor** d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Guts d6, Healing d8, Knowledge (Computers and Robotics) d6, Knowledge (Technology) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Survival d6
Charisma +4; **Pace** 6; **Parry** 5; **Toughness** 7(2)

Hindrances: Bad Eyes (Wears Glasses), Bad Luck, Clueless, Loyal, Outsider

Edges: Attractive, Very Attractive

Medical Incompatibility: None

Gear: Environmental Suit, Undercover Vest, Glock 17 (12/24/48, 2d6, AP1, Semi-Auto), 4 Clips Ammo, Rapier (Str+d4), Clean bandages, 2 doses Stimshot A, Thermos, Shoulder bag, 12 meals Trail Rations (Ancient), Yellow Stage II-C Access Card, Range Finding Binoculars, 50 Corium Pieces

BACKGROUND:

Your ancestors were wise to build their personal biodome so far from the large communities of the world. That the dome stayed intact so many generations after the fall was a miracle.

Your mother taught you Medicine. The computer systems and robots aided you in keeping the community members healthy, so they could raise the crops and animals.

You were living in an isolated paradise, but your luck was not to last. The Brethren's attack was calculated and massive. You and your fellow survivors escaped towards the mountains, looking back to see all that you had known destroyed. But for all your healing skills, your companions fell, one by one, to sickness and wounds.

Alone, you stumbled into the mountain community of Stonehaven. Though you had difficulty understanding their broken language, you convinced them of your value by saving a mutant child from

Cholera. They now accept you as their doctor.

But you wonder... "Could there be other groups of human survivors out there?"

FEATHERBOLT

Race: Third Generation Mutant

Background: Tribal

Tech-Level: 1 Primitive

Languages: Unislang

Agility d8, **Smarts** d6, **Spirit** d6, **Strength** d6/d8, **Vigor** d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d4, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) d4, Knowledge (Twisted Earth) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Charisma -2; **Pace:** 6" Flight 8"; **Parry** 7; **Toughness** 6(1)

Hindrances: Heroic, Illiterate, Overconfident, Outsider

Edges: Defect Reduction, Gladiator

Mutations: Complete Wing Development (M), Nocturnal-Strength (M), Sensitive Sight (m), Shriek (M)

Defects: None

Medical Incompatibility: -4

Gear: Bow, Quiver (20 Arrows), Leather Jacket, Short Sword, 24 meal Trail Rations (Ancient), 2 Basic Walkie Talkies, Sleeping bag, Thermos, Backpack, Manacles

BACKGROUND:

You grew up among a community of your brethren, night-fliers all. On raids against nearby communities you learned the use of bow and short sword. But as your wisdom grew, so did the realization that you did not hold the same beliefs as your family and your comrades. You didn't believe that all you had must be gained through conquest and felt their must be something more to this brutal existence. After countless arguments, you left.

You find yourself now a member of the community of Stonehaven in the low mountains below Big Rocks. Though most of the community is still leery of your presence, their leader, Archon, has accepted you openly. For now that will have to do.

KORIN HALF-MIND

Race: Second Generation Mutant

Background: Resurrector

Tech-Level: 2 Post Apocalyptic

Languages: Unislang

Agility d4, **Smarts** d8, **Spirit** d6, **Strength** d6, **Vigor** d6

Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Computers and Robotics) d6, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) d6, Knowledge (Twisted Earth) d4, Notice d6, Psionics d8, Repair d6, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Pace: 6" ; **Parry** 5; **Toughness** 6(1); **Charisma** -2

Hindrances: Curious, Parasitic Infection (minor), Phobia: Closed Spaces (minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Quick, Radiation Sense

Mutations: Accumulated Resistance (m), Dual Cerebellum (M), Neural Mutation(M)

Defects: Aberrant Deformity (m), Underdeveloped Voice Box (m)

Medical Incompatibility: -2

Powers: Pyrokinetic Pulse, Telekinetic Grasp, Telekinetic Resilience

Gear: Leather Armor, Canteen, Compass, 12 meals Trail Rations (Ancient), Nail Studded Baseball bat, Beretta 93r, 2 clips ammo, Throwing Axe, Shoulderbag

BACKGROUND:

You have always lived in the community of Stonehaven, quietly observing and gaining whatever knowledge you could.

Though you couldn't speak, your curiosity about all things nurtured your strong mind. Then when puberty hit, your latent telekinetic powers revealed themselves.

Though your name belies your intelligence, you don't mind, as long as you can continue to help your brothers rebuild their world.

OURGOG

Race: Second Generation Mutant

Background: Tribal

Tech-Level: 1 Primitive

Languages: Unislang

Agility d6, **Smarts** d4, **Spirit** d6, **Strength** d10, **Vigor** d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Charisma -2; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry** 6; **Toughness** 8(1)

Hindrances: Arrogant, All Thumbs, Illiterate

Edges: Berserk, Sweep

Mutations: Gigantism x2 (M), Skeletal Fortification (m)

Defects: Bizarre Pigmentation: skin (m), Negative Chemical Reaction (m)

Medical Incompatibility: -2

Gear: Battle Axe, Leather Armor, Long Bow, Quiver (20 arrows), 2 spears, Standard Binoculars, 150' Ancient Rope, Waterskin, 12 meals Trail Rations (Ancient), Man Purse (belt)

BACKGROUND:

Your tribe was strong and proud, and you excelled at your craft... killing. Your size and resilience made you a fantastic fighter and you were destined to lead.

But when you realized that your leader, Arthorth, did not believe you capable of leading the war parties, you knew that you could not stay. The final straw

came when, Quenton Longlegs, stole a small morsel from the tribal food stores and was sentenced to death. This was not a crime worth killing for, but Arthorth was resolved.

So, when none were looking, you released him and headed toward Big Rocks. The people of Stonehaven took the two of you in and you are now proud to lead the warriors of your new community.

QUENTON LONGLEGS

Race: First Generation Mutant

Background: Visionary Reinventor

Tech-Level: 2 Post Apocalyptic

Languages: Unislang

Agility d8, **Smarts** d6, **Spirit** d4, **Strength** d6, **Vigor** d6

Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Twisted Earth) d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Throwing d4

Charisma 0; **Pace:** 6"; **Parry** 6; **Toughness** 6(2)/8(4) vs. bullets

Hindrances: Wanted (Major), Cautious, Habit: Always Stretching

Edges: Artifact Cache, Fleet Footed, Quick

Mutations: Dermal Suction(m), Increased Movement(M), Multiple Stomachs (m)

Defects: Skeletal Deterioration (M)

Medical Incompatibility: -0

Gear: Tactical Vest, 2 Concussion Grenades (5/10/20, 3d6), Shoulderbag, 12 meals Trail Rations (Ancient), Sleeping bag, Waterskin, Duct Tape, Bolt Cutters

BACKGROUND:

The citizens of Stonehaven were kind to take you in and raise you as their own. Cast out by your own parents at the age of 8, there was little likelihood of survival without help. When you stole food from OourGog's tribe and were sentenced to death. OourGog saved you, but the tribal leader, Arthorth, put a price on your head.

You always kept to yourself, often climbing the outer walls to get solitude. You prefer to run and hide rather than confront the dangers of the world around you.

CHAPTER 3:



**MUTANTS AND
MUTATIONS**

"I was a dog, but because I was really good, they moved me up to human being status."

-Booga, Tank Girl

"The Unity will bring above the master race. Master! One able to survive, or even thrive, in the wasteland. As long as there will be differences, we will tear ourselves apart fighting each other. We need one race! Race! Race! One goal! Goal! Goal! One people... to move forward to our destiny. Destiny."

-The Master, Fallout



WHAT IS A MUTATION?

Mutation is a complex phenomenon. As a rule, mutation occurs whenever DNA is not perfectly duplicated. This process occurs almost

exclusively as a fetus

develops in the womb. A single cell (a fertilized egg), duplicates its DNA and divides into two identical cells in a process known as mitosis.

These duplicate cells in turn replicate themselves, and those replicates do the same, and on and on, until a full-fledged organism develops. The first replications produce cells that are identical to one another, but after a certain point (say, after a dozen or so splits), the cells begin to specialize in their tasks. The genes of the cell, whose “codes” tell the cell what to do, dictate these “tasks.”

For example, a genetic code might dictate that a single cell joins millions of others of its kind to help create an eye, or a lung, or a liver. These programmed cells, in turn, divide and multiply, and over several months (at least for human embryos) the cells refine their specializations to such a degree that a human child takes form.

The production and reproduction of the human cellular structure is a delicate process fraught with potential problems, from mutated genes to damaged chromosomes. Cells can fail to fully divide, or genes can fail to come through with their genetic “orders.” Without checks and balances, these problems would result in a deformed child, but the body usually recognizes the fault early in the process (typically within the first few weeks of pregnancy) and naturally aborts the fetus. In some cases, however, the process fails to abort, and a mutated birth results.

Whenever cells fail to replicate exactly as the genetic codes of the species dictate, a mutant is born. In humans, genetic mutation typically results in some form of physical retardation. Cystic fibrosis, chorea, Down’s syndrome, muscular dystrophy, hemophilia, anemia, and even color-blindness are all conditions resulting from DNA replication errors that manage to survive through to birth.

Most genetic mutations do not last, however, and are usually restricted to the one mutant in question. The reasons are mainly social and cultural in nature—mutants, no matter how polite one wishes to be about it, do not typically breed. Their mental and/or physical differences generally make them the least ideal selections for a mate, and since reproductive capabilities are often susceptible to damage by mutation (perhaps Nature’s way of ensuring the mutation does not continue in the species), their chances of producing offspring are greatly reduced.



As a result, the mutated genetics of the individual typically die with him and are not passed on to the next generation.

All of this changes in the environment of Darwin’s World. Here, genetic mutation is far more common due to one prevalent factor: mutagens in the environment. The use of chemicals in both industry and warfare was widespread during the fall of the Ancients, and many of those chemicals contaminated the environment to such an extent that errors in DNA replication began to occur. Such is the legacy of the Ancients: contamination and mutation.

Radiation is another factor. Nuclear detonations, fallout, and ultraviolet sources are all known to affect living creatures in much the same way as chemical contamination, but radiation has an added feature: it acts as a kind of “accelerator,” promoting genetic instability.

With a larger percentage of the population suffering from mutation, mutated genes are no longer the exception, but the rule. As a result, mutated genes are now shared amongst the population and are being passed along by those few mutants still capable of breeding.

The existence of advanced mutations is actually evidence of the evolutionary process in action. What starts as stray mutation, expected to discontinue and not contribute to the gene pool, manages not only to exist but to thrive, resulting in the mutation becoming an evolutionary trait. Over successive generations, what was once, for example, a useless additional “tentacle” of flesh and tissue becomes a functional and usable limb. Creatures who have multiple generations of mutant ancestors will likely have mutations of a more advanced and useful nature. Those whose ancestors mutated more recently will have mutations still in the early stages of evolution, less developed and advanced.

CHOOSING MUTATIONS AND DEFECTS

This section details the Major and Minor Mutations and Defects a character may choose from, based on his race (see Chapter 2: Characters). Major Mutations represent more powerful mutations than Minor Mutations. As well, Major Defects are more debilitating than Minor Defects.

A mutant may trade one Major Mutation for two Minor ones, but two Minor Mutations may not be traded for a Major one; they have to be taken as Minors. Defects may never be traded. Players may typically select from any of the available Mutations and Defects when creating their character. However, GM's may restrict certain Mutations or Defects in a given campaign.

Any mutant character may also gain one additional Major Mutation or two additional Minor ones by taking an additional Minor Defect. However, if they do, then ALL of their Mutations and Defects must be

randomly determined by rolling on Tables 3-1 to 3-4: Random Mutations and Defects.

MAJOR MUTATIONS

ABERRANT ENDOSKELETAL ENCASING

This mutation is caused by an aggressive explosion in the production of bone and cartilage between the ribs of the mutant's skeletal frame, creating a thick and reflective bone "shield" encasing his vitals. This growth is segmented so the spine will still allow a good degree of flexibility.

Benefit: Mutant gains 2 points of natural Armor covering her torso.

Special: The mutant can not also have the Protective Dermal Development mutation, and may not take the Attractive or Very Attractive Edges. The mutant cannot wear armor unless it is specifically designed to fit her.

TABLE 3-1: RANDOM MAJOR MUTATIONS

D100	Mutation
1-4	Aberrant Endoskeletal Encasing
5-8	Accelerated White Blood Cell Activity
9-12	Acid Excretion Glands
13-16	Additional Arm Development
17-20	Adrenaline Control
21-23	Complete Wing Development
24-27	Dermal Poison Sap
28-30	Diurnal/Nocturnal
31-33	Dual Cerebellum
34-37	Energy-Retaining Cell Structure
38-41	Extreme Resilience
42-45	Fragrance Development
46-48	Gigantism
49-52	Hemotoxin Sting
53-56	Increased Body Density
57-60	Increased Movement
61-64	Independent Cerebral Control
65-67	Light Distortion Field
68-70	Neural Mutation
71-74	Neurotoxin Sting
72-78	Optic Emissions
79-81	Radiation Immunity
82-85	Regenerative Capability
86-89	Respiratory Membrane
90-93	Shriek
94-96	Simian Deformity
97-00	Stench

TABLE 3-2: RANDOM MINOR MUTATIONS

D100	Mutation
1-4	Aberrant Horn Development
2-8	Abnormal Joint Flexibility
9-12	Accumulated Resistance
13-16	Blindsight
17-20	Chameleon Epidermis
21-24	Claws
25-28	Dermal Spike Growth
29-32	Dermal Suction
33-36	Dual Headed
37-40	Elongation
41-44	Energy Immunity
45-48	Enhanced Respiration
49-52	Epidermal Acid Enzymes
53-56	Expanded Optic Orbit
57-60	Gamma-Ray Visual Sensitivity
61-64	Hyper Olfactory
65-68	Interior Moisture Reservoir
69-72	Multiple Eyes/Multi-Faceted Eyes
73-76	Multiple Stomachs
77-80	Protective Dermal Development
81-84	Sensitive Sight
85-88	Serrated Dental Development
89-92	Skeletal Fortification
93-96	Spontaneous Electric Charge Generation
97-00	Superior Kidney Development

ACCELERATED WHITE BLOOD CELL ACTIVITY

This mutation increases the mutant’s ability to heal even the most extensive injuries.

Benefit: The mutant gains the slow Regeneration Monstrous Ability. Slow regenerators make a natural healing roll once per day. This healing ability is limited to wounds caused by bludgeoning, ballistic, piercing, and slashing weapons. Damage caused by heat, cold, electricity, acid, sonic or energy weapons must heal normally.

ACID EXCRETION GLANDS

The mutant has developed sub dermal glands—usually either a development of the salivary glands in the mouth or special sweat glands elsewhere on the body—that produce acidic enzymes. The mutant can use these glands to squirt a stream of concentrated acid a distance of up to ten feet.

Benefit: The mutant can squirt acid as an attack action. The attack is treated as a pistol with a range of 5/10/20 and 2d6 damage. The acid loses potency quickly after exposure to air, so it cannot be decanted or stored for later use.

ADDITIONAL ARM DEVELOPMENT

The mutant has developed an additional arm, tentacle, or similar tool-wielding limb. This limb may extend from any part of the mutant’s torso.

Benefit: The mutant gains an additional limb. The limb provides one extra action per combat round, with no multi-action penalty. The mutant also gains +1 to grappling attempts.

Special: This mutation may be taken more than once. The additional limb allows an additional action with no multi-action penalty.

The mutant cannot wear armor unless it is specifically designed to fit him.

ADRENALINE CONTROL

The mutant has developed a fine control over his adrenal system, allowing him to exert and extend himself at will. After the adrenaline rush has passed, the mutant must rest to recoup.

Benefit: As a free action, the mutant can trigger an adrenaline surge that increases his speed, stamina, strength, and pain tolerance. During the rush, the mutant temporarily gains one die level of Strength and Vigor, +2” of base speed and can ignore 1 point of wound penalties. The rush lasts five rounds, but it can be stopped voluntarily. After the rush, the mutant gains one Fatigue level that lasts for 4 hours.

COMPLETE WING DEVELOPMENT

The mutant has developed a complete set of wings, in the form of fleshy membranes (as with bats), feathered appendages (as with birds), or even thin, rigid membranes (as with insects). These wings give the mutant the Flight ability.

Benefit: The mutant can fly as long as she has room to maneuver her (6 foot) wingspan. Her Pace while flying is 8”; though she can double this during a dive (each inch of forward movement must lower her altitude by one inch). Her climb rate is one half her flying Pace.

Use standard encumbrance rules to figure out how much the mutant can carry. Any penalties assessed from weight also subtract 2” from her flying Pace.

Special: The mutant cannot wear armor unless it is specifically designed to fit her.

DERMAL POISON SAP

The mutant is covered in a thick gooey “sap” (like a plant) or “slime” (like a frog) that is poisonous to those who touch him.

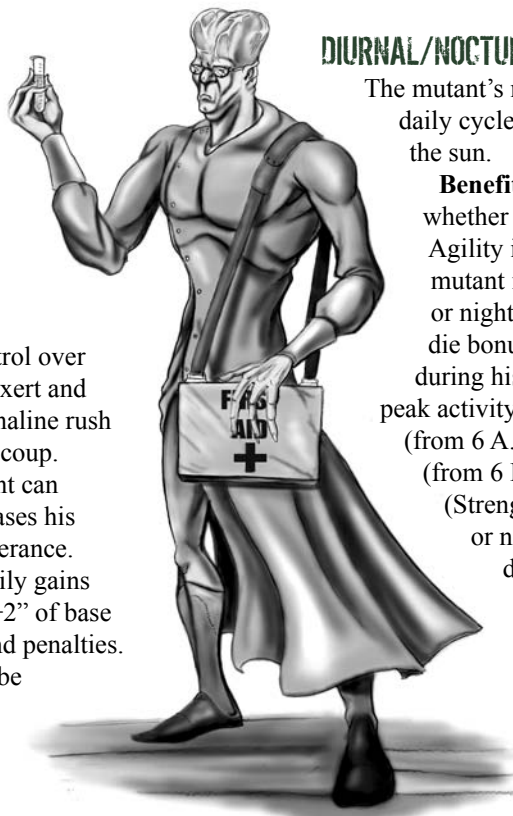
Benefit: Successful bare-hand, bite and grapple attacks either by or against the mutant require the opponent to make a Vigor roll against the poison. If the Vigor roll is failed, the character is Shaken and temporarily loses one die of Strength (minimum d4) until healed. This can only affect each creature once per encounter.

Special: In order for the poison to take effect, the Mutant must touch exposed skin of the target. This usually will require a called shot on the attack.

DIURNAL/NOCTURNAL

The mutant’s metabolism is tied to the daily cycle of the rising and setting of the sun.

Benefit: The player chooses whether the mutant’s Strength or Agility is affected and whether the mutant is at his best during the day or night. The mutant receives a one die bonus to Strength or Agility during his peak activity cycle. His peak activity cycle can be either day (from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.) or night (from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M.). The bonus (Strength or Agility) and cycle (day or night) must be determined during character creation and cannot be altered.



Special: This mutation may be taken twice, selecting both Strength and Agility tied to the same cycle of the sun. Use the character's unmodified Attribute score when determining Skill costs.

DUAL CEREBELLUM

The mutant possesses two distinct and fully developed brains, housed in independent brain cavities within a single skull, and is thus capable of greater intelligence. A complete medical scan of the head will reveal the true independent nature of the two brains. If the mutant also possesses the Dual Head mutation, each head contains a brain.

Benefit: Every time the mutant makes a Trait roll based on Smarts, she rolls an additional die equal to the trait being rolled and takes the best of the rolls. For Wild Cards, this die is in addition to the Wild Die.

ENERGY-RETAINING CELL STRUCTURE

The mutant possesses special energy-sensitive cells and internal electrolyte "webbing" that acts to disperse harmful energy and store it in the body. The mutant can, sometimes, channel the energy before it dissipates (through short bursts of static energy), utilizing it as if he were a "battery." The mutant can absorb energy, storing it for a later time to release as an attack or to attempt to heal).

Benefit: When the mutant is struck by an electrical or energy weapon attack, he must make a Vigor roll. If the check is successful, the attack does no damage whatsoever. On a raise, the mutant absorbs this energy, which automatically heals one Wound.

Special: Energy from cold, acid, radiation, heat, and sonic attacks will damage him as normal.

EXTREME RESILIENCE

A mutant with this ability suffers much less from attacks made against her. This mutation can manifest itself in a number of ways. Often, the mutant is simply much larger than others of her species, making it more difficult to injure her (just as it's harder to instantly kill an elephant than a human). Other mutants with Extreme Resilience might have an unusual configuration of internal organs. Many other possibilities exist as well.

Benefit: The mutant gains the Hard to Kill Edge, ignoring normal requirements.

FRAGRANCE DEVELOPMENT

The mutant has the ability to produce a subtle yet hypnotic fragrance. This is another mutation that can take a number of forms, but the most common is mutated pheromones or hormones, which the mutant can emit at will. Another form this mutation can take is the production of spores, which, again, the mutant would generate at will. Other possibilities also exist.

Benefit: Once per encounter, as an action, the

mutant can emit an invisible scent that hypnotizes living creatures. Place a medium burst template centered on the mutant. All creatures in the template must make a successful Vigor roll or be Shaken (hypnotized) by the overwhelming affect on their system.

GIGANTISM

The mutant's physical size has been altered, either by a pituitary defect or a change in the body's genetic program during growth and development. While this serves to increase toughness and size, often substantially, the mutant is nonetheless noticeably different from others of his species, often showing such traits as ape-like arms, a lumbering gait, and distorted features.

Benefit: The mutant size is increased by +1 (providing +1 to Toughness). He is now noticeably larger than other humanoids (8-10 feet).

Special: This mutation can be taken multiple times, increasing the mutant size by +1 each time. The mutant cannot wear armor that was designed for creatures of a different size category. The mutant may not take the Attractive or Very Attractive Edges.

HEMOTOXIN STING

The outer cells of the mutant's epidermis have developed into nematocysts, oval-shaped stinging cells that fire microscopic "darts" into any living tissue that comes into contact with them. These screw-shaped darts penetrate deep into the skin of the victim and release hemotoxins into the bloodstream, causing immediate damage. This is a microscopic action that requires nothing more than contact between flesh and flesh. For example, the mutant could use this ability simply by grasping an opponent.

Benefit: Hemotoxins cause bruising and hemorrhaging and disrupt the ability to heal. Any creature coming into skin-to-skin contact with the mutant must make a Vigor roll or suffer one Wound of acid damage. This ability will only work once against each opponent per encounter.

Using a sting is a free action but is not automatic. The mutant can choose not to sting when touching other creatures.

Any creature wounded by the hemotoxins doubles the time until the next natural healing roll may be made.

Special: In order for the toxins to take effect, the Mutant must touch exposed skin of the target. This usually will require a called shot on the attack.

INCREASED BODY DENSITY

This mutation has modified the mutant's cellular spacing and reinforced the structure of his cells. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in the mutant's body density and resistance to kinetic shocks.

Benefit: The mutant gains +1 Toughness for all parts of his body.

Special: Due to the increased density, the mutant's Swimming rolls suffer a -1 penalty.

INCREASED MOVEMENT

The mutant has developed the ability to move incredibly fast. Possible reasons for this ability include enhanced adrenal gland function and development of a higher tensile strength in the muscles and tendons of the lower torso and legs. Other possibilities also exist.

Benefit: The mutant's pace is increased by +2" and his running die is now d10. If he also has the Fleet Footed edge, his pace is now +4" and he rolls 2d6 for his running dice.

Special: This mutation can stack with other Edges or abilities that increase movement.

INDEPENDENT CEREBRAL CONTROL

The forward motor cortex of the mutant's brain has developed to such a point that each hemisphere can control actions independently, without dividing the mutant's attention.

Benefit: A mutant with this mutation may ignore two points of multi-action penalties when taking two or more "different" actions in the same round. This does not allow the mutant to take the same action twice.

Special: Independent Cerebral Control can be combined with the Two-Fisted Edge. The mutant could then, for example, make two attacks and another action with no multi-action penalty.

LIGHT DISTORTION FIELD

The mutant is capable of emitting a powerful "distortion field," which alters light patterns surrounding him and makes him literally invisible. The field is large enough to envelop his entire body, as well as any clothes and surface gear he might be wearing. The biology and physics surrounding this phenomenon are not well understood.

Benefit: As an action, the mutant can become invisible for 5 rounds. Opponents may detect him on a Notice roll at -6 and if successful may attack with the same penalty. Turning invisible requires an incredible amount physical energy. At the end of the invisibility, the mutant gains a level of Fatigue that lasts until he rests for at least 4 hours.

NEURAL MUTATION

Sometimes mutations develop in the brain rather than the body. These mutations can unlock neural powers, often called Psionics, which allow the mutant to perform extraordinary feats. The unlocked potential varies greatly from mutant to mutant. Some barely understand the true nature of their mental powers,

while others learn to master and expand their mutant gifts.

Benefits: The mutant gains the Arcane Background (Psionics) Edge with 10 power points and 3 powers chosen from the Neural Powers section.

NEUROTOXIN STING

The outer cells of the mutant's epidermis have developed into nematocysts, oval-shaped stinging cells that fire microscopic "darts" into any living tissue that comes into contact with them. These screw-shaped darts penetrate deep into the skin of the victim and release neurotoxins into the bloodstream, causing immediate damage. This is a microscopic action that requires nothing more than contact between flesh and flesh. For example, the mutant could use this ability simply by grasping an opponent.

Benefit: Neurotoxins act to paralyze the body and respiratory system. Any creature coming into skin-to-skin contact with the mutant is automatically Shaken and must make a Vigor roll or suffer a temporary loss of one die of Agility (minimum d4). The ability score loss lasts for 2 hours.

Using a sting is a free action but is not automatic. The mutant can choose not to sting when touching other creatures.

OPTIC EMISSIONS

The mutant gains the ability to emit blazing atoms from her eyes. These "eyebeams" are streams of charged ions that are cycled in the optic center. The beams act much like lasers, searing and burning flesh much as thermonuclear radiation can cause a flash burn.

Benefit: The mutant gains an optic emissions, ranged attack, damage 2d6, range: 5/10/20. The mutant rolls his Shooting skill when using this ability.

RADIATION IMMUNITY

Having adapted to life in a harsh radiated environment, the mutant is immune to radiation (as well as heat generated by radiation).

Benefit: The mutant is immune to all effects of radiation exposure (see Radiation).

REGENERATIVE CAPABILITY

This mutation allows the mutant to recuperate from injury at a staggering rate, provided she gets proper rest and food. The mutant may recover from critical wounds in mere days and even, according to some reports, re-grow severed limbs.

Benefit: The mutant is able to heal from crippling injuries. Any permanent injuries will completely heal when all Wounds are healed. This even allows the mutant to grow back limbs even if they were completely severed.

RESPIRATORY MEMBRANE

The mutant has developed a set of gills and the associated membranes within the respiratory tract. This allows him to breathe underwater by extracting oxygen molecules from the water just as a fish does.

Benefit: The mutant is a true amphibian, and gains the Aquatic Monstrous Ability (see Savage Worlds core rules).

SHRIEK

The mutant's vocal cords can produce sounds both above and below the normal human auditory range. This mutation also allows the mutant to produce a multi-layered, multi-timbre shriek, whose sonic vibrations affect everyone in the mutant's immediate vicinity.

Benefit: When in combat, the mutant may usher a savage wailing scream that is horrendous to hear. He then makes an Intimidation roll against every foe within an adjacent Medium Burst Template. Deaf opponents are unaffected.

SIMIEN DEFORMITY

This mutation gives the mutant a set of physical features that resemble those of the great apes (such as gorillas and orangutans). These features include stunted legs, a hunched and slope-shouldered posture, and elongated arms that cause the knuckles to drag on the ground. The mutant's overall speed is reduced unless his arms are used to assist in locomotion.



Benefit: If the mutant uses both his arms and legs to move, his speed is increased by 2" and his running dice is a d10. The mutant also gains a climb bonus of +2. If he uses his arms to assist in movement or climbing he cannot wield a weapon or carry items in his hands. The mutant's elongated arms also extend his reach by 1."

Penalty: If the mutant does not use his arms to aid in locomotion, his shortened legs reduced his base speed to 4" and his running dice is a d4.

STENCH

The mutant can secrete an oily, musk-like chemical whose smell is unpleasant to most animal life.

Benefit: As an action, the mutant can produce the Stench. All living creatures, that possess a sense of smell, within a medium burst template must make a Vigor roll or gain a level of Fatigue. This Fatigue goes away after 10 minutes. Attackers with an animal Smarts of d6 or less flee if they fail their roll.

Special: Mutants with this ability are easier to detect. Creatures with a sense of smell get +2 on Notice rolls to detect this mutant.

MINOR MUTATIONS

ABERRANT HORN DEVELOPMENT

The mutant's hair and bone growth has become accelerated and pronounced on the head area, and a pair of "horns" (or even "antlers," with advanced development) has grown on her head, giving her natural weapons and the ability to make a gore attack.

Benefit: The Mutant gains horns as a natural weapon. The horns do Str+d6 damage, but are considered an off-hand weapon. The Ambidextrous edge will negate this penalty.

The mutant can also charge opponents to gore them with her horns. She adds +2 to the damage roll if she moves at least 4" in a straight line before attacking; this increases to +4 if she moves at least 8".

ABNORMAL JOINT FLEXIBILITY

This mutation allows the mutant to alter her body in some small manner by dislocating fingers, arms, legs, etc. This allows an incredible degree of bodily flexibility.

Benefit: Mutant gains a +1 bonus to Climbing and Lockpicking rolls, Grappling attempts, and Agility rolls made to escape bonds.

ACCUMULATED RESISTANCE

The mutant has built up a resistance to various agents (chemicals, poisons, drugs, and diseases).

Benefit: The mutant gains a +2 bonus to all Vigor rolls against chemicals, poisons, drugs, diseases;

and Medical Incompatibility checks. This does not include radiation.

BLINDSIGHT

The mutant has developed a sense that allows him to detect creatures within a limited range, even in circumstances where normal vision is impaired (such as blindness, total darkness, or creature invisibility). This ability could take the form of acute hearing, acute vibration sense, or echolocation, the GM and player may decide the exact specifics.

Benefit: The mutant gains the ability to detect objects to a range of 10' (60 feet). Invisibility and darkness are irrelevant to his enhanced senses. The mutant normally does not need to make Notice rolls to notice creatures within the range of his Blindsight.

Special: The GM should carefully consider the form of mutant's blindsight, as situations will inevitably arise in which it could be negated or useless.

CHAMELEON EPIDERMIS

The cellular structure of the mutant's epidermis (skin) has mutated, allowing the cells to alter their appearance and color. This provides the mutant with an exceptional talent for hiding, allowing him to remain undetected if he makes no sudden movements.

Benefit: By changing color, the mutant can hide even without cover or concealment. His coloration provides a bonus to his Stealth rolls based on how much of his skin is exposed. The mutant gains +2 to Stealth rolls in light or partial clothing and +4 if nude or nearly nude. This benefit is lost when the character is fully clothed.

Changing color requires that the mutant do nothing else for one round.

CLAWS

This mutation has altered the mutant's fingernails so that they can be used as formidable natural weapons. Some variety has been observed in claw development; most mutants have fixed claws, though a few have been found to have retractable claws. Most (but not all) mutants have claws on their feet as well.

Benefit: The mutant has natural weapons that allow him to make a claw attacks with either, or both, hands. The claws deal Str+d4 damage. Retractable claws can be hidden and provide a +1 bonus to Climbing rolls. Non-retractable claws are an obvious mutation, but add +2 to Climbing rolls.

DERMAL SPIKE GROWTH

The mutant has developed thick, bone-like protrusions from his epidermis, resulting in spikes that cover his torso.

Benefit: When the mutant makes a successful Grapple attack, or is successfully grappled, he may



immediately inflict Str+d6 damage. Use this damage on subsequent rounds if the mutant wins the opposed grapple.

Due to the sharp spikes, opponents wishing to make a touch attack against the mutant must make a called shot to the arms, legs or head.

Special: The mutant cannot wear armor unless it is specifically designed to fit him. The mutant may not take the Attractive or Very Attractive edges.

DERMAL SUCTION

The mutant has developed minute cilia or suction cups on the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet that allow her to climb smooth surfaces.

Benefit: The mutant can climb and travel on vertical surfaces or even traverse ceilings. The mutant must have its hands free to climb in this manner. The mutant gains a climbing speed of half his pace. Furthermore, it need not make Climbing checks to traverse a vertical or horizontal surface (even upside down). The mutant cannot "run" while climbing.

DUAL HEADED

The mutant has developed a second head next to the first (on his shoulders) through a wild genetic deformation. Only one of the heads has an actual brain, unless the mutant also possesses the Dual Cerebellum mutation.

Benefit: Opponents do not gain any "gang up" bonuses they would normally get against the mutant. If one head is blinded, the mutant loses this benefit.

Special: The mutant may not take the Attractive or Very Attractive Edges.

ELONGATION

The mutant's tendons, muscles, and cartilage have developed to allow for extreme stretching without tearing. This permits the mutant to extend her arms, legs, neck and torso to almost twice their normal length without ill effect.

Benefit: As a free action, a mutant can extend her limbs to add 1" (2 yards) to her reach. While elongated, the mutant gains a +2 bonus when making Agility rolls to escape bonds. Due to stress on the tendons and muscles, the mutant must make a successful Vigor roll after Elongating, or be fatigued. This fatigue is removed with an hour rest.

ENERGY IMMUNITY

The mutant has developed immunity to a certain type of energy. The reason for this immunity depends on the mutant's environment and development. A mutant with immunity to directed energy, for example, might have a reflective hide or chameleonic skin cells that react to flashes of intense energy by becoming tiny mirrors. Immunity to acid, as another example, might indicate the mutant's skin is fibrous, like a plant, and resists flesh-eating acids.

Benefit: Choose one type of energy: acid, cold, electricity, energy weapons, fire, or sonic/concussion. Each time the mutant is subjected to that energy type the damage roll is halved (round down). If energy weapons are chosen, it works against all weapons of type energy including lasers, masers, particle beams, and energy field generators.

ENHANCED RESPIRATION

The mutant has an improved respiratory system, with enlarged and chambered lungs. The mutant normally takes a breath every three or four minutes, and can hold her breath for exceptionally long periods of time.

Benefit: The mutant can hold her breath for a number of minutes equal to her Vigor die before making drowning or suffocation checks. Because of her infrequent breathing cycle, she adds +2 to Vigor rolls made to resist airborne diseases, spores, and inhaled poisons.

EPIDERMAL ACID ENZYMES

The mutant can emit powerful dissolving juices or corrosive enzymes (such as those emitted by carnivorous plants and some species of toads and frogs) through pores in the skin. While these enzymes have some effect against organic material (like leather or wood), they are particularly destructive to metallic constructs. Stone items are generally unaffected.

Benefit: This mutant secretes a digestive acid that can dissolve metal rapidly, and has some effect on organic material. Any successful touch attack deals 2d6 points of acid damage to metal objects (which might include an opponent's weapon or armor) and

can cause it to be dissolved (use the rules for Breaking things from Savage Worlds). The acid inflicts only 1d4 damage to the flesh of opponents. If a metal weapon strikes the mutant, after doing damage it will suffer acid damage unless the wielder makes an Agility roll at -2.

Inflicting acid damage is a free action for the mutant. It is not voluntary; the mutant damages everything metal that he touches.

Even metal that can resist the enzyme damage cannot resist prolonged contact with the mutant's skin. As such, the Mutant can create a hole in most metal objects (doors, cars, etc.) in about an hour.

Special: The mutant cannot wear metal armor. Any other armor or clothing will be soiled and tattered from continuous contact with the enzymes. The mutant can expect any metal weapons he uses to rapidly lose effectiveness, dissolving in 1d4 rounds.

EXPANDED OPTIC ORBIT

The skull of the mutant has evolved to allow a special kind of eye movement. The orbit (socket) of each eye is much deeper than normal and new eye muscles have developed along the interior walls of the cavity. These new muscles allow the mutant to instinctively pull his eyes back and into his skull when they are threatened. In effect, the eyes of the mutant retract back and down into the head, out of harm's way.

Benefit: A mutant with this mutation looks normal most of the time, but when his eyes are threatened, they rapidly sink back, leaving hollow, empty holes. This mutation negates the effects of weapons, devices, or other effects that cause blindness.

GAMMA-RAY VISUAL SENSITIVITY

This mutation allows the mutant to literally "see" emissions of gamma rays within his field of vision.

Benefit: Gamma ray emissions appear as bright glowing patches or "auras," warning the mutant of a dangerous area, object, or creature (the GM is only required to describe the aura as dim for low radiation levels, bright for higher levels, or brilliant for extremely high levels). The range of the mutant's detection is roughly equivalent to his natural sight.

HYPER OLFACTORY

The mutant has developed an advanced sense of smell similar to that of animals.

Benefit: This mutation lets a mutant detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. The mutant can follow tracks by smell. The mutant gains +2 to Tracking rolls (+4 if the quarry's odor is particularly strong) and ignores the modifier for poor light.

Mutants with this ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

INTERIOR MOISTURE RESERVOIR

Like a camel, the mutant has an internal reservoir (most likely located in the buttock and stomach area), which collects residual moisture in the body and provides the mutant with an emergency source in circumstances where drinking water is unavailable.

Benefit: The mutant can ignore hunger and thirst rolls for the first 5 days without sufficient food and water.

MULTI-FACETED EYES/MULTIPLE EYES

The mutant has either developed multi-faceted, insect-like eyes, or additional eyes (which might be located anywhere on her body).

Benefit: The mutant adds +1 to Notice rolls requiring sight.

Special: The mutant can not take the Attractive or Very Attractive Edges.

MULTIPLE STOMACHS

The mutant has developed a series of interconnecting stomachs (similar to those of a cow), which allow him to break down and digest nearly any substance, be it animal, vegetable, or mineral.

Benefit: The mutant can subsist on nearly anything that is not inherently poisonous. He still requires water.

PROTECTIVE DERMAL DEVELOPMENT

The skin cells of the mutant's epidermis have thickened and hardened, turning into a tough "armor." This mutation can take the form of a thick leathery dermal overgrowth (like "jowls" or an extra layer of callous tissue, for instance) or hardened "scales," like a lizard's.

Benefit: The mutant gains +1 Armor over her entire body.

Special: The mutant can not also have the Aberrant Endoskeletal Encasing mutation.

SENSITIVE SIGHT

The mutant's eyes and optic nerves have increased sensitivity and allow him to see well in low light.

Benefit: A mutant with this mutation gains the Low Light Vision monstrous ability (see Savage Worlds core rules).

SERRATED DENTAL DEVELOPMENT

The mutant has developed mandibles, beak, saber teeth, or other rigid mouthparts. The actual nature of the mutation can vary tremendously depending upon the player's choice. The mouthparts can be used to make a bite attack.

Benefit: The mutant gains a natural weapon that can be used to make a bite attack. The bite inflicts Str+d6 damage with no off hand penalty. This may be

combined with normal hand attacks with the standard multi-action penalties.

Special: This mutation may be taken twice. If taken a second time, the bite attack does not count towards multi-action penalties.

SKELETAL FORTIFICATION

The calcium deposits in the mutant's skeletal system have been replaced with other minerals. This mineral substitution strengthens and fortifies the bones.

Benefit: A character with this mutation gains +1 natural Armor that can stack with worn armor. He also does Str+d6 damage with his fists, but is considered an unarmed defender if he does so.

SPONTANEOUS ELECTRIC CHARGE GENERATION

The mutant's nervous system generates a surplus of ionizing electrical energy, which can be discharged from his body in the form of an electrical jolt. The mutant need only touch his target or a conductive material. The biology and physics behind this phenomenon are not well understood.

Benefit: The mutant can emit an electrical pulse as a touch attack, inflicting 2d6 points of electricity damage.

Special: Unless the target is wearing metal armor, the Mutant must touch exposed skin of the target for the electrical attack to be effective. This usually will require a called shot on the attack.



SUPERIOR KIDNEY DEVELOPMENT

The mutant’s kidneys have developed into an extremely effective filtration system, which grants the mutant total immunity to ingested (not inhaled or injury type) poisons and toxins (including most non-acidic chemicals).

Benefit: The mutant becomes immune to ingested poisons of all types, and her urine becomes a poisonous byproduct of roughly equal strength and effect to the toxin imbibed. If the mutant decides to harvest her urine and use it as an ingested poison, the victim gets +1 to the Vigor roll needed to resist the effects of the original poison.

MAJOR DEFECTS

ALBINISM

The mutant’s body has adjusted to a life sheltered from UV radiation (underground or in some type of shelter), and thus reacts poorly to direct sunlight and UV sources.

Penalty: When exposed to natural light or other UV sources, the mutant suffers a temporary 1 die reduction to Vigor (min. d4).

ANAPHYLAXIS

The mutant’s metabolism reacts adversely to the presence of certain materials, which are normally harmless. This extreme reaction is such a shock to the

mutant’s system that it could kill her if the exposure is long enough. The player chooses a common material from the following list: alcohol, corium, feathers, ferrous metal, fur, leather and hide, plastic, rubber, or wood.

Penalty: Each round the mutant is in contact with the offending material; the character’s Vigor is reduced by one die type. If this would drop her Vigor below d4, then the character is Incapacitated and must roll on the Incapacitation table. When away from the substance, the character’s Vigor will return to normal in 8 hours.

ATROPHIED CEREBELLUM

The mutant’s brain has atrophied in certain areas due to a genetic birth defect. As a result of this defect, the mutant suffers a number of mental deficiencies.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect must spend 2 points to raise his Smarts by one die type during character creation.

BRACHYDACTYLY

The mutant has developed significantly shortened fingers and toes.

Penalty: This defect severely reduces manual dexterity, resulting in a -2 penalty to the following skills: Climbing, Driving, Lockpicking, Piloting and Repair.

TABLE 3-2: RANDOM MAJOR DEFECTS

D100	Defect
1-5	Albinism
6-10	Anaphylaxis
11-17	Atrophied Cerebellum
18-22	Brachydactyly
23-26	Cannibalism
27-33	Critical Vulnerability
34-38	Cystic Fibrosis
39-43	Hemihypertrophy
44-48	Hemophilia
49-55	Negative Chemical Reaction
56-60	Neurofibromatosis
61-67	Night Blindness
68-72	Pituitary Deformation
73-77	Sensitivity
78-82	Sickle Cells
83-89	Skeletal Deterioration
90-94	Syncope
95-00	Terminal Arm Deficiency

TABLE 3-2: RANDOM MINOR DEFECTS

D20	Defect
1-2	Aberrant Deformity
3	Adrenaline Deficiency
4	Attention Deficit
5	Bilirubin Imbalance
6-7	Bizarre Pigmentation
8	Dwarfism
9	Immune-System Abnormality
10	Odorous Stench
11	Photoluminescent Aural Emission
12	Photosensitivity
13-14	Underdeveloped Inner Ear
15	Underdeveloped Intestines
16-17	Underdeveloped Lung
18-19	Underdeveloped Muscles
20	Underdeveloped Voice Box

CANNIBALISM

The mutant hungers for the flesh of his own kind. This could be a physical or mental defect. Regardless of the cause, the mutant must eat a certain amount of flesh from its own species or suffer withdrawal sickness.

Penalty: This defect requires the mutant to consume one half pound of flesh (or blood) from its own species every day. If the mutant fails to satiate his need within 24 hours he begins to suffer from starvation (see Savage Worlds core rules). This starvation can lead to death, but can be negated by eating a half pound of flesh.

Special: Cannibals (or Ghouls) are universally hated in the wasteland and thus have an additional social burden. Often an adventurer afflicted with this defect must hide his cannibalism or risk severe persecution.

CRITICAL VULNERABILITY

The mutant has developed a crucial weakness in his body that makes him especially susceptible to additional damage. Typical causes include lack of protective bone or cartilage around vital organs, exposed nerves or pressure points in certain locations, and organs that are unusually sensitive to trauma.

Penalty: Any physical damage to the mutant causing at least one Wound adds an additional Wound. The Wounds may be soaked normally.

Special: The mutant cannot have the Extreme Resilience mutation.

CYSTIC FIBROSIS

This defect results in defective programming of the glands that produce mucus. The defect causes a build-up of salt in the lungs and produces mucus that erodes the lungs' tissues and inhibits the mutant's ability to breathe. This can cause suffocation, infection, and eventual death. A mutant with this genetic defect has a limited lifespan. When this time has passed, the mutant is considered to have died of the eventual salt and mucus build-up.

Penalty: The mutant will have a maximum lifespan of 20+2d6 years. The mutant also suffers a -2 penalty on all Vigor rolls.

Special: A mutant may not have both the Cystic Fibrosis and Pituitary Deformation defects and may not take the Berserk Edge.

HEMIHYPERTROPHY

Hemihypertrophy is a genetic disorder in which one side of the body fails to grow normally. This results in a grotesque, lopsided, and stunted development. On one side the mutant has a shortened leg with a diminutive foot and an arm with a diminutive hand. A mutant with this defect has an unusual gait and reduced dexterity.

Penalty: The mutant's pace is reduced by 2". She also suffers a -2 penalty to actions requiring two-handed dexterity and manipulation. This applies to wielding two handed weapons, Climbing and Swimming rolls, and some Agility rolls (GMs call).

HEMOPHILIA

The mutant's white blood cell count is diminished, preventing him from healing as quickly as others of his species.

Penalty: When a mutant with this genetic defect must check the Incapacitation table, his Vigor rolls are made at -2 (in addition to Wound and Fatigue modifiers). As well, the mutant must wait an additional 2 days before making natural healing rolls.

NEGATIVE CHEMICAL REACTION

The mutant suffers from a genetic disease (such as malignant hyperthermia) that increases the chances of negative reaction to treatment with foreign drugs.

Penalty: The mutant's modifier for Medical Incompatibility does not change, but if she fails a Medical Incompatibility check, the effect roll is made with d10 instead of a d20 (causing more severe effects).

Special: A mutant with this defect may not take the Accumulated Resistance mutation with the resistance toward chemicals.

NEUROFIBROMATOSIS

This is an advanced form of tumor development, once known as "The Elephant Man's Disease." A mutant with this defect develops massive and grotesque tumors that completely distort and pervert the human form, causing a reduction in vision and negatively impacting movement.

Penalty: This defect severely restricts a mutant. A mutant with this defect reduces his Pace by 1", his Charsima by 1, and suffers a -1 modifier to Notice rolls.

NIGHT BLINDNESS

The mutant suffers from retinitis pigmentosa, a genetic disorder that causes degeneration of the retina. This condition results in diminished vision under low-light conditions.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect doubles the penalties from dim and dark lighting.

Special: The mutant may not choose this defect if he already has the Sensitive Sight mutation or the Bad Eyes or Blind Hindrances.

PITUITARY DEFORMATION

The mutant's pituitary gland has developed a defect that causes unnatural aging. A mutant with this defect appears much older than he really is, generally two to

three times his actual age.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect must spend 2 points to raise his Strength by one die type during character creation. The mutant has a maximum lifespan of 25+2d6 years.

Special: A mutant may not have both the Cystic Fibrosis and Pituitary Deformation defects.

SENSITIVITY

The mutant is particularly sensitive to one or more forms of attack or special effects. The player chooses the particular form of this sensitivity.

Penalty: The mutant suffers double damage from one category in the following list: heat, cold, electricity, acid, energy weapons, sonic attack, poison, or radiation.

Special: The mutant may not take this defect if she has taken Energy Immunity (see Mutations) for the same attack form.

SICKLE CELLS

The mutant has developed abnormal hemoglobin, which results in a shortage of healthy red blood cells, or anemia.

Penalty: The mutant gains the Anemic Hindrance.

SKELETAL DETERIORATION

The calcium deposits in the mutant's skeletal system have been replaced with other minerals (cadmium being the most prevalent in this post-holocaust environment). This mineral substitution weakens and deforms the bones and causes brittleness.

Penalty: The mutant subtracts 1 from his Toughness.

Special: A character with this defect may not have the Skeletal Fortification mutation.

SYNCOPE

The mutant is afflicted with cerebral anemia and is thus vulnerable to fainting. These swoons commonly strike at the most inopportune times.

Penalty: Whenever the mutant suffers a Wound or fails a Guts roll, he must make a Vigor roll or lose consciousness. Unconsciousness lasts for 2d4 rounds, after which the mutant recovers from the syncope and is Shaken.

TERMINAL ARM DEFICIENCY

The mutant's defective genes failed to fully develop one limb. In some cases, this means that the mutant was born with missing limbs. In other cases, a genetic deformity has caused one of the mutant's limbs to degenerate and atrophy, in which case the mutant has a short, stubby, or disfigured limb, evidence of mutation in transition. The limb is severely handicapped (if any vestigial portion is present) or entirely absent.

Penalty: The affected arm's Strength and Agility are reduced by 1 die type. When purchasing skills based on Strength or Agility, the character uses the lower score. Anytime the mutant attempts Strength or Agility roll that requires both arms, she uses the reduced scores.

If the penalty reduces the arm's Strength or Agility to less than d4, then the arm is completely missing instead. Treat as the One-Armed hindrance: two-handed attacks cannot be made, and a -4 penalty is applied to appropriate skill rolls.

MINOR DEFECTS

ABERRANT DEFORMITY

The mutant has developed limbs in places where they don't belong, or large growths or a grotesque hunchbacked form. This results in a hideous appearance.

Penalty: Though this does not affect the mutant's physical abilities, it serves as a blatant sign that he is a mutant and cannot pass as a normal human. The mutant suffers a -2 to his Charisma.

ADRENALINE DEFICIENCY

The mutant has a deficiency in adrenaline production (perhaps due to an atrophied adrenal gland or diminished adrenal function), and as a result, cannot make use of this reservoir of strength and stamina in dangerous situations.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect may not have any of the following edges: Quick, Berserk, Combat Reflexes, Frenzy, Improved Frenzy, or Fleet Footed.

Special: The mutant may not take the Adrenaline Control mutation.

ATTENTION DEFICIT

The mutant has developed a chemical imbalance that prevents him from concentrating.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect suffers a -2 penalty to Investigation, Knowledge (including Common Knowledge), and Repair rolls.

BILIRUBIN IMBALANCE

Due to a one-nucleotide error in a certain blood-producing gene, the mutant generates an inordinate amount of bilirubin that the liver cannot break down. This results in pale skin and telltale yellow eyes which show that he is a mutant.

Penalty: The mutant suffers a -4 penalty to Vigor rolls made to resist the effects of ingested poisons and alcohol. This defect serves as a blatant sign that the character is a mutant and he cannot pass as a normal human.

BIZARRE PIGMENTATION

The mutant's hair color, eye color, and skin color (the player chooses two of the three) are of a color not normally found in humans. Odd hair colors include light red, unusually fair blond, white, platinum, and silvery gray. Unusual skin hues include extensive freckling, melanin blotches, and irregularly livid (bruised-looking) tones. Abnormal eye colors include red, pink, white, and unusual flecked combinations. Whatever the abnormal coloration, it is clear that the mutant is not a normal human. Many other choices exist for all of these features.

Penalty: The mutant's Charisma is lowered by 2. He is clearly a mutant and cannot pass as a human.

DWARFISM

The mutant's physical size has been altered, either by a pituitary defect or a change in the body's genetic program during growth and development. With this mutation, the mutant is a dwarf; his size and body weight are substantially decreased.

Penalty: The mutant is smaller in stature than other characters. His base Pace is now 5".

IMMUNE-SYSTEM ABNORMALITY

The mutant has developed an immune system defect that diminishes resistance to disease. The manner in which this defect manifests itself varies greatly from mutant to mutant. Examples include depleted white blood cell count (diminishing the body's defenses against foreign viral infection) and kidney atrophy (diminishing the body's ability to purify its system).

Penalty: This mutant has a -4 penalty to Vigor rolls to resist disease.

Special: Depending on the form chosen for this defect, the mutant may not be able to take one of the following mutations: Accelerated White Blood Cell Activity, Accumulated Resistance, Regenerative Capability, or Superior Kidney Development (GM's call).

ODOROUS STENCH

The mutant's sweat glands produce an odor that is unpleasant to others and can not be reduced. This makes him easy to detect, but hard to be around.

Penalty: The mutant reduces his Charisma by 1. As well, others gain +2 to Notice rolls to detect the mutant and Tracking rolls when following him.

PHOTOLUMINESCENT AURAL EMISSION

A strange glow emanates from the mutant's body. The cause of this condition is typically a constant (but harmless) combustion of dying (or dead) inner-body cells, a process which occurs as old cells die and new ones are created. Sometimes, however, this condition is the result of the ionization of latent radiation within the mutant's body. The glow is usually neon green,

blue, white, or yellow, but the player may choose another color.

Penalty: The mutant emits a glow that sheds dim light up to 4" in all directions. This makes the mutant easily visible, because the glow is constant.

Special: Wearing normal clothing does not inhibit the illumination. The mutant is likely to automatically fail all Stealth rolls in areas of darkness or areas lit by less than full daylight. If the mutant wears some enveloping cloak or similar garment, he may attempt Stealth rolls at -2 in such areas.

PHOTOSENSITIVITY

The mutant's eyes have developed an extreme sensitivity to intense light.

Penalty: A mutant with this defect suffers from the Blind Hindrance in sunlight or other bright lights. This can be kept in check only with sun goggles or tinted glasses, but Notice rolls are made at -2.

UNDERDEVELOPED INNER EAR

The mutant's inner ear did not fully develop, leading to hearing loss and problems with balance.

Penalty: The mutant suffers a -2 penalty to Notice rolls requiring hearing and Agility rolls to maintain balance.

UNDERDEVELOPED INTESTINES

The mutant's intestines are underdeveloped and have difficulty extracting nutrients from food.

Penalty: The mutant requires 2x the amount of food daily.

UNDERDEVELOPED LUNG:

The mutant's lungs did not fully develop. As a result, he has difficulty with rapid breathing and holding his breath.

Penalty: The mutant's running roll is halved. As well, he can only hold his breath for 2 x his Vigor in seconds.

UNDERDEVELOPED MUSCLES

The mutant's muscles are underdeveloped, making it difficult for him to perform feats that require strength.

Penalty: All Strength rolls suffer a penalty of -2, including damage based on Strength.

UNDERDEVELOPED VOICE BOX

The mutant's voice box did not fully develop, preventing him from making the full range of sounds a normal human can make.

Penalty: The mutant cannot speak. He may only make incomprehensible guttural grunts, squeaks or squeals.

NEURAL POWERS

Characters with the Neural Mutation gain the Arcane Background (Psionics) Edge, as describe in the Savage Worlds rulebook. The following powers are available to them. These powers are broken down into three categories: Precognitive, Telepathic and Telekinetic. Characters can choose from any of the categories, as long as they meet the rank requirements.

PRECOGNITIVE POWERS

BATTLE PLAN

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 3
Range: Self only
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: A hardened look.

You can see the course of a battle in your mind and use that knowledge to affect its outcome.

With a Success, you may redistribute all of your allies' initiative cards as you see fit each round. With a Raise, you may also include one of your opponents' cards in the redistribution.

CLAIRVOYANCE/CLAIRAUDIENCE

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Smarts x 10
Duration: 1 minute (1/minute)
Trappings: A concentrated gaze.

Clairvoyance allows you to see people, places and things out of your normal sight. Make a Psionics roll. A normal success allows the character to see any place within range; a raise allows the character to hear sounds in those places.

FORESIGHT

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Self only
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: A concentrated gaze.

You gain glimpses of the very near future. To the casual observer this will appear as though you have lightning fast reflexes.

With a Success, if you are dealt a 5 or lower in combat, you may discard and draw again until you get a card higher than 5. With a Raise, you replace cards of 8 or less.

Level Headed characters draw their additional card and take the best before using their Foresight.

PRECOGNITIVE TRAIT (BOOST TRAIT)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Self only
Duration: 3 (1/Round)

Traits Affected: Spirit, Boating, Driving, Fighting, Healing, Investigation, Notice, Piloting, Repair, Stealth, Survival, and Tracking.

Trappings: Visions of the immediate future assists with reflexes.

This power allows a character to increase any of the listed Traits by one die type for a standard success, and two with a raise. The affected Trait can exceed d12. Each step over d12 adds +1 to his Trait total. For example, a raise on someone who already has a d12 in the affected Trait grants him d12+2 for the duration of the power.

Multiple uses stack, though the precog must keep track of when each casting expires as usual.

PERCEIVE OUTCOME

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 2
Range: Self only
Duration: Instant

Special: Perceive Outcome does not count as an action in the round it is used.

Trappings: Visions of outcome of your actions.

You can gain insight into the outcome of one action.

Declare this power before making a Trait roll. On a Success, you may see the result of the roll and any Bennies spent to reroll. You may then choose to keep the result or perform another action instead. If you perform another action, ignore the first result and retrieve all Bennies used.

On a Raise, you may make your decision after performing your other action. In this way, you see both results and decide which one you actually do.

This ability may only be used once per round.

TELEKINETIC POWERS

PYROKINETIC PULSE (BURST)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Flame Template
Duration: Instant
Trappings: A blast of heat

The mutant is able to excite the air molecules surrounding him to such an extent that he generates a wave of super-heated air that blasts out from him in a direction of his choice. Place the thin end of the Flame Template at the mutant's front. Targets within the template must make Agility rolls versus the mutant's Psionic roll to avoid the blaze. Those who fail suffer 2d10 damage.

RAIN OF OBJECTS (BLAST)

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2-6

Range: 24/48/96

Duration: Instant

Trappings: A hail of rubble and objects.

With this power, the mutant showers an area with small objects. The character first picks where he wants to center a Medium Burst Template, then he makes the appropriate skill roll, including penalties for range. If the roll is failed, the blast deviates as a launched projectile.

Targets within the rain of objects suffer 2d6 damage from the rubble being hurled around. Unlike other attacks, raises on the attack roll do not add to damage to area effect attacks.

Additional Effects: For double the Power Points, the blast does 3d6 damage or is the size is increased to a Large Burst Template. For triple the points, it does both.

TELEKINESIS

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 5

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: A wave of the hand.

Telekinesis is the ability to move a single object or creature (including one's self) with arcane will. The weight a caster can lift is equal to 10 lbs times his Spirit die type, or 50 lbs times his Spirit with a raise. The object or creature may be moved up to the caster's Smarts in inches per turn in any direction.

Lifting Creatures: Living targets may resist with an opposed Spirit roll. If the roll is greater than the caster's skill total, the victim is unaffected. If the creature loses, however, it is lifted as usual and does not get another attempt to break free.

Occasionally a victim might manage to grab onto something solid to prevent itself from being lifted. When this happens, the victim may make an opposed Strength roll versus the caster's arcane skill. If the victim is successful, he manages to grab onto whatever was available and is not moved, bashed, or otherwise affected that round.

Dropping Things: Ruthless characters may use telekinesis to drop their foes, or to bash them into walls and the like. Dropped creatures suffer falling damage as usual.

Victims who are bashed into walls or other solid objects suffer the caster's Spirit+d6 as damage. If a caster with a d12 Spirit smashes a mutant into a wall, for example, the mutant suffers d12+d6 damage.

TELEKINETIC GRASP (ENTANGLE)

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 2-4

Range: Smarts

Duration: Special

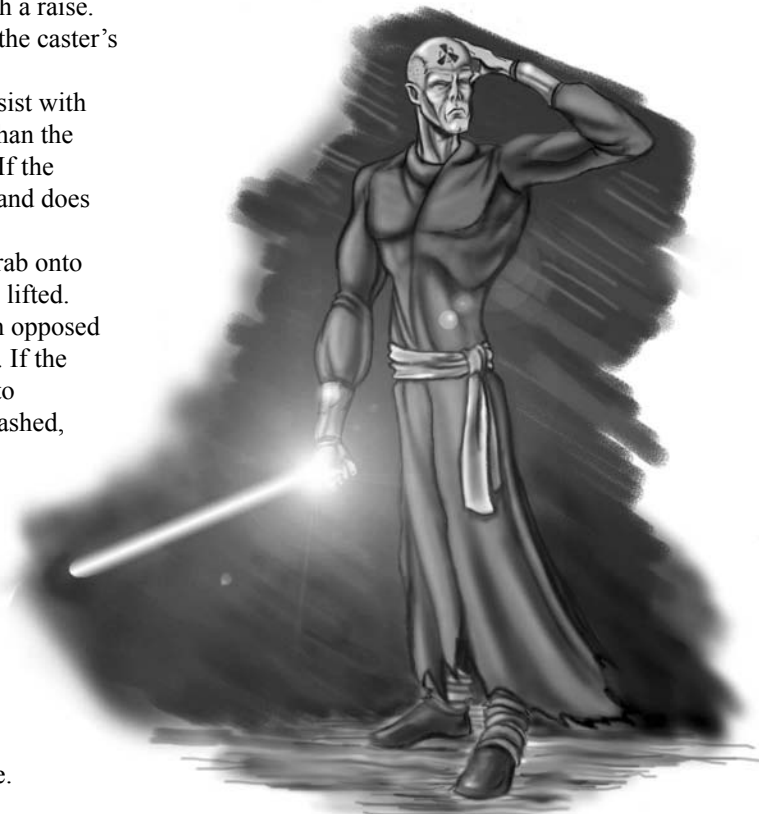
Trappings: Invisible mental force.

This power allows the character to restrain a target with an invisible telekinetic force.

The arcane skill roll is opposed by the target's Agility. Success indicates partial restraint so that the target suffers a -2 penalty to Pace and skills linked to Agility and Strength. A raise restrains the target fully. He cannot move or use any skills linked to Agility or Strength.

Each following round, a grasped target may make a Strength or Agility roll to break free. Other characters may also attempt to free the ensnared person by making a Strength roll at -2.

For 2 Power Points the mutant grasps a single opponent. For 4 points it affects everyone in Medium Burst Template.



TELEKINETIC SHIELD (DEFLECTION)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Touch
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: Invisible shield of force.

Telekinetic shields actually deflect incoming attacks with mental energy. The end result is to misdirect incoming melee and missile attacks from the user.

With a standard success, attackers must subtract 2 from any Fighting, Shooting, or other attack rolls directed at the user. A raise increases the penalty to -4. This also acts as Armor against area effect weapons.

TELEKINETIC RESILIENCE (ARMOR)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Self only
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: Telekinetically hardened skin.

Telekinetic Resilience creates a field of telekinetic energy protection around a character, effectively giving the target Armor. Success grants the recipient 2 points of Armor. A raise grants 4 points of Armor.

Multiple castings stack, though the caster must keep track of when each casting expires as usual.

TELEKINETIC SLAM (SMITE)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Smarts
Duration: 3 (1/round)
Trappings: A telekinetic force assists a weapons' attack.

This power is cast on a melee weapon of some sort, including fists. While the power is in effect, the telekinetic force increases the weapon's damage by +2, or +4 with a raise. The weapon must stay within the Psionist's range or the power is dropped.

TELEKINETIC THROW (BOLT)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 1-6
Range: 12/24/48
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Small objects hurled by an incredible force. There must be some sort of objects near enough to throw.

The mutant is able to use his telekinesis to hurl small objects at his opponents with amazing accuracy. The damage of the objects is 2d6.

Additional objects: The character may hurl up to 3 objects by spending a like amount of Power Points. This must be decided before the power is used. The objects may be spread among targets as the character chooses. Hurling the additional objects does not incur any attack penalties.

Additional Damage: The character may also hurl larger objects. This increases the damage to 3d6 by doubling the Power Point cost per object thrown. This may be combined with the additional objects, so hurling 3 medium objects of 3d6 damage costs 6 Power Points.

TELEKINETIC WALL (BARRIER)

Rank: Seasoned
Power Points: 1/section
Range: Smarts
Duration: 3 (1 per section, per round)
Trappings: Invisible wall of force.

Telekinetic Wall creates a solid, immobile wall to protect the user against attack or to entrap an opponent.

Every Power Point spent creates a 1" wide section of wall with a toughness of 10. The barrier is but a few "real world" inches thick. (If you're using a gridded mat to play, draw the barrier between the squares directly along the grid-lines.) The exact placement of each section is defined by the caster, but each section must be connected to at least one other section after the first. When the power expires or a section is broken, it dissipates, leaving nothing behind.

TELEPATHIC POWERS

ANXIETY/FLIGHT TRIGGER (FEAR)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Smarts x 2
Duration: Instant
Trappings: A cold stare of concentration.

This power causes the target overwhelming dread and horror in the mind of the targets. The area of effect is the Large Burst Template. Every creature beneath the template must make a Guts check, apply -2 to the Guts roll if the caster got a raise.

Wild Cards who fail roll on the Fear Table. Extras are Panicked instead.

CHARM CREATURE (BEAST FRIEND)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: Special
Range: Smarts x 100 yards
Duration: 10 minutes
Trappings: A loving look and thought.

This power allows the mutant to speak with and guide the actions of nature's beasts. It works only on creatures with animal intelligence, not humanoids. Nor does it work on robotic beings.

The target must be within the mutant's range—it is not conjured.

The cost to control a creature depends on its Size. The base cost is 3, plus twice its Size for creatures with a Size greater than 0. A great white shark (Size

+4) costs 3 plus (2x4=) 8 or 11 points. A roc (Size +8) costs 19 Power Points to control.

Swarms may also be controlled. Small swarms cost 3, Mediums 5, and Large 8. Thus a single rat costs 3 to control, as does a small swarm of the creatures.

DOMINATION (PUPPET)

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 3

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: A trance-like state.

Domination is an opposed roll of the character's Psionics skill versus the target's Spirit. The psionist must score a success and beat the target's roll to gain complete control. The victim will follow the psionist's commands. He will attack friends and even commit suicide, though such acts allow the victim another opposed Spirit roll to attempt to break the control.

MIND BLOCK

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 2

Range: None

Duration: 5 (1/round)

Mind Block protects all allied characters within a Medium Burst Template centered on the caster against mental attacks. The character shuts down his emotions, and projects his thoughts into his allies' minds, blocking off all possible in roads to their psyches. While in use, the character seems to go cold and distant though they remain very much aware of their surroundings.

A success gives the characters a +2 to all Spirit rolls to resist Psionic attacks. A raise gives a +4 bonus. These may stack with the Mentalist Edge.

MIND READING

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Smarts x 10

Duration: 1 minutes (1/minute)

Mind reading allows a character to read another's thoughts. This is an opposed roll versus the target's Spirit. A success detects surface thoughts. A raise reveals deeper thoughts, and a second raise reveals any memory in the subjects mind. At the GM's discretion, certain techniques and conditions – drunkenness, extreme emotions – give the target a +2 (or more) bonus to his Spirit roll.

TELEPATHIC BLINDNESS

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: A fogginess of mind.

This power does exactly what its name implies—blinds creatures to what they could normally see. This is an opposed roll versus the target's Spirit. With a success, the target's sight is blurred and all of his actions that require sight are at -2. With a raise, he is completely blinded and suffers the standard penalty for pitch darkness of -6.

An additional target may be Blinded each round, ignoring the -1 penalty for maintaining the previous blindings (though other maintained powers still apply). Power points for additional targets must still be spent.

TELEPATHIC WIPE (DISPEL)

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Smarts

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Waving hands.

Telepathic Wipe allows a hero to negate enemy Psionic powers.

Telepathic Wipe can be used on a power already in effect, and can also be used to counter an enemy power as it is being used. The latter requires the countering mage to be on Hold and interrupt his foe's action as usual.

In either case, wiping the opponent's power is an opposed roll of Psionics skills.

TELEPATHY

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Smarts x 10

Duration: 1 minute (1/minute)

Telepathy is used to communicate mentally with another person. If the target is willing, make a normal Psionics roll. If not, it's an opposed Psionics vs. Spirit roll. Success allows you to 'speak' with the target. You can only hear thoughts the target directs at you; anything more requires Mind Reading.

CHAPTER 4:

GEAR AND EQUIPMENT



*“Mr. President, we are rapidly approaching a moment of truth both for ourselves as human beings and for the life of our nation. Now, truth is not always a pleasant thing. But it is necessary now to make a choice, to choose between two admittedly regrettable, but nevertheless *distinguishable*, postwar environments: one where you got twenty million people killed, and the other where you got a hundred and fifty million people killed.”*

“You’re talking about mass murder, General, not war!”

“Mr. President, I’m not saying we wouldn’t get our hair mussed. But I do say no more than ten to twenty million killed, tops. Uh, depending on the breaks.”

- General “Buck” Turgidson and President Merkin Muffley, Dr. Strangelove



Market places, village bazaars, and established trade houses deal in all manner of goods.

Even in the ruined cities, where communities live and die by brutal violence, some “shops” are known to still operate.

Goods exchanged either conform to traditional barter

rules (trading one item for another of equal value), or, in some places, the exchange of corium pieces.

STARTING GEAR

All characters in Darwin’s World start with a certain amount of equipment. The amount of gear given is meant to represent years of scrounging, pack rat hoarding, etc.

The amount of money a character begins with is determined during character creation and should be fully used to buy starting gear. It would be unusual for a character to have more corium than gear.

The armor, weapons and gear listed in this section represent some of the more commonly available items. Items not listed here are covered in Chapter 9: Artifacts of the Ancients. The GM has final say on what items are actually available at any given time.



TRADE

An essential part of playing Darwin’s World is trade - characters will, no doubt, at some point wish to cash in artifacts and excess items for goods and/or services. Trade is essential to acquiring things characters can’t find on their own, whether its food, weapons, or simple spare parts. As a result, this section deals with trade, barter, and bargaining.

BARTER VS. COIN-BASED ECONOMY

The economy of the post-holocaust world is based mainly on barter (the exchange of equitable goods), since the existing currencies of the world have long been valueless – copper and nickel simply don’t cut it when there’s emptiness in your stomach. Indeed, even fancy minerals and metals like gold and silver holds little or no value in Darwin’s World (sure gold is pretty, but a bar of it is far less valuable than a liter of fresh water), and thus the only system that remains viable is barter.

All items in Darwin’s World are given a base value in “cp” (see corium, below), intended to permit the GM to regulate the basic value of items for trades and barter.

A GM should feel free to modify an item’s value depending on local availability (one way to get excess gear out of characters’ hands if they’re getting too powerful)!

CORIUM PIECES

Corium is a resource widely accepted throughout the Twisted Earth as a universal form of “money.” When a nuclear reactor melts down, the molten core often cools into pillar-like formations of metal that glow with a subtle incandescence in the dark, generating its own internal heat.

Corium is mined throughout the wasteland in spots known to have once been reactors or power plant facilities; miners risk long-term radiation dangers, but the profit is immense for those willing to put on a helmet and go down beneath the earth into the core. Many communities use slaves or conscripts instead to mine their corium deposits. In any event, corium metal is typically formed into “coins” (generally the shape is flat oval nuggets) and used as a monetary unit.

Though of little practical use, corium cannot be duplicated or falsified, and thus remains widely accepted as currency for trade, in place of or supplementing traditional barter.

Variation: In some places, corium pieces might instead be replaced by a currency of bottle caps, hand-printed “pay slips”, or transferable meal tickets good for one meal in that communities soup kitchens.

ARMOR

Armor ranges greatly, from leather hides and forged chain and plate, to the most advanced protective devices of civil and military agencies that existed before the fall of civilization. The former can be crafted by the denizens of the apocalyptic wastes; the later scavenged, traded for, or stolen.

PRIMITIVE

LEATHER ARMOR

This armor can be a complete suit that covers the entire body, or sections of leather that are tied around each body part.

CHAINMAIL SHIRT OR HAUBERK

Chainmail is often forged by blacksmiths of the wastelands into shirts or full hauberks. Though heavy, it offers better protection than leather.

PLATE MAIL

Some communities arm their soldiers in this medieval armor. It's heavy and cumbersome, but the protection it provides and availability make it a likely choice for a wasteland warrior; until something better comes along.

POST-APOCALYPTIC

LEATHER JACKET

This is a typical leather jacket either scavenged from wreckage or sewn from tanned animal hide. It offers basic protection to the torso.

LIGHT UNDERCOVER SHIRT

This rare shirt, scavenged from the wreckage, provides the protection of leather with less weight.

UNDERCOVER VEST

This vest provides better protection than an undercover shirt. Although still concealable, it is slightly bulkier and more likely to be noticed when worn under clothing.

FLACK JACKET

This bulky jacket provides good protection against physical attacks as well as increase protection against bullets. Flack jackets typically have multiple pockets for holding items.

MELEE WEAPONS

Among the most commonly employed weapons of the wasteland are those that are easiest to produce and

TABLE 4-1: ARMOR

Type	Armor	Weight	Cost	Notes
Primitive				
Leather armor	+1	15	40 cp	Covers torso, arms, legs
Chainmail shirt	+2	25	800 cp	Covers torso
Chainmail hauberk (longcoat)	+2	40	1,200 cp	Covers torso, arms, legs
Platemail	+3	50	4,000 cp	Covers torso, arms, legs
Pot Helm	+3	4	80 cp	50% chance of protecting against head shot
Steal helmet (enclosed)	+3	8	150 cp	Covers head
Post Apocalyptic				
Leather jacket	+1	4	25 cp	Covers torso, arms
Light undercover shirt	+1	2	250 cp	Covers torso, arms, Concealable
Undercover vest	+2	3	350 cp	Covers torso, Concealable
Flack jacket	+2/+4	12	1,200	Covers torso, arms, +4 vs. bullets
Riot Shield	—	6	100 cp	+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Shields**				
Small Shield (Buckler)	—	8	20 cp	+1 Parry
Medium Shield	—	12	40 cp	+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit
Large Shield (Kite, Pavise)	—	20		+2 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit

**Shields protect only against attacks from the front and left (assuming a right-handed character).

TABLE 4-2: MELEE WEAPONS

Type	Damage	Weight	Cost	Notes
Blades				
Dagger	Str+d4	1	10	
Great Sword	Str+d10	12	300	Parry -1, 2 hands
Katana	Str+d6+2	6	700	AP 2
Long Sword	Str+d8	8	200	Includes scimitars
Rapier	Str+d4	3	100	Parry +1
Short Sword	Str+d6	4	150	Includes sabers and machetes
Axes and Mauls				
Axe/Hatchet	Str+d6	2	150	
Battle Axe	Str+d8	10	200	
Great Axe	Str+d10	15	400	AP1, Parry -1, 2 hands
Maul	Str+d8	20	300	AP 2 vs. rigid armour, Parry -1, 2 hands
Warhammer	Str+d6	8	200	AP 1 vs. rigid armour
Pole Arms				
Halberd	Str+d8	15	200	Reach 1, 2 hands
Lance	Str+d8	10	250	AP 2 when charging, Reach 2
Pike	Str+d8	25	50	Reach 2, 2 hands
Staff	Str+d4	8	10	Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Primitive/Scrounged				
Baseball Bat, metal	Str+d6	2	8	2 hands
Baseball Bat, nail-studded	Str+d6+1	4	2	AP 1 vs. rigid armour, 2 hands
Baseball Bat, wood	Str+d6	4	1	AP 1 vs. rigid armour, 2 hands
Bayonet	Str+d4	1	5	When affixed to a rifle: Str+2, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands
Brass Knuckles	Str+d4	1	2	Considered unarmed, can't be disarmed
Club	Str+d6			2 hands
Lead Pipe	Str+d8	8	0	AP 1 vs. rigid armour, Parry -1, 2 hands
Police baton	Str+d4	1	10	
Spiked chain/flail	Str+d6	8	200	Ignores Shield, Parry and Cover bonuses
Spiked knuckles	Str+d6	1	4	Considered unarmed, can't be disarmed
Straight Razor	Str+d4	.5	3	
Sword cane	Str+d6	3	30	Sword hidden in a cane
Trusty 2x4	Str+d6	10	0	Parry -1, Reach 1, 2 hand

replace. These include cleavers, daggers, knives; short, long and great Swords; hand, battle and great axes; mauls, warhammers, staffs and whips.

Less common are katanas, rapiers, flails, spiked chains, halberds, lances and pikes - though certainly some raider groups or war-like primitive might cherish special weapons (like the spiked chain or flail) as symbols of their fighting elite.

There are virtually thousands of possible primitive weapons in Darwin's World, since nearly anything

can be used to cause harm. Most items will simply be considered improvised weapons, but many become a weapon type in their own right. Part of the flavor of Darwin's World is the weird stuff the characters use to help them survive.

The following is a list of commonly scavenged or assembled melee weapons. Use it as a guide for similar types of weapons that denizens of the wasteland may employ.

BASEBALL BAT, WOOD

This is a typical well-balanced wooden bat, a step above the common club for beating in the heads of raider scum.

BASEBALL BAT, METAL

This is typically a lightweight aluminum bat used for Little League practice. Though it is harder, its metal construction means it has less chance of splintering on impact (thus the reduced critical effect).

BASEBALL BAT, NAIL-STUDED

Pretty standard fare, a wooden bat shot through with 4' rusty nails; a makeshift "morningstar."

BAYONET

The bayonet is essentially a 12-24" blade, detachable from a weapon and usable as a regular dagger or digging tool. However, when a bayonet is attached to a rifle-sized weapon, it permits the user to switch back and forth from gun to weapon as a free action.

BRASS KNUCKLES

These range from cheap brass antiques to modern titanium knuckledusters. A strike with brass knuckles is considered an unarmed attack.

LEAD PIPE

A heavy section of piping, torn from the ground and used effectively as a brutal bludgeon.

POLICE BATON

A high-impact, plastic instrument for keeping the peace through less than peaceful means. The police baton inflicts subdual damage.

SPIKED KNUCKLES

These act as typical knuckles, but with metal spikes so the punch is all the more deadly. A strike with spiked knuckles is still considered an unarmed attack.

STRAIGHT RAZOR

Exceptionally sharp, but damage is minimal. Razor blades are, however, easily concealed.

SWORD CANE

It is rare to find among the ruins, but some of the last remnants of civilization protected themselves using fancy canes with hidden sword blades.

TRUSTY 2X4

A big ol' hunk of wood for cracking skulls.

RANGED WEAPONS

Humans have always found ways to kill safely from a distance from the simple sling to powerful energy weapons of the last wars. Scattered throughout the Twisted Earth are relics of awesome power, often in the hands of the desperate and the bloodthirsty. Primitive ranged weapons are crafted in communities throughout the wasteland. As well, still in use are the primitive firearms that fire projectiles of lead or lead shot.

This section covers primitive slings and bows through common firearms (including black powder weapons). More modern firearms as well as heavy weapons, explosives and the advance firearms are covered in Chapter 9: Artifacts of the Ancients.

PRIMITIVE

Primitive range weapons include throwing axes, daggers and knives; bows and long bows, crossbows, slings and spears.

NET

A successful Throwing roll means that all targets in a Small Burst Template are partially restrained, and suffer a -2 penalty to Pace and skills linked to Agility and Strength. A raise fully restrains the targets; they cannot move or use any skills linked to Agility or Strength.

Each following round, an entangled target may make a Strength or Agility roll to break free. Other characters may also attempt to free the ensnared person by making a Strength roll at -2.

PISTOLS

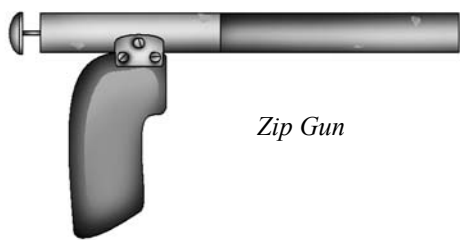
BLACK POWDER PISTOL

These primitive weapons are still created in the wasteland, and resemble their historical counterparts in both appearance and function. Indeed, some museum pieces are still around, used in the manner for which they were originally intended for, but in the hands of raiders, thugs, and killers.

A black powder pistol requires a full-round action to reload.



Black Powder Pistol



Zip Gun

DERRINGER

This is a small, concealable pistol that breaks open at the breach in order to load its two bullets. They are rare to find in the wasteland.

ZIP GUN

The “zip gun” is a cheaply manufactured piece of homemade hardware, usually just a metal frame or wooden handled “pistol.” The barrel can be made from any piece of pipe or tube. Real pistol cartridges are used in the gun, however, and a high-tensile spring is used as a hammer. When the spring is triggered, the bullet is hammered and fired out of the barrel.

The damage inflicted by a zip gun depends on what kind of round it is designed to fire (use any pistol round). The purchase price is based on the caliber. Zip guns can only be fired once (the shot ruins the barrel and firing mechanism), and are of limited range and accuracy. Raiders and desperados seeking an easily concealed weapon craft zip guns. Virtually any thug with at least one spare round of ammunition can make a zip gun from readily available materials such as pipe or tubing.

Zip Gun Type	Damage	Cost
9mm	2d6	75 cp
10mm	2d6 +1	75 cp
.22 caliber	2d4 +1	50 cp
.32 caliber	2d4 +1	50 cp
.38 caliber	2d6 +1	75 cp
.357 caliber	2d6 +1	75 cp
.44 caliber	2d6+2	100 cp
.45 caliber	2d6 +1	75 cp
.50AE caliber	2d8	150 cp

REVOLVERS

COLT PYTHON

The Python is a .357 caliber revolver that was made with either a 4” or 6” barrel. The accuracy of this double action revolver makes it a prized possession for humans and mutants alike.

PATHFINDER

The Pathfinder is a typical short-barreled, small-caliber revolver that was often used by police forces before the Fall.

RUGER SERVICE-SIX

The service six revolver was once used by police forces in the US before the advent of autoloaders. They are a sturdy reliable .38 revolver.

S&W M29

This .44 Magnum revolver is a loud and powerful pistol. It gives off a bright flash and strong recoil when fired.

AUTOMATIC PISTOLS

BERETTA 92F

This Italian designed semi-automatic pistol saw was once a standard issue to US military and law enforcement agencies

COLT DOUBLE EAGLE

The double eagle is a double action/single action 10mm, semi-automatic pistol usually made of stainless steel.

COLT M1911

The M1911 is a common semi-automatic .45 pistol that can be found throughout the wastelands.

GLOCK 17

A typical 9mm pistol.

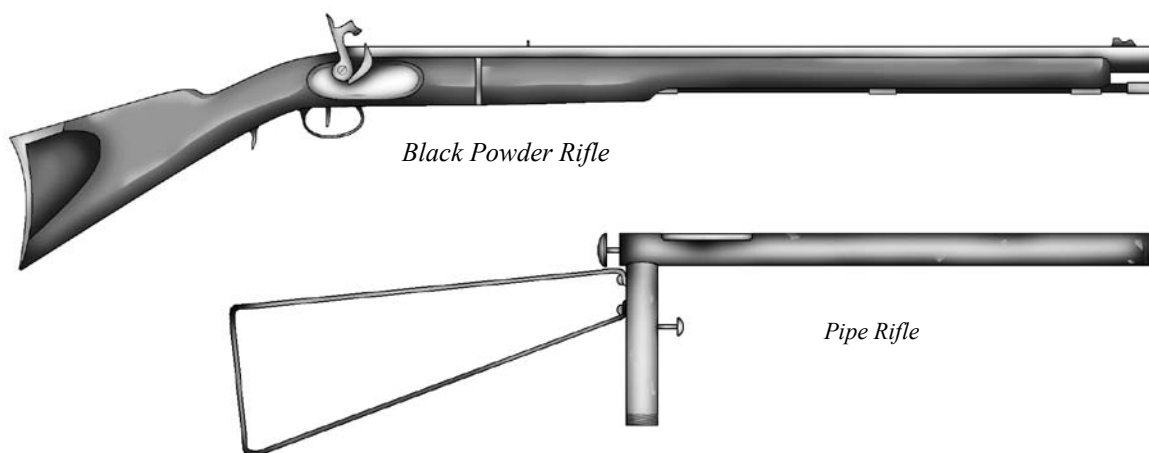
RIFLES

BLACK POWDER RIFLE

The black powder rifle, or “musket”, is one of the most common firearms in the wasteland. Similar to those fashioned in early American history, these weapons are unpredictable, have a slow reload rate, and require constant and tedious maintenance.

A black powder rifle requires two actions to reload.

Carved from sacred wood with religious reverence, and fitted with intricate workings of metal scavenged from the ruins and re-shaped by mutant hands, muskets are the ultimate tool of war for many primitive communities and survivors from the savage wasteland. Made with a deteriorating understanding of technology, the musket is an impressive artifact that roars with sound, smoke, and fire. Oftentimes those who use muskets decorate them with carvings of their primitive “war gods” or picture stories of the great enemies they have been instrumental in slaying. As such each musket is a work of art.



Black Powder Rifle

Pipe Rifle

PIPE RIFLE

These generic weapons are simply homemade rifles (much like the zip gun), making use of any length of pipe and attaching it crudely to a stock to control recoil. Regular rifle cartridges are used in the gun, and a primitive breech-load is generally fitted. Shot capacity is invariably one round at a time.

The damage inflicted by a pipe rifle depends on what kind of round it is designed to fire (use any rifle round).

Any critical miss with a pipe rifle results in the weapon being destroyed due to misfire.

Pipe rifles are extremely common weapons among tribal communities, desert villages, and raider gangs alike, due primarily to their ease of manufacture and the quickness with which they can be produced.

Pipe Rifle Type	Damage	Cost
.22 LR	2d6 AP 1	150 cp
5.56mm	2d8 AP 2	250 cp
7.62mmR	2d8 AP 1	250 cp
7.62mm	2d8+1 AP 1	350 cp

Due to unreliable construction, .444 caliber, .50 caliber, and shotgun ammunition cannot be used in a pipe rifle.

REMINGTON 700

A typical bolt-action rifle owned by countless hunters in the pre-fall world.

WINCHESTER 94

The 94 is a big bore hunting rifle prized by countless scavengers of the wastes.

SHOTGUNS

All shotguns use the Savage Worlds shotgun rules.

DOUBLE BARRELLED SHOTGUN

This is a standard 12-gauge, double-barreled shotgun.

SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN

This is a Double Barrel shotgun that has been sawn off to cause a greater spread of bullets. It also makes the shotgun slightly more concealable.

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Only warriors, community guardians, and soldiers carry most weapon accessories. Despite the typical attitude of keeping the best for their own, some communities do sell such items to travelers, merchants, and visiting outsiders.

Box magazines, holsters, and speed loaders are common enough. Detonators (and all explosives) are rare, usually hoarded by various communities for weapons. Illuminators, laser sights, and silencers are uncommon, if not very hard to find.

BOX MAGAZINE

Box magazines, for weapons that use them, are a valuable resource. Magazines may be fitted to other weapons of the same caliber with a successful Repair roll. A failure on this roll ruins the magazine.

DETONATOR

Detonators for explosives may be wired, radio controlled, or timed. Wires typically come in 100 foot lengths. Radio controlled detonators can reach to 500 feet. Timed detonators can be set to go off at any time.

A demolitions roll must be made when setting the detonator.

HOLSTER

Holsters come in a variety of types from hip holsters to concealed holsters. If they aren't found with the weapon, they can be custom made in communities with a Post-Apocalyptic Tech-level.

TABLE 4-3: RANGED WEAPONS

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str	Notes
Primitive								
Axe, throwing	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	50 cp	2	-	-	
Bow	12/24/48	2d6	1	200 cp	3	-	d6	
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	400 cp	10	-	d6	AP 2, 1 action to reload
Dagger/Knife	3/6/12	Str+d4	1	10 cp	1	-	-	
Long Bow	15/30/60	2d6+1	1	250 cp	5	-	d8	
Net	1/2/4	Special	1	50	8	-	d6	SBT, See text
Sling	4/8/16	Str+d4	1	2 cp	1	-	-	
Spear	4/8/16	Str+d6	1	15 cp	5	-	d6	
Pistols								
Black powder pistol (special pistol)	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	250 cp	3	1	-	2 actions to reload
Derringer (.45)	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	400 cp	1	2 int.	-	AP 1
Zip gun (special pistol)	10/20/40	See text		See text	5	1 int.	-	See text
Revolvers								
Colt Python (.357 revolver)	15/30/60	2d6+1	1	600 cp	3	6 cyl.	-	AP 1, Revolver
Pathfinder (.22 revolver)	10/20/40	2d4+1	1	400 cp	1	6 cyl.	-	Revolver, Concealable
Ruger Service-Six (.38S revolver)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	400 cp	2	6 cyl.	-	AP 1, Revolver
S&W M29 (.44 magnum revolver)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	600 cp	3	6 cyl.	-	AP 1, Revolver
Automatic Pistols								
Beretta 92F (9mm autoloader)	15/30/60	2d6	1	900 cp	3	15 box	-	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Colt Double Eagle (10mm autoloader)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	900 cp	3	9 box	-	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Colt M1911 (.45 autoloader)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	600 cp	5	6 box	-	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Glock 17 (9mm autoloader)	12/24/48	2d6	1	1,500 cp	3	17 box	-	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Rifles								
Black powder rifle (special rifle)	15/30/60	2d8	1	400 cp	10 lb.	1 int.	d6	2 actions to reload
Pipe rifle (special rifle)	12/24/48	See text	1	250 cp	8 lb.	1 int.	-	-
Remington 700 (7.62mm hunting rifle)	24/48/96	2d8	1	1,100 cp	8 lb.	5 int.	-	AP 2
Winchester 94 (.444 hunting rifle)	30/60/90	2d8	1	600 cp	7 lb.	6 int.	-	AP 2
Shotguns								
Double Barrel (12-gauge shotgun)	12/24/48	1-3d6	1-2	1,200 cp	8 lb.	10 box	-	See Notes
Sawed-off DB shotgun (12-ga shotgun)	5/10/20	1-3d6	1-2	600 cp	4 lb.	2 int.	-	See Notes

box=removable box clip; cyl. = cylinder; int. = internal chamber

TABLE 4-4: AMMUNITION

Ammunition Type	Weight	Cost
Arrow	1/5	2 cp
Teflon Arrow (AP 2)	1/5	10 cp
Quarrel	1/5	5 cp
Shot (w/powder)	1/10	5 cp
Sling Stone	1/10	-
5.56mm (20)	1/20	30 cp / 20
7.62mm (20)	1/20	30 cp / 20
7.62mmR (20)	1/20	30 cp / 20
.444 caliber (20)	1/20	50 cp / 20
.50 caliber (20)	1/20	50 cp / 20
9mm (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
10mm (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.22 caliber (50)	5/50	30 cp / 50
.22 LR (50)	5/50	30 cp / 50
.32 caliber (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.38 special (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.357 caliber (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.44 caliber (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.45 caliber (50)	5/50	40 cp / 50
.50AE caliber (50)	8/50	50 cp / 50
10-gauge buckshot (10)	1/10	40 cp / 10
12-gauge buckshot (10)	1/10	30 cp / 10

TABLE 4-5: WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Name	Weight	Cost
Box magazine	0.5	50 cp
Detonator		
Radio controlled	0.5	200 cp
Timed	0.5	100 cp
Wired	1	75 cp
Holster		
Hip	1	40 cp
Concealed carry	0.5	70 cp
Laser sight	0.5	1,000 cp
Scope	0.5	250 cp
Scope , Electro-optical	3	2,500 cp
Silencer		
Pistol	1	300 cp
Rifle	4	450 cp

LASER SIGHTS

A laser sight provides a +2 Shooting bonus against targets at medium or long range at night only. Standard darkness penalties apply.

SCOPE

A scope provides a +2 Shooting bonus to shots over Short range as long as the firer does not move this round.

SCOPE, ELECTRO-OPTICAL

An electro-optical scope functions the same as a standard scope in normal light. In darkness, the user ignores darkness penalties out to 24” (120 feet).

SILENCER

A silencer makes a weapon harder to hear. Any character that is unaware of the shot may make a Notice roll at -2 to detect it.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

CLOTHING

For travelers of the blasted ruins, some valuable finds consist of rare and weird clothing that harkens back to a time when mankind was able to be frivolous and wasteful. It is widely known that rare and exotic textiles were used to create fantastic and futuristic clothing in the years leading up to the Fall; from fancy three-piece suits made of black shimmer velvet to liquid gold gowns for the ladies. Rarer textiles employed in such garments included Synthisilk (just like the real thing, all but impossible to get with diminishing world trade during the years of final warfare), SexySatin (a cross between satin and crushed velvet), Luminescence (glowing and color-shifting fabric), and Neosamite (gold thread intertwined with synthetic or, even rarer, natural fur follicles).

Most forms of clothing from the pre-fall world remain common (except for business and formal wear, which is almost impossible to find), while uniforms (short of those scavenged off the bodies of soldiers who died during the Fall) are usually only seen on members of specific factions to identify their followers.

Characters may begin play with clothing of any description that would fit the character’s specific background. Clothing made of animal hides are also common amongst those who shun the ancients’ ways. Descriptions of outfits are a great way to spice up both characters and NPC’s alike.

Some types of clothing may provide for camouflage in certain environment. Specifics are up the GM.

TOOL/UTILITY BELT

Various types of tool and utility belts have been scavenged from the ancients. They may be made of leather or synthetic materials. Typically they have pockets, clasps and hoops once used for tools, nails, pencils, pocket computers or cell phones. These days they are typically used to carry survival rations, weapons and ammo.

TABLE 4-6: GENERAL GEAR

Object	Weight	Cost
Clothing		
Clothing, basic	2	70
Clothing, Fancy	2-3	200-500 cp
Fatigues	3	90 cp
Uniforms	2	90 cp
Coat	1-2	40-70 cp
Parka	3	90 cp
Technician's Coveralls	2	200 cp
Tool/Utility belt	2	90 cp
Web Belt	2	150 cp
Adventuring Gear		
Backpack	3	75 cp
Binoculars, Rangefinding	3	900 cp
Binoculars, Standard	2	100 cp
Briefcase	2	55 cp
Candle (provides light in 2" radius)	1/10	1 cp
Canteen/Thermos	1	20 cp
Cigarette Lighter	-	90 cp
Climbing gear	10	150 cp
Compass	0.5	50 cp
Corium Lantern	2	90 cp
Crowbar	10	2 cp
Fire extinguisher	3	75 cp
Flash goggles	2	500 cp
Flashlight	1	75 cp
Flashlight, High Powered	2	100 cp
Flask (ceramic)	1	5 cp
Flint and steel	1	10 cp
Gas mask	5	400 cp
Grappling hook	2	50 cp
Hammer	1	10 cp
Handbag/Purse	1	20 cp
Instant Pillow	-	50 cp
Lamp, oil	3	25 cp
Light Rod	-	15 cp
Magnesium Firestarter	-	350 cp
Manacles	2	15 cp
Map	-	Varies
Map case	1	2 cp
Oil, 1 pint	1	2 cp
Portable stove	1	125 cp
Power Bar	-	10 cp
Ready Meal	1	20 cp

Rope, Ancient (150 ft.)	12	30 cp
Rope, Hemp (60')	15	10 cp
Salt Pills	-	20 cp
Shoulder bag	2	30 cp
Sleeping bag	4	90 cp
Soup Mix	-	5 cp
Survival Pack	4	90 cp
Tent		
2-person dome	4	150 cp
4-person dome	7	250 cp
8-person dome	10	400 cp
Torch (1 hour, 4" radius)	1	5 cp
Trail rations (5 meals, keeps 1 week)	5	10 cp
Trail rations, Ancient (12 meals)	1	40 cp
Waterskin	1	5 cp
Computers and Electronics		
Computer, Laptop	5	7,000 cp
Computer, Hand	10	5,000 cp
Digital audio recorder	1	1,000 cp
Digital Camera	0.5	2,000 cp
Digital video camera	2	2,000 cp
Printer	3	1,000 cp
Walkie-talkie, Basic	1	100 cp
Walkie-talkie, Professional	1	500 cp
Mounts and Gear		
Fraxx Steed		400 cp
Horse, riding		300 cp
Horse, desert		500 cp
Horse, war		750 cp
Mule		200 cp
Saddle		50 cp
Saddlebags		20 cp
Power Sources		
Power Backpack	4	2,000 cp
Power Beltpack	2	1,000 cp
Power Cell	0.5	50 cp
Power Clip	1	400 cp
Power Pack	3	200 cp
Surveillance Gear		
Metal detector	2	200 cp
Night vision goggles	3	3,000 cp
Professional Equipment		
Astronaut Pen	-	100 cp
Books	2	3,000 cp – 10,000 cp

Bolt cutter	5	50 cp
Demolitions kit	5	600 cp
Duct tape	1	50 cp
Tool kit	15	1,000
First aid kit	3	200 cp
Musical Instrument	1-12	400-1000 cp
Lockpicks	1	200 cp
Primitive Potions		
Drink Of Fools	-	25 cp
Juju Salve	-	50 cp
Oil Of Remedy	-	100 cp
Purgative	-	125 cp
Sleeping Potion	-	100 cp

TECHNICIAN+S COVERALLS

These clothes consist of a pair of white coveralls with light-reflective plastic strips up the legs and arms, zippered up the front with an insulated collar. These suits are not only comfortable, but allow a great freedom of movement. In addition, the material of the suits (the fabrication of which is no longer possible using the technology of the wasteland) has a special property that blocks out up to mild radiation (see Radiation Sickness).

WEB BELT

This is an efficiently designed belt used by military, police, or technicians for tools and other equipment. The typical web belt has six to eight clip-sized pockets (as well as a pistol holster for military and police versions).

ADVENTURING GEAR

A huge variety of possible adventuring gear is available. Some is created in the wasteland communities and some scavenged from the wreckage of the Ancients once proud civilization. The following is a selection of items that is often available from the various wasteland merchants.

Of the various basic categories of equipment, survival gear is by far the most important to the inhabitants of the post-nuclear world. While there is great demand for most items useful in surviving the world’s terrible dangers and climate hazards, a number of communities have virtual “cottage industries” that produce these vital items to make life in the wasteland possible.

Backpacks, climbing gear, compass, mesh vests, rope, sleeping bags, tents, and trail rations are all common items found in nearly every corner of the wasteland, either as dusty old items scavenged from the ruins or post-Fall replicas made from makeshift materials (examples include backpacks made from

woven reeds, rope made from animal gut or sinew, tents made from hides, etc.).

Binoculars, light sticks, fire extinguishers, flash goggles, flashlights, and portable stoves are very useful to wilderness travelers, and as a result fetch a good price in markets. Gas masks are much more uncommon items, their rarity commanding a significantly higher price.

Maps are often priceless finds in the post-holocaust world. Whether found in the form of a foldable travel map or as a small electronic map display device (a “computer map” so to speak), maps from before the Fall can provide an invaluable tool for the finding of Ancient storehouses - lost cities, military reserve depots, research facilities, or water sources (such as forgotten mountain lakes, reservoirs, etc). Almost all communities’ value pre-war (and even some post-war) maps like gold.

GPS systems are not operable due to the destruction of most communications satellites during the Fall, or thanks to deterioration of said satellites over the decades since the collapse of civilization.

BACKPACK

This may be any of a variety of with straps over each shoulder for carrying bulky items. Some may have plastic or aluminum frames for support.

BINOCULARS, RANGEFINDING

In addition to the +2 bonus to Notice rolls, Rangefinding binoculars have a digital readout that gives the exact distance to the object focused on.

BINOCULARS, STANDARD

Binoculars provide a +2 bonus to Notice rolls at a distance.

BRIEFCASE

Whether leather, plastic or metal. Carrying a briefcase is often a sign of status amongst wasteland communities.

CANTEEN/THERMOS

A typical canteen or thermos holds one days worth of water for one person.

CIGARETTE LIGHTER

This tiny, priceless object creates a steady flame even in wet or windy conditions due to a shielded cover. They come in a number of colors and styles. A typical lighter will still have d100 “charges.”

CLIMBING GEAR

Characters using climbing gear to scale rocks or cliff faces gain a +4 bonus to their Climbing rolls.

COMPASS

For those mutants who understand how it works, a compass can be invaluable in navigating the barren wastelands.

CORIUM LANTERN

These items come in a wide variety of sizes and shapes, depending on where and how they were made. Mostly these are made from discarded kerosene lanterns, the core of which has been replaced by a solid chunk of corium. The corium in the lamp provides a dim silvery-white light just like a regular lantern; however, a corium lantern cannot be extinguished (though it can be shuttered or covered to block the light).

Though the corium in the lantern is radioactive, the level is so weak that it is harmless (but is still detectable by mutations or devices that detect gamma radiation).

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

A typical fire extinguisher can put out a fire in a 2" x 2" area.

FLASH GOGGLES

These goggles provide total protection against all forms of blinding light. The wearer incurs a -1 penalty to all Notice rolls.

FLASHLIGHT

Flashlights come in a wide variety of sizes and shapes. A typical Flashlight shines light up to 5" (30 ft.) in one direction.

Power source: Power cell

FLASHLIGHT, HIGH POWERED

A high powered flashlight shines light up to 20" (120 ft.)

Power source: Power cell

HANDBAG/PURSE

A purse is a small bag for carrying personal effects. It may have a shoulder strap.

GAS MASK

A gas mask provides total protection from air born chemicals and diseases.

INSTANT PILLOW

This item is often packaged in a "high-tech" looking metallic package, no larger than a pack of sealed baseball cards. When torn, the slip of pink material inside is cast on the ground, where a chemical reaction (the stuff is made of a material that foams on contact with simple atmospheric nitrogen) turns it into a good-sized pillow. The pillow only opens up once, however,

and cannot be re-packaged. The item was, obviously, ideal for weekend camping trips for the whole family.

LIGHT ROD

These are hard plastic rods (three feet in length), filled with two chemicals which, when combined by pulling a tab on the rod, glow brightly and intensely. Colors range from vibrant orange to fluorescent blue. The glow of a light rod provides illumination in a Large Burst Template, and lasts up to eight continuous hours, before the rod is used up.

MAGNESIUM FIRESTARTER

These are high quality magnesium starters, operable in even the wettest conditions. The starter consists of a magnesium bar, which when scraped produces magnesium shavings that are highly flammable (a built-in sparking rod is included).

MAP

A wide variety of maps may be discovered, including state roadmaps, city maps and hiking trails. The specifics of any given map and it's usefulness are up to the GM.

PORTABLE STOVE

Portable camp stoves use kerosene for fuel and fit conveniently in a backpack.

POWER BAR

These large candy bars are packaged in silver wrapping, and can remain preserved for a great deal of time. Although the taste is far from delicious, these bars are full of protein and vitamins; each provides for about one-half a meal's worth of nutrients.

READY MEAL

These excellent examples of pre-Fall food technology come in either tray, envelope, or cylinder form, and are the ultimate in preserved foods. At one end of the package (regardless of shape and size) is a pull ring, which when peeled off creates a chemical reaction in the package that either heats, cools, or rehydrates the food within (depending, of course, on the type of dish). In addition, a spork is usually attached to the package to eat with. Ready meals remain preserved for centuries due to space-age packaging, and are actually quite delicious and nutritious. The nutrition value of one meal is equal to a full day's nutritional requirements.

ROPE

Rope can typically support several hundred pounds.

SALT PILLS

Salt pills increase the salt content in the body, which as a result helps retain ingested moisture. One pill,

taken daily, reduces the need for ingested moisture by one half for 1-4 weeks.

SHOULDERBAG

Smaller than a backpack, a shoulder bag is ideal for mutants who are traveling light.

SLEEPING BAG

Sleeping bags may be made from a variety of cloth materials. For double the cost, the sleeping back provides +2 to Vigor rolls to resist extreme cold.

SOUP MIX

A variety of soup mixes (most from oriental companies) are available even decades after the holocaust. Dehydrated and vacuum-packed, these mixes are somewhat nutritious (equal to about one full meal), but require mixing with a certain amount of heated, drinkable water – a rarity in a world without adequate water resources.

SURVIVAL PACK

A survival pack is bulkier than a backpack and has an integral frame made of light but durable metal. It has numerous pouches and clasps for all sorts of items including canteens, bedrolls and tents.

TENT

A typical nylon tent is very portable and provides protection from rain and sun exposure.

TRAIL RATIONS, ANCIENT

Ancient trail rations do not spoil and provide all the energy needed while on the move.

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Computer equipment, often referred to simply as “gizmos” by the uneducated, has become rarer and rarer with the passage of time. Their intricate components, delicate manufacture, and susceptibility to the elements have left many useless or destroyed. As a result, what was once available in every city is now a rare and precious resource.

Digital cameras can be found among the ruins of old cities, though once the memory card is full, there may not be anywhere to upload them. Since there is no cell service anymore, cell phones are, by and large, utterly useless to characters. All kinds of computers, digital audio recorders, modems, PDAs, portable video cameras, printers, scanners, and walkie-talkies are available (albeit extremely rare, and often hoarded by those with any knowledge of their operation). Satellite and cellular phones do not work because the satellites and cell towers that they rely on have deteriorated over the decades.

COMPUTER, LAPTOP

Working laptop computers are invaluable in the hands of someone with the knowledge to use them. However they are limited by what software can be found. In very rare cases, advanced humans may still retain the knowledge needed to write new programs.

Power Source: Power Pack

COMPUTER, HAND

Hand computers before the fall were nearly equivalent in power to Laptop computers.

Power Source: Power Pack

DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER

These devices can be used to record audio in very high clarity. With the proper shotgun microphone, they can record audio at a distance.

Power source: Power Cell

DIGITAL CAMERA

A variety of portable digital cameras may be available. They are great tools for surveillance and capturing information about an area.

Power source: Power Cell

DIGITAL VIDEO RECORDER

A device for recording video and audio can be used for all sorts of purposes, not the least of which is surveillance.

Power source: Power Cell

PRINTER

Computer printers are often used by wasteland communities to spread propaganda to the citizens. A laptop or hand computer is required to make them useful.

Power Source: Power Pack

WALKIE-TALKIE

Walkie-Talkies are invaluable tools for adventurers. They can range from a few 100m for civilian models to a few kilometers in military models.

Power source: Power Cell

POWER SOURCES

Various items of this type were created to supply power to the various technological devices of mankind’s creation, just prior to the end of civilization. The power source (or “fuel cell”) is an electrochemical device that converts the chemical energy of the fuel into a direct-current output, like a “continuous-process battery.” Most fuel cells made on pre-holocaust Earth used hydrogen as a fuel.

Different weapons/devices use different power sources. Certain weapons are restricted to using minifusion cells or plutonium clips, for instance. Power cells and packs are for civilian electronic items

TABLE 4-7: POWER SOURCES

Power Source	Uses	Power
Power Cell	Gizmos, small electronic devices	1 year continued use
Power Pack	Gizmos, large electronic devices	5 years continued use
Power Clip	Energy weapons	10 discharges*
Power Beltpack	Energy weapons	25 discharges*
Power Backpack	Energy weapons	50 discharges*

* When used to power non-discharged items, these power sources will provide indefinite use

only, and cannot power weapons. A single source can power only one device at a time.

Power sources cannot be recharged with the diminished resources of most post-holocaust communities. Only the most advanced (which might well be considered out of the scope of player involvement) have this ability.

The various types of power sources are as follows:

POWER CELL.

This item is a small flat circular battery, used to power certain civilian energy-consuming devices. This is the most primitive form of power source, being, in effect, a battery. Chemicals within the pack produce an electric charge when forced to interact, this being the source of produced power.

POWER PACK.

The power pack was created to give power to almost everything in mankind's world just prior to the fall of civilization - ultra-modern blenders, computers, even cars. The power pack is roughly the size of a toaster or car battery, but may be as small as a thin textbook.

POWER CLIP.

The power clip, created for use with portable weapons, is a small black "battery." When slid into any acceptable receptacle (such as an energy weapon's clip port), it immediately powers the weapon.

POWER BELTPACK.

The power beltpack was a development for the military, and consists of a black plastic (or metal) belt with small power packs attached, along with a power cord and universal adapter/capacitor. The beltpack can be used to power energy weapons and other devices that will accept it.

POWER BACKPACK.

The ultimate personal power source, this type of item is a small black backpack, carried on plastic, leather, or rubber straps, linked around the chest. The power backpack has a power cord with universal adapter/capacitor (fits into any item that will receive it).

SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Like computer equipment, surveillance gear is a dwindling category of gear in the post-nuclear world. In most cases characters would be very hard pressed to locate operable examples of this type of equipment.

Black boxes, caller ID defeaters, cellular interceptors, lineman's buttsets, tap detectors, and telephone taps do exist, but their usefulness in a world without widespread electronic communication would be limited at best. Metal detectors and night vision goggles, however, are far more useful to most characters.

METAL DETECTOR

This handheld device provides a +4 to Notice rolls involving metal objects within 10" (60 feet).

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES

These goggles provide "sight" at night by amplifying ambient light. They can be used as long as there is some light, such as a cloudy night. The wearer of night vision goggles ignores darkness penalties out to 24" (120 feet), but is at -2 to Notice rolls while wearing them.

PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT

With the degenerate and backwards mentality of the chaotic wasteland, what constitutes "professional equipment" often becomes the basis for a community's entire way of life. As a result, common kits, instruments, and individual tools are often considered strategic resources to be jealously guarded. A simple chemical kit could become the basis for a community's drug-based economy, or an electronics tool kit could be vital to keeping a sheltered dome community in power. Professional equipment is seldom for sale.

Bolt cutters, caltrops, car opening kits, duct tape, handcuffs, instruments and search-and-rescue kits are uncommon, but not impossible to find in most wasteland markets.

Evidence kits, fake ID, and forgery kits have little or no value to most people in the wasteland, and as a result are extremely uncommon at best.

The following items are rare and extremely valuable commodities, hoarded by most communities for

their applications in recreating weapons, maintaining complex items of technology, etc..

ASTRONAUT PEN

This is a fantastic pocket pen made from high-durability titanium, with a 1,000-year guarantee of operation. An astronaut pen can write on wet surfaces (even underwater), upside down, and for an unlimited period of time.

BOOKS

Books are among the last evidence that a culture beyond the warring, desperate civilizations of today once existed on the Twisted Earth. The books, propaganda, and other educational devices of the Ancients are called “Arcanum”, and are as revered as artifacts as firearms, fancy armor, and their fancy gizmos. Some cults actually worship old books and readings – “Archie” comics and Disney storybooks have spawned a number of odd cults in the wasteland.

Books are useful as well, providing in many cases access to skills otherwise denied primitive or uneducated people (e.g. texts on cybernetics, robotic repair, and the use of laser weapons). In game terms, the GM may permit the owner of a book on a certain skill to earn a +2 bonus to that skill. Most books are written in the language of the Ancients, however, requiring knowledge of that language to be used with any appreciable effect.

BOLT CUTTER

A bolt cutter can snip through things like handcuffs, padlocks and wire fences. This may require a Strength roll.

DEMOLITIONS KIT

This type of kit would contain wire, wire cutters, and a variety of fuse type for explosives.

DUCT TAPE

Duct tape can be used to hold a wide variety of things together and is often used for mounting weapons to vehicles, or anything else for that matter. It can also be used to tie people up.

TOOL KIT

Although there are a wide variety of hand tools, this kit contains all the basic components to aid in repair of mechanical and electronic devices.

FIRST AID KIT

Typically consisting of band aids, swabs, gauze, scissors, tape and ointment, a first aid kit removes the -2 penalty to Healing rolls for 5 uses.

HANDCUFFS

A pair of strong metal binders for securing a persons hands.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Musical instruments are often sources of inspiration to communities and help to bind their stories through song. These can range from repaired instruments of the ancients to hand carved “modern” instruments.

LOCKPICKS

Attempting to pick locks without proper lockpicks imposes a -2 modifier to the Lockpicking roll.

PRIMITIVE POTIONS

Primitive potions have the remarkable quality of working perfectly for all races, whether human or mutant. Incompatibility is not considered with these simple juju items.

DRINK OF FOOLS

This legendary “poison” causes a person to break out in violent hiccups. It is typically administered secretly. The Victim must make a Vigor roll at -2, or suffer 1 level of Fatigue due to the violent hiccups. The Fatigue (and hiccups) last for one hour. Other characters gain a +2 bonus to trying to Notice the character if he is trying to hide.

JUJU SALVE

This thick pasty substance, when rubbed into fresh wounds, adds +2 to Healing rolls. This can only be done during the first hour after combat.

OIL OF REMEDY

This is a medicinal salve rubbed into an area of injected venom or toxin. Roll a d4. On a roll of 1, the venom or toxin takes its normal effect, otherwise it is neutralized.

PURGATIVE

This grotesque mixture of ingredients is used to cleanse the system of a patient. When drunk, the potion automatically purges any ingested poisons in the drinker’s system.

SLEEPING POTION

A sleeping potion is generally slipped into the drinks of the unwary. When imbibed, the drinker must make a Vigor roll at -2 or drift off into a deep sleep for 1d4 hours. The drinker cannot be wakened short of violent means while the potion is in effect.

CHAPTER 5:

SURVIVORS' GUIDE TO
THE TWISTED EARTH



The name's Bixby and I'm an explorer. Lookabout-man. Sandwalker. Got lots of names for folks like me, but to put it plain I'm just a fella walking the world and seeing all its got to give. I've seen a lot in my wanderings, met a lot of folks – good and bad – in all corners of the Twisted Earth. So let me tell you what I seen.

- From "Bixby's World Almanac," a post-Fall survival guide published in the Free City of Styx



GAZETTEER

Excerpts From “Bixby’s World Almanac”, a post-Fall survival guide published in the Free City of Styx

BAJA CLIFFS

I learned from the Far Traders of Lost Albuquerque that south of the Poisoned Shores, well beyond the mountains of the Bone Desert, there lies a distant and savage territory known as the Baja Cliffs. The Far Traders know about the tribals there with intimacy, for they alone are the few outsiders permitted to pass through the territory of the cannibalistic headhunting Hill Tribes without invoking their wrath.

The Far Traders tell of a nation of scattered and isolated tribal villagers, deep in the desert-like Baja Hills, who forage for their food from the desert; iguana, rats, and vipers provide their main sustenance. Some fresh water streams do exist high up in the mountains of the peninsula, and fish and mountain cuttlefish are caught when and if they can be found, and sold as luxuries to the passing traders.

In return, the Far Traders bring the normal fresh water, as well as trinkets and novelty items that the savages find astonishing. Things such as lighters are articles of worship (I can see how a hand-held source of quick and infinite fire would be amazing to such primitive folk), as are car horns, shiny hubcaps, and even bottle caps.

Obviously the people of the Baja Mountains are frightfully xenophobic, and again only the gypsy-like Far Traders are given sanctuary from their attacks (being the sole bringers of trade, water, and other luxuries, one does not bite the hand that feeds, so to speak). But anyone not bearing the colors of the Far Traders is fair game.

BIG HOLE

They say there ain’t nothing in the world quite like the Big Hole – and I believe it. I been there on my travels, dear reader, and believe you me it’s one of the greatest wonders of this here Earth.

The Big Hole’s been around since before the Ancients, and extends for maybe a hundred or so miles through the high mountains of the Big Rocks. It’s a mighty canyon, deep as a mile in some parts and full of treacherous cliffs, craglands, and broken mesas, where once they say a river carved its way through the very rock itself towards the earth’s bowels. It’s an incredible sight!

The Big Hole presents one of the greatest obstacles to travel between the east and the west, even more so than the gigantic peaks of the Big Rocks. It’s a dry, waterless region down in the great canyon gulf, and little if anything is believed to live down there – ‘cept

of course maybe big ugly beasts like mutagons and certainly a terralops or two hiding in the shadows of the mighty canyon walls.

What’s most remarkable, though, is the means merchants and the folk of the canyon region use to travel down the canyon. At each end, you see, the canyon tapers and rises abruptly, almost completely preventing descent into the canyon depths. Even if one could get a caravan down into the valley, navigating the rocks and dry river beds would be a nightmare for the several score miles required to come out the other end.

Regardless, the city of Styx (on one end of the canyon) and Kingman Town (on the other, some hundred or so miles distant) still manage to keep not only in contact, but a lively and active trade. How, you ask?

Airships. That’s right, airships. Seems some genius in the city of Styx a long time ago came up with the know-how to make lighter-than-air craft. Big bladders of leather and canvas, filled with hot air or helium. The people of Styx use them to fly over the canyon, badlands, and mountains, avoiding the dangers that would otherwise threaten them below.

They load them with trade goods from east and west; water from secret reserves high in the mountains, salt sold by the Salt Merchants in Styx, and corium from as far west as the Necropolis. Hang-gliders escort them in as they approach the city, keeping a sharp eye out for the rare mutated flying beast that might attempt to prey on them in their foolishness.

I had the wonderful privilege of flying on one of these so-called “zeppelins” on my travels to the West. They are gigantic! Huge balloons, with enclosed structures dangling from the bottoms, filled with brimming cargo holds, colorful passengers from each end of the canyon, and brave men dangling off the sides by harnesses and arming giant crossbow mounts that scan the sky for attackers.

It may sound terrific and frightening - and it is! The world is so different from on high – seeing the great canyon far, far below is dizzying, but its somehow so strange and hypnotic. The pilot of one airship told me that the Ancients used to travel by air as easily as we do by land; it’s hard to imagine!

If you ever plan on going west, to California or beyond, I suggest you pay the handsome fee and go by air rather than risk the mountain passes, or face the unknown dangers of the deep canyon.

BIG ROCKS

Towering, skyscraping, rising into the sky like sentinels of some prehistoric time, the Big Rocks are the world’s greatest barrier and largest mountain range. From the beyond the Deserts of Nowhere in the north, to the high-altitude narrows of Trader Pass in the south, the Big Rocks cover many, many dozens of miles with impassable peaks and cliff-ringed

countryside that almost seems to whisper a haunting “allure” to those folks who see them, even from a great distance away.

Legends abound about the Big Rocks in almost every culture, community, and tribal camp in their shadow; legends that speak of lost cities, magical mountain springs, hidden valleys, and mountaintop aeries that permit views unimaginable to the ground-born eye of our kind.

BURNING LANDS

The Burning Desert is a stretch of terrible land skirting the central plains of our Dead Earth like a scorching belt of unforgiving Gehenna. I myself have traveled near these lands on my journeys along the caravans of the Water Merchants, and it was from these wise and honorable folk that I get most of what I know of this particular wasteland. Beware; the legends of this place seem to suggest a greater danger beyond mere heat.

According to the Water Merchants of the CrystalTime Clan (who are well-established in the town of Free Water and northwards towards distant False Watertown), the Burning Desert is an awful, forbidding place. It is a dry desert land of unrelenting sands and dunes, intermittent only once in perhaps a hundred miles with the remnants of dry river beds and old salty-bottomed dry lagoons. Rough terrain is uncommon here but not unknown; for the most part, the Water Merchants say, it is merely an expanse of dust that never ends.

The worst part of the Burning Desert is the macabre legends that surround it. According to the CrystalTime, no one enters the Burning Desert and emerges alive – or at least, not sane. Tales tell of an invisible heat that burns all who pass through this barren country, imparting them with an insatiable thirst that cannot be purged even with all the water in the world. Folk who make the mistake of wandering the desert either never come out alive – or come out raving mad, dying of thirst, the heat so great their hair falls right out their heads.

Though I’m no expert on such things, sounds a great deal similar to what I learned as a boy was the Number One symptom of radiation overdose...

CURSED SEA

The Cursed Sea is a legendary place most folk in the region of the Ultraviolet Empire and even as far north as Barter Town have heard of. But in case the name isn’t familiar, I’ll spill what I’ve heard.

According to legend, the Cursed Sea was once, in fact, a great ocean that lay nestled among the Big Rocks, far north of the Big Hole, Styx, and the trade settlements of the south. Salt has been sought here for countless generations, for the Cursed Sea is perhaps the single greatest source of the stuff known to folk of the wasteland. Though many earlier expeditions and peoples tried to establish operations here to mine the

salt, it was only upon the arrival of the Salt Merchants (their original clan name is apparently unknown) that a permanent settlement was erected.

The Cursed Desert, according to the tales, is a great dust bowl of salt desert – so salty, in fact, that the very sand gleams blindingly like cut glass during the day, and sparkles at night like a field of fallen stars for as far as the eye can see. Strange formations of salt crystal jut from the dust bed into the air like underwater formations once described by the Ancients, while elsewhere veritable dunes of salt stretch on forever.

More sinister tales surround the Cursed Sea as well. Though the hearty and secretive Salt Merchants have an established settlement at the southernmost reaches of the sea, the rest of the sea is unknown and desolate. Towards the center of the desert, the sand turns aquamarine in color, and the remnants of bones and animals can be found here, petrified, turned to a bright green stone through some “evil magic.” Tales also tell of strange glowing creatures that walk the haunted salt sea at night, to be seen moving in the distance, but no such creature has ever been located or killed. If these are connected, none can be sure.

DEADLANDS

The Deadlands are a region of desert and dry mountains that occupy the land north of the great desert oasis of Vegas (the so-called “City Of Lights”) and the territory of the near-legendary Rangers. Rugged, unpredictable, and deadly in their dryness and heat, travelers (such as the trail-borne nomads) also tell of glowing horizons at night, strange reddish aurora, and weird mutant creatures that wander out of its heart to terrorize the settlements of the desert.

There is another, rather curious point I’d like to relate here. Legends surviving from my own people speak of a place, near the “Glimmering Oasis”, which once served as the testing-grounds for the awesome Fire Arrows of the Ancients. Called “nuclear bombs”, these weapons are the source of what today we know as radiation. Perhaps the “Glimmering Oasis” in fact refers to Vegas, and thus the Deadlands are so-called because only the most horrendously mutated life can thrive there (the radiation being so strong from experiments of the Ancients in the vicinity).

Whatever the reason for its terrible life, the Deadlands are far from dead, despite its name. All manner of mutant beasts originate from this hot-bed of new life. Water in the Deadlands is abysmally scarce, and legends tell of false waterholes filled with poisoned, radiated liquid.

FAR DESERT

The name of this well-known expanse of country refers to a vast region of desert and dry wasteland skirting precariously between the Burning Desert, Forbidden Lands - and the distant steppes of the

Savant Empire. The Far Desert has variably been identified with a variety of names throughout the generations, including the Dry Plain, the Waterless Waste, simply “The Desert”, and even Old Nevada (the latter being a total misnomer, since I’ve never found evidence that the Ancient kingdom of Nevada ever reached this far).

Towns such as Free Water, Midway, and the ruins of Amarillo are just a few of the oases scattered through this legendary and raider-infested region.

FORBIDDEN LANDS

The term “Forbidden Lands” refers to an extent of desert, mesa-country, and dry high- and lowlands that covers the so-called “Raider Territories”, the Badlands, and the beginnings of the Deserts of Nowhere. Some scholarly folk even extend it as far east as the Burning Lands as well.

The Forbidden Lands are so-called because they’re an ugly, inhospitable place. Despite the heat, lack of drinkable water, and even reliable shelter (if there ever were ruins in this land, they were long ago swallowed up by the sands of the desert), man- and mutant-kind still stubbornly cling to life in this wasteland.

Raider gangs predominate here, sweeping down from mountain caves and ravines (makeshift bases) or from across the blindingly-bright desert dunes. A few scattered settlements of survivors do dot the plains, but those I’ve encountered were always vigilant of raider activity. Few folk, even solitary wanderers like myself, find hospitality in this land. Heck, few communities can afford to give it.

Cartel caravans pass through this territory periodically, and have suffered cruelly at the hands of such bands as the Ravagers, Crazy Bull, the Templars, and others. If you’re looking for steady pay (usually in water, but other forms of payment are frequently arranged), the traders of this dangerous region are always looking for scouts, caravan guards, and hired guns.

I myself wandered the Forbidden Lands for a good long time, and though I met a lot of folks in a lot of places, I learned one thing is pretty much true out here. No one trusts anyone. Water and other resources are so scarce that they’re the most precious commodities around (and so are women, but what’s new?). Vehicles, gasoline, and water make up the currency in the Forbidden Lands.

I did try, on my travels, to make the best of a bad situation. I guess I just have a knack at getting on people’s good side. I remember helping one settlement get its central water purifier back online with only minimal tools, and at another community I taught the folk how to treat the Red Fever as best I could. One tribe of savages took me prisoner, and though I thought I was sure to end up in their stewpot by nightfall, I found all they needed was someone to treat the chicken pox their children were dying from.

Heck, I burned through my supply of meds pretty quick out there, and got little in return except maybe some water and a good home-cooked meal. You know, though, it really is something else – seeing those wary, paranoid looks slowly change into smiles and warm laughter of friendship. I guess anyone can change. I guess, deep down, we’re all the same. Even in the Forbidden Lands. And that’s reward enough.

FORGOTTEN DESERT

There ain’t much I know about the so-called Forgotten Desert, mostly cause I ain’t never been there myself. Most of anything I know I heard from a fella named Juro. If I haven’t mentioned it before, Juro is a fella I’ve come to trust over the years, a fella not at all unlike myself. I first met Juro as I wandered the wastelands of California, sitting alone among the rocks around his own cozy campfire. Me myself I was parched with thirst and caked with dust, and I was surprised when the bald ranger just smiled a wry smile and invited me to join him at his fire.

Juro shared with me his water and some iguana-on-a-stick, and through the night we came to talk about who we were and where we were going and why. Seems Juro was a traveler, a wanderer not unlike me, who sold little trinkets and other odds-and-ends he scavenged from the abandoned ruins of the Ancients throughout the western region. Oh, things like old tinker-toys, and the little oddities the Ancients were known to play with. But through these travels Juro had seen a lot of things, met a lot of people, and it was with great joy that I sat there listening to him tell his exciting tales of the west.

It was Juro who first mentioned the Forgotten Desert. According to my old friend, the desert lies north of the Deadlands, creating a vast lonely plain of dry scrubland and parched earth between the Big Rocks and the Range of The Lost. According to Juro, there ain’t much out there but desolation; even the Ancients were hesitant to settle that land, being so dry and distant. But Juro did say that in his travels he had seen the desert, and in it were a scattering of peoples – tiny communities – the tiny remnants of folk who left the mountains during the Fall to seek shelter in the desert. They must’ve hung on despite the gritty wilds, for Juro says the small towns out there still talk the Ancient talk and manage to do some trade in little machines and tinker-toys.

GLOWING HILLS

I first heard tell the legends of the Glowing Hills from a savage tribal who claimed to have come from the region of the Deserts of Nowhere. I have always been fascinated by the simple stories and primitive superstitions of these savage peoples, and this tale is no exception.

The savages of the desert have long lived under a canopy of fear from the strange aurora-like glow that

permeates the northern horizon of their land. Stories tell of strange inhuman beasts that, perhaps once every decade or so, wander out from the deserts' heart into the lands of the savages. Such creatures, according to legend, bring with them the Red Fever (which I have come to believe is their word for radiation sickness), terror, and death.

One story told to me by the very same tribal fellow tells of one tribe's ritual of manhood; to become fully initiated in the tribe's warrior house, an aspirant must spend a few weeks out in the Deserts of Nowhere, braving whatever dangers he might find there, while also ensuring he does not find himself lost or out of supplies. Such a test would indeed prove a warrior's capabilities!

Tales of the so-called "Glowing Hills" originate from this very tribe. According to legend, one such aspirant returned one day with bizarre tales of a land he discovered deep in the desert where the terrain turned to hills, and hills into distant mountains. Strangest of all, the land was dotted with ruins, one of which the boy did in fact explore – "a deep and terrible pit of metal halls, lightless corridors, and filled with skeletal remains." A terrible glow permeated this rolling land and all its ruins, a white-hot fluorescence which burned him and caused his hair to fall out (he died only a few days after returning home).

The tribals no longer venture too far into the desert, and the mythical Glowing Hills are, to them, a kind of "netherworld", the place one goes if he wanders too far and falls off the edge of the world. It is, according to their beliefs, a cursed land where everything is dead and from which no one can escape death's inevitable grasp.

GRASS PLAINS EMPIRE

I cringe at the thoughts that are conjured up by this most terrible of names, the Savant Empire. But no good lookabout-man worth the name can claim he's never heard that dread appellation. Savants. Let me tell you what I know. It may very well save your life some day.

Most, if not all of what I know about the Savants and their great empire comes from a fellow I met a long time ago in Free Water, a big one by the name of Clickitat. A feral, not untypical of the desert scavs and survivors that leech off the refuse of places like Free Water, I was surprised to find that this winged giant had more to say than just a few grunts. Heck, when we first met I swore he was itching to wrestle my water from me rather than strike up a conversation.

Conversation sprung up when the wilderness feral heard I was joining the next Cartel caravan heading south across the deserts to the city of Styx. I found Clickitat quite eager to relate the tales of his own journeys along this migratory path that merchants have traveled for countless generations, until the point, late into the night under the shadow of Free

Water's waddle and daub huts, I asked him what was the greatest danger of the deserts south of Free Water. Clickitat was silent for a good long time but he finally told me of his own encounters and history as they related to the Savants.

The Savants are a nation of bizarre mutant entities that dominate the lands south of the desert and east of the Big Rocks, an arid land the rises from the unforgiving sands, turning into the flat open grassy plains that – unlike anywhere else in the world – have seen the steady fall of rain in all but the driest months. This arable paradise, stretching for countless miles towards the unknown lands of the east, skirts the south like a promised paradise just out of the reach of human hands.

The "protectors" of this land are the Savants. According to my friend Clickitat, these arcane beings are perhaps the southlands' greatest menaces. My feral friend himself was a first-hand witness of their depravations. His tribal people, living on the outskirts of this pleasant steppe country, were among so many nameless victims who were crushed by these malevolent folk, who swept across the plains to destroy or enslave all peoples within their reach. But it was Clickitat's stories of the Savants themselves that terrified me most, and so I will not hesitate to describe here those details he shared with me. I wonder at times as to the imagination of that primitive giant, which may have indeed colored this story, but I'll tell you true as I can.

They came sweeping across the plains, their fore protected by massed armies of thousands – yes, thousands – of slave races. Men, mutants, and monstrosities all bound by their great mental control to charge before them in a massed pack, ravaging, pillaging, and burning everything in their wake. These huge armies, stretching from horizon to horizon in what seemed a sea of churning naked bodies, moved as one with the simple gesture of the Savant hand or rod of office; with such coordination as to suggest that all, so many dozens of battalions, were dominated by the legendary Savant mind powers.

The Savants themselves hovered behind this awesome wave of men and monster, coursing along on the backs of whirring flying saucers that flew across the plains. From the tops of these floating platforms the Savants stood, dressed in their magnificent and archaic regalia that can only be described as bizarre – long flowing clerical cloaks and robes, covered in unknown runes and writing, with massive ornate headdresses covering their deformed heads and faces (no Savant's face has allegedly ever been seen), with articulated tubes and pipes feeding them air from packs on their backs.

With glowing energy rods the Savants strike at those on the ground, while others near and about them simply fly through the air without wings – propelled by some "magical force" it seems. All who have seen

the Savants have fallen, and only scattered survivors of these vicious raids of salvage remain to tell the tale.

According to the hushed tale of Clickitat, the Savants killed his parents and took his people as slaves, no doubt to join their endlessly-growing mentally-dominated armies. Clickitat told me that he managed to escape by fleeing into the wasteland, and grew up eternally in the fear that the Savants would return some day to claim him as well.

I have since heard stories from Cartel caravaneers and Water Merchants that the Savants do indeed exist, and occupy a substantial amount of territory in what can only be regarded as the breadbasket of our Twisted Earth. They jealously guard a land where grass grows freely, where livestock range the plains, and where fertile earth is rumored to facilitate crops fit to feed tens of thousands. The Water Merchants have, on occasion, made forays into Savant country to trade water supplies, which if true means they are the only peoples known to have encountered the Savants and survived to tell about it.

GRAVEYARD OF BONE CITIES

Many tales have I heard about this nightmarish and haunting land, from merchants I've traveled with in the Texaco-False Watertown region, that by the time I came to the area myself, I thought I'd be well-prepared for the eerie sights of this eastern portrait of man's holocaust. They call it the Graveyard of Bone Cities, or simply "The Graveyard." Let me tell you, reader, one has to see it to truly believe it. From what I saw, I can easily understand the hesitation even the mighty Water Clan have of passing through it, and the superstition the tribals of the desert have created surrounding its origins.

What I saw, I won't ever forget. When I first came to the Graveyard it was on a solo expedition of some foolhardiness, having traveled south from the outskirts of the great Apolis ruins as a guest of CrystalTime water merchants headed via the pioneer trail to Free Water. The CrystalTime trailmaster, a most generous fella by the name of William Water, told me in the comfort of his master wagon that my endeavor was foolish, perhaps even suicidal. When I told him of the stories I had heard and my curiosity to see the legendary Graveyard, he only shook his head sadly as if he were sure he'd never again see me. I should have realized my true danger when he voluntarily gave me twelve liters of water and a fast fraxx – from his own personal stock – and sent me on my way. Before I left, he stuffed a strange thing he called a "crucifix" in my hand.

It took a few days to cross the sun-parched dunes, even riding swiftly on my fraxx, until at last, atop a great rise, I spied eastwards across miles of muddy plains something few men have ever seen. Stretching out before me lay a desolate land, something that looked like a great lava flow or mighty gorge snaking

across the plains and to the horizon. A great reddish glow hovered on the noontime horizon, silhouetting what at first I thought were strange mountains dotting the range.

These weren't mountains, as I soon saw, as the sun rose ever higher into the sky. They were, in fact, great domes, bigger than any other dome I had ever seen – bigger even than Eden, the dome from which I myself come. No, these were gigantic – as big as the cities the Ancients once made, their polish still gleaming in the sun as the wind whipped strongly over the plains revealing their glass to the sky.

It was an awesome, impressive sight. Not only one dome, but many – from where my fraxx nervously waddled, I could spy three great domes within maybe ten miles; another could be seen just on the horizon, but as night fell I could see numerous other glows and auroras which I can only guess denote the locations of many other cities well beyond the flat horizon.

Yet if not for my fraxx, I would have died there. In my foolishness, the next day I sought to head out into the plains and have me a look-see, the object of my own personal quest very much in mind. This, I thought, could in fact be what I was always looking for, what my people were looking for – a new home. Any one of those great domes could hold a city of people! I rode until mid-day across the plains; ignorant of many signs that should have warned me away, but blinded I was by my ambition to explore those distant monoliths of urban construction.

Sometime during my trip I passed out and fell off my fraxx. I should have been dead. I woke three days later, high up on the rise, the glow of the Graveyard still burning in the sky. There I lay, in the sand, my foot tangled in the stirrup that had held me atop the fraxx. That fuzzy little critter stood nearby, grazing on weeds poking through the dune. Somehow I had been dragged along for those many miles after I had fainted, and ended up there, once more out of that cursed valley.

The next few days passed and I got awful sick, mighty tired. I thought I was gonna die what with all the puke streaming from my mouth and nose well into each night. I knew then, as I know now, why that land is considered so darn haunted – and deadly. Radiation. The entire Graveyard is one giant bowl of ruin, a wind of radiation trapped perpetually in its gorges and valleys.

The weakness caused by the Red Fever had made me faint in the first place. If my fraxx had not broken and run for safety (apparently those critters have an inherent sense of radiation's dangerous presence), dragging me along with it, I would have perished there. I'm sure of it.

Look back on this tale, reader, as a warning. I don't know what the Graveyard of Bone Cities is – presumably great cities of the Ancients which were ruined in their Big War – or what secrets they might

hold. Maybe we, the survivors of mankind's fall, are not meant to know. Like staring up on starry nights at that moon of ours, so blue and green with its water and fertile continents, perhaps we are only meant to see – not reach – this paradise just outside our grasp.

GREAT RIFT VALLEY

The Great Rift Valley lies diagonally across the rough and abyssal territory of southern California. Tales tell how this land was, even in the time of the Ancients, a place of earthquakes and great catastrophes, and by the looks of it today it's no wonder.

The Great Rift Valley is a region riddled with mighty gorges, ravines, and cracks that stretch from the desert plateau of Kingman Town in the southeast to the Frisco Bay area in the northwest part of the land. At its heart is a single continuous rift, a huge scar upon the land - its rocky, mesa-like cliffs falling anywhere from ten to almost fifty feet at various points along its miles-long length, sometimes even vanishing into the depths of the earth. The cliffs are notoriously unstable, the rift volcanic, and wanderers who've come too close have been said to sometimes fall to horrible deaths in burning lava below. Tremors are still reported to shake the land every few years or so; the glow of underground hotspots in the crack sometimes can be seen as far south as Calico.

The Great Rift represents a monumental barrier to the peoples of the Sierra Gehenna region, separating the lands of the civilized - the valley of the monastery-fortresses of the Foundation on one side, the desolate ruins of Bakersfield and the legendary mega-ruin of Necropolis on the other. Places like Kingman Town sit at strategic points along the Great Rift, where reliable passes down into the valley have been established. These mark important junctures on the trade routes that connect the lands of the east with the territories of the west.

The Great Rift, though largely a rocky dry desert, is not entirely empty. All manner of wildlife has come to populate this terrible region; I myself wandered this land a great deal during my service with the Foundation, and it ain't a safe, hospitable place. Not only the odd band of savage raiders (as well as slavers from up north come looking for captives), but also giant "mole rats", huge mutated scorpions, and the odd aberration spawned by the radiated atmosphere pervading the belt of devastated cities that ring the valley.

If you ever go to California, you're sure to come to the Great Rift Valley at one point or another – one has to at least skirt it in order to get anywhere. If you ask me, stick to the established trade routes as much as possible. It's a harsh and dangerous place, the Rift Valley.

LOST MUD SEA

This distant corner of the world is only legend; they say, like the impassable Bone Peaks of the southwest, a dried-up sea of mud stretching on forever bound the southeast corner of the Twisted Earth. If there is truth to this I cannot openly say, but I have reliable information that suggests otherwise. Whatever the truth, it is unlikely that anyone will ever venture this far to find out, for the Lost Mud Sea lies beyond the lands of the dreaded Savants and their cursed citadels of power.

LOST PARADISE

The so-called "Lost Paradise" is, if you ask me, just a myth. I first heard about this land after visiting the northern region of Sierra Gehenna. A fellow member of the Foundation, an aging master scribe in the bustling town of Redding, related to me a mythical tale about this supposed paradise that he himself had heard from traders of the Restored States of America.

According to those brave folk that once lived north of the desert region (in case you've never been there, it's a dry hot country of rolling mountains, interspersed with dry forests that are prone to summer wildfires that rage for weeks on end), the land north ascends into higher and higher mountains, like the towering fortresses of mythical giants. These distant peaks are said to be beyond even the Restored States (which, as far as I can tell, are really, really, far north), and beyond them lies the Lost Paradise.

The Lost Paradise was described only vaguely to me, as a land of rich pine forests, steady heavy rains almost all year-round, and towering mountains with snow-covered peaks (in case you don't know what snow is, it's what water becomes when it falls from the sky in cold weather; it's white, fluffy, and really cold, and sort of piles up like sand). Wild animals are said to live freely here, where no man can ruin it. Even the Ancients respected this land, and kept their hand clear of it. If such an unbelievable paradise does in fact exist, I hope to someday find it!

MOUNTAINS OF MISERY

I've heard many stories of these mountains, said to be "haunted" by the primitive people who skirt their foot all along the southern edge of the world. Legends speak of entire cities buried in mud, or blasted so completely that they glow like pockets of green radiance visible in the lost mountain valleys on any clear dawn.

In the west, in Styx and Socorro, more practical stories speak of raiders who have come to infest the foothills of the Mountains, raiding passing merchant caravans using Trader Pass, and using their dangerous terrain to dissuade outsiders from pursuing them back to their mountain strongholds.

RANGE OF THE LOST

They say that the far northern reaches of the Sierra Gehenna rise and rise into first foothills, then mountains, which comprise the near-mythical “Range of The Lost.” Here, I am told, tribal peoples dwell among lost mountain valleys and cloudy peaks, coveting secret forests and river gorges where game is plentiful.

I ain’t never been this far north, but tales of tribals living the Great Forest region of the Sierra Gehenna seem similar – perhaps there is some truth to the tales of “lost tribes” living in this volcanic range.

SIERRA GEHENNA

The Sierra Gehenna region is well-named; it is a vast region swept by flaming-hot winds, nestled like a desolate depression between two towering mountain ranges on either side. Miles and miles of desert lie in the valley below, split by the forgotten and abandoned remnants of old highways and the rubble and ashen ruins of lost cities destroyed in the Fall.

In the mountains surrounding this great valley, and rising from the rocks throughout, jut the austere and grim faces of Foundation monastery-fortresses; huge citadels of stone built to oversee vast stretches of country, from which these advanced peoples can mount attacks against those moving through their lands.

I’ve been to this corner of the world, which was once a great bed of Ancient civilization, now a ash-covered basin of burned-out ruins and lost roadways meandering in the valleys. Settlements ranging from small trade hubs to large slaver cities dot this hellish, lawless region, connected by well-traveled routes often crowded at times with mile-long caravans and convoys of trade goods and slaves – slave typically taken from the poor primitive tribes of the mountains and sold in the skin markets of the Gehenna cities.

The Sierra Gehenna is a dangerous, awful place of radiated ruins and degenerate peoples. An abundance of technological wonders are known to surface now and again among the ruins here, and even slavers and strong-arm communities are known to utilize advanced weapons to guarantee their long life and prosperity. The Foundation, born in this land, stands as the biggest of the bullies, its message of preservation looming more like a threat than a promise to the people of the region.

WILDS OF DESOLATION

A region exists along the frontier of the Grass Plains Empire, where the rule of the mighty Savants ends and the chaos of savage mutant-kind begins. Though little is known of this rugged, mountainous enclave of terrain, it is said that tribes of mutants fleeing Savant rule and lordship have made this barren wasteland home for numerous generations. Savages one and all,

these tribes are said to sever heads and shrink them in boiling chemicals, and wear them as charms of luck to inspire valor in battle.

Other stories also speak of cannibalism, and powerful shamans among their ranks that command weird mental powers to shield their brethren against the onslaught of Savant expeditions set after them into the Wilds.

DENIZENS

MAJOR FACTIONS

The Twisted Earth is rich with scattered settlements, established communities, and enclaves of civilization separated by wide spaces of wasteland. In addition to more mundane places and their generic inhabitants, there do exist what can only be described as “major” factions, movements, and philosophical fraternities. Organized along numerous lines (monastic traditions, neo-military structure, etc.), these few are the major powerhouses that promise to one day bring back civilization in the shape of their particular vision – or threaten to bring about another Fall through their own wars of ignorance and domination.

BRETHREN

The Brethren are a rather disturbing army of men, women, and children dwelling in the radiated and diseased ruins of San Francisco (and other cities) in the Sierra Gehenna region. Many stories surround the Brethren and their activities, and traders who have been to their decrepit cities often speak of the danger they pose to outsiders – and civilization as a whole. It is widely known that the Brethren believe that the Ancients were “demons”, and through their own malevolence they destroyed the world, reducing mankind to what it is now – twisted and hideous.

Predominant among the Brethren are mutants of a particular sort (years of troglodilian existence beneath the city – a lifestyle forced upon them by more powerful mutant groups now vanished from the face of San Francisco – has left a vast majority of them albino and photosensitive), who detest everything the Ancients ever made: guns, television, power, even the life giving medicines of the past. It is their sole goal to destroy everything of technology that was left by the Ancients, slaughter all pureblooded humans and survivors, and bring to the world a new era of “innocence” (or ignorance, depending on your point of view).

Though they are said to have vast numbers of followers, the religious views of the Brethren prohibit them from employing firearms and other effective weapons, and as such they are often their own greatest enemy, limiting their own power and abilities through their backwards beliefs. However, large packs of screaming Brethren clad in their long black robes

and only ever emerging after twilight are more than enough to overwhelm and butcher lone travelers or lightly armed convoys nearing their cities. As such, no matter how primitive they are, the boundaries of their lands are often given a very wide berth.

BROTHERHOOD OF RADIATION

A well-known movement sprawling over the deserts in recent years is the Brotherhood of Radiation – a community of monastic mutants who follow a dream to bring peace, understanding, and worship of the “holy power” (radiation) abandoned during the Fall. Creating their own bizarre ritual society, their message – though strange – has become one of the most attractive to the myriad mutant races of the world that seek to learn of their “secrets.” In fact, many simply wish to believe that their mutations are not a curse, but actually a blessing, and the Brotherhood’s message provides just the sense of comfort and acceptance they have desired all their miserable lives.

The Brothers are some of the few surviving communities to retain any knowledge of pre-holocaust technology, and they guard this wisdom jealously. Sadly, this often leads to resentment and envy by other, less privileged groups, which spawns numerous rumors about the monks’ true motivations and sanity. It is known that the cult constantly irradiates new members through exposure to radiated sites, spawning legions of hairless glowing “freaks” that wander out to do all sorts of quasi-religious machinations. Few understand the goals of this organization, but most are sure they are not benevolent.

All over the wasteland, tales of the Brotherhood’s “Holy City of Lights” are almost legendary. This once-spectacular citadel of towering skyscrapers and broad leafy boulevards, kept alive with water pumped from other lands, is now a dusty ashbin, kept brilliantly illuminated by lights from the High Temple. It is a beacon to all who seek enlightenment in the Brotherhood’s beliefs. Outside of the Holy City, the Brotherhood is known to have numerous cells and branches, especially in places of atomic interest (power plants, missile silos, cratered ruins, waste dumps, etc).

CARTEL

One of the best-known trade organizations in the American Southwest, the so-called “Cartel” represents the encroaching influence of an alliance of peoples from all across the wasteland. The Cartel originally started as a group of heavily-armed trade caravans braving the many deserts of the continent, but soon came to embody a number of oil and salt merchant interests with over half a dozen major trade routes extending as far west as Bernardino (after being pushed out of the ruins of Los Angeles like many other transgressors into that city) and as far east as what used to be northern Texas. The Cartel, while

admittedly motivated solely by capitalist concerns, also seeks to spread civilization and open new markets throughout the post-apocalyptic wasteland. Though not immediately concerned with a resurrection of the Ancient way of life, they are by far the best hope for humanity’s future. Their policy is always to tread softly but to carry a big stick, for there are many who would readily prey upon the prosperity and success of the Cartel throughout the wasteland.

The Cartel has grown considerably in the past few decades. It is well known that their capital is the city of “Kingman Town” (said to be a virtual junkyard of oil derricks and rusted-over train cars), but they have spread out from this distant location to maintain outposts in the settlements of Styx, Lil’ Vegas, Midway, the Arid City, and as far west as Bernardino – on the outskirts of the haunted, burned-out ruins of the Necropolis.

Within this band of control the Cartel is a hard and ruthless caretaker of its territory, though this inflexibility towards raiders and vagrants has made these among the safest regions to travel through in the world.

CHILDREN OF THE METAL GODS

The hated “Children of The Metal Gods” are a cult of technology worshippers that follow the often odd and archaic commands of their “masters” - robots and androids whom they have discovered in ruins across the wasteland, and brought back to life through the following of “revered magic tomes” (repair manuals). Though these robots often kill one or two of their “children” before realizing how incredibly naive these supplicants are, they soon begin to take advantage of their followers’ worship through plans of conquest - and extermination.

Cults of this “faction” are often brutal and inhumane entities, working in unison with selfless determination at the unforgiving direction of their emotionless masters. Commanded to sacrifice their lives at the whim of their metal masters, those who join the cult usually do so only out of sheer ignorance - or some twisted ritualistic “worship” of technology carried over from the Dark Ages succeeding the Fall. Most are outcasts from their own communities and factions, such as the mentally handicapped, the crippled and diseased, “village idiots”, and worse.

At the heart of these cults are usually one or two powerful, artificially intelligent robots (the genius and tyrant behind their cult’s power), such as thinker androids or war robots. Many of these, having developed insane personalities due to their extreme age (or the fact that they despise humans for creating them in the first place), have only the most despicable plans for the life of the Twisted Earth.

When dealing with this cult, it is important to note a distinction in terms: “Metal Gods” refers to the androids and robots who are the object of the cult’s

worship, while the term “Children” refers to the human and mutant servitors who serve these synthetic masters and act as their “footmen” and “cannon fodder.”

CLEAN WATER CLANS

The Clean Water Clans are among the most powerful and widely known trade organizations across the face of the Twisted Earth. From the Free City of Styx to as far north as Free Water, they trade the world’s most valuable commodity – drinking water.

The Clean claim to have a heritage stretching back to the time of the Ancients, and hold that their claim to trade rights across America were established even well before the Fall. They are a highly respected organization; with a powerful status everywhere they go due to their valuable commodity as well as their fierce reputation for brutally destroying competitors, raiders, and enemies of the Clan. Led by a group of wise elders, their main concern is with the generation of profit; they are largely uninterested in politics and other factors that weigh many communities down. In addition, a cunning policy of trading water for technology (or outright theft) has left them with the know-how to produce high-tech weapons and equipment. They are truly a force to be reckoned with.

DOOMRIDERS

What some scribes consider to be just another raider gang in the Forbidden Lands, is actually a great new threat to the balance of power in that dry and dismal region. The Doomriders are a sadistic all-male cult that can only be described as crazy madmen. A quasi-monastic society of road warriors, they’ve got only one purpose in mind – the extermination of the human and mutant races of earth.

No one knows who started the Doomriders, but according to reports they’re led by one, perhaps two powerful overlords who attained their position through sheer brutality, killing all other rivals to the gang’s leadership. They view themselves as “warrior-monks” of a sort, charged with a “holy” mission to end the legacy of the Ancients. They’re one of those groups (among the more powerful ones too) that detests the Ancients for what they “did” to the world – turning it into the deadly wasteland it is. Burning with this hatred, their alleged goal is to exterminate all mankind, and finish the work the Ancients left undone.

To this end the Doomriders butcher all females they come across – perhaps the greatest atrocity ever known. No woman, not even child, is left with a merciful death. Able-bodied men are taken in by the Doomriders as “janissaries” of a sort, forced and brainwashed into their cause. Those who cannot fight, or are too fair, are tortured or worse, certain to die within a few weeks of mistreatment. No communities are safe from the Doomriders, for they make no friends, alliances, or treaties. Anything they want or

need, they simply take, and ruin, soil, or destroy the rest to ensure that life elsewhere cannot benefit from it.

The Doomriders are a threat to more than just the disorganized and scattered communes of the desert. Larger communities such as the Cartel and Water Clans have also suffered their wrath at various times; lucrative bounties have been placed on the heads of all gang members, with a virtual fortune out on their leaders. The Doomriders are a ruthless and powerful organization; they wear good armor, ride modified vehicles (numerous reports of flame-throwers, lasers, and even cannon-mortars), and are well organized for a desert raider gang!

ENTROPISTS

The “Entropists” are a doomsday group (similar to the Doomriders of the Forbidden lands) known to prowl the old highways and high wastelands of the Mountains of Misery region, striking often into Trader Pass and the southern Far Desert in virtual “fleets” of shiny automobiles and motorcycles, with flapping oriental banners depicting gruesome scenes and proclaiming Biblical sayings about the End of Times.

The Entropists are dedicated to a singularly destructive and nihilistic cause – the ending of all life on the planet. Consumed by strange beliefs and rituals, they sack, pillage, and destroy everything in their path, leaving no survivors and only burning remains. They are feared throughout the south.

What few reports that exist of the Entropists are varied, but they often pick up on strange quirks in their behavior that only adds to the mystique surrounding the cult. For example, it is said that all Entropists are bald, that they only consume canned foods and other preserved supplies packaged before the Fall – and that an Entropist would rather die than be touched by an outsider. In one instance, an Entropist who merely brushed against an outsider in a scuffle was shot dead by his comrades after what seemed like a crazed panic among their own ranks.

FAR TRADERS

The Far Traders are an age-old association, best described as “gypsies” of the mutant world. A long time ago they forfeited their claim to a sedentary existence to become a nomadic people, winding their way across the Twisted Earth in miles-long caravans, their carts and Conestoga wagons stacked-high with a menagerie of weird goods from all over the deserts. Though ostracized in many communities as thieves and superstitious beggars, the Far Traders nonetheless hold to their own code and are at least known to be honest – once a legitimate trade has been engaged in.

FOUNDATIONISTS

One of the more famous (or infamous) organizations in the wasteland is the so-called “Foundation”, a

central association of warrior-thinkers that believes in the preservation of lost technologies for the benefit of a future time, some day down the road, when all the people of the world will be ready to accept their Wisdom. Until that time, the Foundationists seek, through diplomacy, scrounging, or outright military force, to locate and secure lost installations, vehicles, gizmos, and “arcanum” from the barbarians of the desert.

The Foundationist movement believes that the only way to secure the future of man and mutantkind is to take extreme measures, and not to roll over like so many others and die. Hard military training and a strict education are the destiny of all who join the ranks. They are known to hold a number of bases and old centers of military significance (what few remain intact) all over the western part of the Twisted Earth. In particular, the Foundation’s presence is most widely felt in Old California, in large settlements and trade hubs where they can best keep an eye on the markets for the appearance of lost technologies. Over the Big Rocks, however, their power and influence is shaky at best, though it is rumored the Foundation is seeking to grow...

The Foundation is well known for its efforts to preserve technology, though they are more often than not viewed as bullies, bandits, or worse. Many think their quest of preservation just a ruse, so that they can accumulate the most powerful weapons and armor for some future plan of conquest. Wherever a Foundationist goes, he is treated with quiet respect, sometimes awe, but more often a subtle dislike that borders on real resentment.

GHOULS

First there was civilization, then war. And in the dust and ashes of mankind’s glory, there were survivors. They survived by staying alive, no matter what the cost – to their minds and their humanity. In the ruins of the many cities scattered across the Twisted Earth, there was little left that was uncontaminated or destroyed in the looting that followed the great collapse so many years ago. But what was left, and has never since been in short supply, were the bodies of men. Men killed by war or disease.

Ghouls are a widespread and horrible race of degenerate humans and mutants that managed to survive in the ruins for so many years, through abandoning all humanity and sinking to the level of dead-eaters and cannibals. Years of such decadent appetites have left them markedly changed – unhealthy, unstable, and utterly insane. The communities of the world despise ghouls above all others, for their ability to sneak through the sewers and shadowy rubble of the ruins is unparalleled. While not strong individually, a mass of ghouls emerging from the darkness is a most terrifying sight.

THE MOVEMENT

The so-called “Movement” is a unique – and new – group to visit the rasping, wind-swept deserts of the Twisted Earth. Though said to have had humble beginnings, the organization has grown in recent years to include a vast number of mutants and pureblood humans alike – something that has not been seen on the face of the Twisted Earth before.

The Movement has a legend that all members know and can recite, word-for-word, with a glimmer of promise, hope, and belief in their eyes. A long time ago, so they say, when “Pure Ones” (humans) and “Beastmen” (mutants) fought constantly with anger and hatred against one another, the red skies of the Twisted Earth thundered with the anger of the Gods. It was on a field of battle, where two opposing forces of man and mutant met, when the sky turned white with the trail of a great comet – a comet that fell from the dimly-visible stars above and impacted on the hard earth between the armies as they faced off.

From the shell of this fallen comet came a living God, clad in a suit of gleaming silver armor, his flesh magically unburned from his descent from the stars. His armor bore the symbols of the Ancients, and with him he carried the great weapons of his brother-Gods.

Awed by the appearance of this God, who came to them with words of peace, the armies of men and mutant were forced to sit and listen. And listen well they did, and came to understand the Love and Peace that was once the Ancients’ own, and understood then that this God had come to bring back their Blessed Ways.

The Fallen God (as he came to be known) lived with the people for a time; he wandered the land, they say, and brought peace and harmony where he went. Where his wisdom and words of peace were not enough to tame the foolish children of the Twisted Earth, his mighty weapons set the people right. It is said that he brought an end to the slavery that once was a way of life in the Northern Deserts, and led a coalition of the peoples against the dreaded Mongoliant horde. He united peoples of all races and shapes under his guidance, and brought the Promise of a new reign of Brotherhood.

That was many years ago, and though the Fallen God vanished as mysteriously as he appeared, his Message has never been forgotten. In the Northlands, his Children continue to carry on his Dream and Promise. Man and mutant live as one, and peace reigns. The Movement spreads, and with their coming they bring their vision of the future, where all men are equal, where choices are made by the people, and where no man may rule others unjustly or with cruelty.

Though He is gone, the Promise remains alive.

PARADISE BELIEVERS

The “Paradise Believers” are a quasi-religious society based in the Far Desert and Forbidden Lands, a

collection of misfits and self-proclaimed visionaries whose belief is centered on a mystical quest to reach “Paradise” (stories vary on what exactly Paradise is; some say it is a tenth planet discovered just before the Fall, others look at Paradise as the Blue Moon tauntingly close enough to view, while others speculate it is a space station still in orbit, while even more postulate it is in fact a star system long ago colonized by the Ancients). The Paradise Believers are a naïve peace-loving group, believing that they can talk their way out of any problem through reason and peaceful gestures. Believer groups across the Forbidden Lands are constructing a fleet of mighty rocket ships (of scavenged metal and junk) with the efforts of their delusional followers to blast their way to the stars. Few believe their efforts are anything but foolish, a fact stemming from previous failures that have left entire towns and villages in flaming ruins from their movement’s failures.

RANGERS

The Rangers are a notorious force of unforgiving law and justice in the Deadlands, known to “serve” a number of communities throughout the region. Legend traditionally surrounding the Rangers suggests that they were, at one time, descended from an actual military unit that survived piecemeal the final Fall, to carry on the rules and justice of the Ancients into this brave new world.

Not unlike wandering “Texas Rangers” from America’s distant past, Rangers have a reputation for being the best of the best when it comes to living off the land and waging war against raiders and road gangs. Being descended from professional soldiers, their people have worked hard to preserve the rigorous training and lifestyle that makes them truly “elite.” Where the Rangers are known, people look up to them as protectors and lawmen of a higher caliber. Gifts of food and other luxuries are often offered to the Rangers as rewards for their services, but seldom are these accepted by their spartan leadership. It is common for people, upon hearing of a Ranger detachment’s arrival in a town or village, to gather and petition them for assistance in whatever trouble they are having.

RAVAGERS

Among the raider gangs of the wasteland are many of peculiar size and power, and of these the so-called “Ravagers” are perhaps a glaring example of brutality and tyranny. The rampaging army of raiders that follow the Ravager banner is known throughout the Forbidden Lands, led by an infinitely depraved and ruthless raider emperor - whose true name is unknown. The Ravagers are a terror throughout the land; laying burgeoning communities low for their own perverse pleasure and gain, stamping out all growing civilization in the Forbidden Lands region. Riding on

virtual armadas of motorcycles, trucks, and cars that churn enough exhaust to cloud the horizon when on campaign, and armed with shotguns and automatic weapons, the Ravagers have come to make their name known far and wide. Members of this particularly sadistic raider gang are subjected to tremendous tortures on initiation, but nearly anyone can join if he can survive the test. A few women are kept around only as slaves and playthings, but these inevitably die due to mistreatment and malnutrition.

SAVANTS

Some of the most significant entities of the Twisted Earth are the bizarre mutant overlords of the “Savant Empire”, a vast pseudo-nation covering almost the entirety of the Grass Plains region. A land ruled by cruel and unforgiving masters, only rumors circulate about the Savants’ appearance and their possible origins. Many say they are re-activated robots, others say they are “super-mutants” with batteries of unusual powers. Uncontested, however, is their ability to dominate the minds of entire masses with but a thought, and as such they cruelly control vast armies of mutants and slaves, taken from all over their borders, to serve against their enemies on the battlefield. The Savants themselves are said to actually be very few in number, but their thralls comprise megalithic numbers throughout the cities and villages of their empire.

This cryptic brotherhood is believed to have originated among the ruins of either the Midwest or Texas, and is composed of mysterious mutants who appear to have cultivated a very special ability, which they (and others who have survived contact with them) can only call “magic.” The “magic” is, in fact, a mastery of mental powers beyond the norm seen by most of mutantkind. It is said that the Savants are capable of forming invisible energies as they need - but the mental strain is said to be immense and their methods are obviously guarded savagely. The Savants are known for their arcane robes and KKK-style hoods, amassed weapons and refurbished droid servants, and their lack of mercy for any who stand in their way. Some legends claim the Savants are, in fact, the descendants of criminal Ancients who were subjected to great tortures by their former captors, only to survive the holocaust and claim the new world as their own.

Savants compose a nation of bizarre mutant entities that dominate the lands south of the desert and east of the Big Rocks. This is an arid land that rises from the unforgiving sands, turning into the flat open grassy plains that - unlike anywhere else in the world - have seen the steady fall of rain in all but the driest months. This arable paradise, stretching for countless miles towards the unknown lands of the east, skirts the south like a promised paradise just out of the reach of human hands.

MINOR GROUPS

There are also several smaller, less prestigious groups that, while not quite “major”, nonetheless either aspire to become big players on the Twisted Earth, or else are still worthy of mention. Below are a few of the more significant minor factions of the world.

AMAZONS

In many of the communities of the Twisted Earth, women of all kinds are little more than property – the more handsome, the more valuable as commodities to the various bands of raiders, survivalists, and more brutal scum. Treated as mere objects by most, used as trade goods in many communities, and only seldom valued for any purpose other than pleasure and reproduction, they face a nightmarish existence in this world devoid of civilization.

But in the radiated wilds, there are some few females – loners mostly – who have struck out to find their own destiny. Many are escaped slaves, or girls secretly exiled by their parents at birth to save them from a horrible fate. Regardless, the solo life is a rough one, even for rugged males, and those few females who have survived to womanhood are among the most vicious, hateful, and brutal of their gender; they have to be, for over every hill lies a community or pack who would just as soon make her a slave as a friend. Those women who do survive are known almost universally as “amazons”, tough and savage females who are as skilled at combat as the most rugged survivalists.

BENDERS

The community of Bend City is said to be home to a stable populace of peaceful yet wary folk on the edge of known country. The “Big Bend” (after which their “city” gets its name) is a rugged valley where once a great river ran wild and free, but since the drying up of the Earth has turned into an impassable gulch that separates the northern, flat lands with the mountains of the south – mountains which, according to local legend, run to the edge of the world.

The Benders maintain this distant outpost because of what Bend City sits right on top of – oil. They say the Benders claim to be the descendants of the personnel that originally operated it as an important installation of the Ancients. Whatever the truth of their origins, the oil supply is a steady one, steady to such an extent that the water merchants of the Clean have been navigating a particularly-dangerous route south from Trade City to Bend for the past decade or so. In return for their water shipments, the Clean are warily rewarded with bountiful oil that is perhaps the single-greatest source of oil outside of that produced by the Cartel.

This abundant oil does not come without a price. The mountainous desert region around Bend City is legendary for its dangers – extreme heat and lack of drinkable water, rare but ferocious sand-burrowing

worms, and especially road gangs. Raiders, whose vehicles have often-times been stripped of their electric power to run off combustible fuels, have always sought to crack Bend City open and loot its wells for the millions of gallons it allegedly hordes.

To protect itself, Benders have turned Bend City into a great fortress, surrounded by metal and wooden walls, great moats, and towering lookouts to spy the dusty approach of such gangs. Not even the Clean and their caravans are permitted into Bend City. The people of Bend City have never shown any inclination to joining any pre-Fall faction, and have even denied the protection of the Cartel when it was offered a few years back. According to the Clean, their dealings are always done at a distance, with intermediary drop-offs and pick-ups, as if they feared everyone else in the world had the plague. As such, accounts of the actual people have always been vague at best.

CORIUM MINERS OF LITTLE VEGGS

Though the wasteland is filled with encampments of so-called “corium miners”, nowhere are their kind more numerous – and prosperous – than in the tiny town of Lil’ Vegas, situated on the east side of the Big Rocks just a dozen or so miles from the main trade routes of the Twisted Earth.

Not much is known of Lil’ Vegas to most outsiders, short of the stories that the town “gleams at night” with electric power, that ancient-era music – hinting at untold decadence within – drifts out from behind its tall walls night and day, and that all men (and even women) are welcome there to share in the wealth of the mines if only they’ll roll up their sleeves and start digging.

Oddly enough, however, few people ever seem to leave Lil’ Vegas (alive anyway), though the amount of corium pouring out of the town is enough to distract from what would otherwise be something of real concern to the people of the Twisted Earth...

CRYSTALTIME MERCHANTS

The “CrystalTime” merchants are an enigmatic association of far-flung traders who comprise the primary competition for the world’s water markets, close in power to the more prestigious Clean who dominate the Southwest. The CrystalTime have long been confined to the eastern fringes of the Far Desert, but for nearly a century have maintained trade routes north and south through the Far Desert, Deserts of Nowhere, and even into Trader Pass. On occasion the CrystalTime have openly warred with the Clean for control of specific regions or in disputes over prices and supply, but these conflicts have become rarer and rarer these days as boundaries and deals have largely been worked out between the two. Despite the concerted efforts of the Clean to slowly eradicate the CrystalTime merchants one way or another, the latter persist due to some vast unknown source of water that

they provide to the northern reaches of the Twisted Earth. Legend has it this water source is beyond the formidable Purple Desert (for the water merchants are the only known group to explore possible routes beyond that barrier). Whatever the truth, the CrystalTime have long managed to keep its location hidden.

HERMAVS

Like ghouls, who are more a separate “race” than an actual “faction”, hermavv are a disturbing body of mutant crossbreeds that are only just becoming numerous among the wastes, unified only by their body form, and not by any real philosophy. Cast-outs of various communities, hermavv are marked for expulsion because of a single unifying characteristic – they are all born hermaphrodites.

Considered “monsters” and “abominations” by their own birth people, under certain circumstances individual hermavv come together, find other cast-outs with similar “mutations”, and form violent, briefly-lived communities. But like many other groups turned out or thrown away by their people, they harbor and cultivate a burning desire for revenge, which often turns into sadism and murderous hatred for all those they consider “normal.”

Hermavv vary in appearance depending on their specific community origins, but as a group they are all misfits who have both male and female characteristics combined (or, in some cases, have stunted or underdeveloped sexual characteristics). This often (but not always) manifests in a distorted, husky voice, long feminine hair, distorted facial and body features, and both sets of male and female genitals. To terrify their enemies, and to play on their “outcast” persona, they often take to wearing lewd suits of leather, rubber, and open chain that show off their hermaphroditic bodies – to grotesque effect. Strangely applied pigments, war paint, tattoos, and body piercings are also common adornments for these strange wasteland predators.

KNIGHTS OF ROUTE 66

Far to the south, among the towering peaks flanking both sides of the Big Holes region, an army of vehicle-mounted raiders has long preyed upon the travelers of the trade routes. Known as the “66 Knights”, not due to their number but to the number “66” on their shields (taken from the ancient name of the trade route 66, which ran the length of this region east to west), they have long been a threat to the continued survival of trade in the area.

The Knights raid in large, well-organized packs on horses and vehicles, and have been known to field muskets and even modern-era firearms scavenged (it is believed) from the lost cities of the Mountains of Misery. Now and again it is said they even use “artillery” concealed in mountain strongholds to bombard passing caravans out in the open in Trader

Pass below (though they use these sparingly; ammo is impossible to come by). The Knights are said to be particularly cruel raider scum, giving no mercy to captives or surrendering enemies, and rewarding only brutality and savagery among their own ranks.

RAIDER GANGS (VARIOUS)

The lands of the Twisted Earth are home to profuse numbers of gangs, bands, war-parties, and savage tribal groups that prey off the weak, undefended, and unwary. The power of these groups (few of which work together, instead preferring to wage war against one another for dominance of a given region) is seldom great enough to threaten larger communities or trade cartels in the open, so most prefer hit-and-run and harassment tactics to get what they want and run. Convoys, caravans, and even lone travelers are all subject to attack by these various groups when and if their territory is challenged or crossed.

WASTELORDS

One of many raider groups to come out of the Forbidden Lands, the Wastelords have grown from a regional gang into a veritable army that has crushed all opposition in their corner of the world. Stories of the simple tribal folk of that region often equate the Wastelords to “cunning devils”, inhuman overlords who use technology to conquer and oppress, viewing those of a more primitive mind as little more than “cattle”, worthy of nothing but service to the Wastelords for the rest of their lives.

XENOPHOBES (VARIOUS)

There are many bubbles of isolation in the wasteland, and those communities who defy the efforts of others to initiate trade or open their doors to outsiders are known universally as “xenophobes.” Many of these communities were, at some point or other, ravaged by one or another of the raider gangs of the world. Some were victims of disease brought unwittingly (or deliberately) by outside traders and merchants. In the end, invariably, these small but determined communes close their doors to all outsiders, reserve their resources for their own, and care little for the goings on of the outside world.

It would seem they would be rightfully left alone due to their neutrality and willingness to just sit back while the world goes on around them, but in truth many xenophobe communities survive due to the fact that they are, in fact, oases, old water stations, oil refineries, etc. Thus, they are inherently of value to the predators outside, who sooner or later return to finish them off.