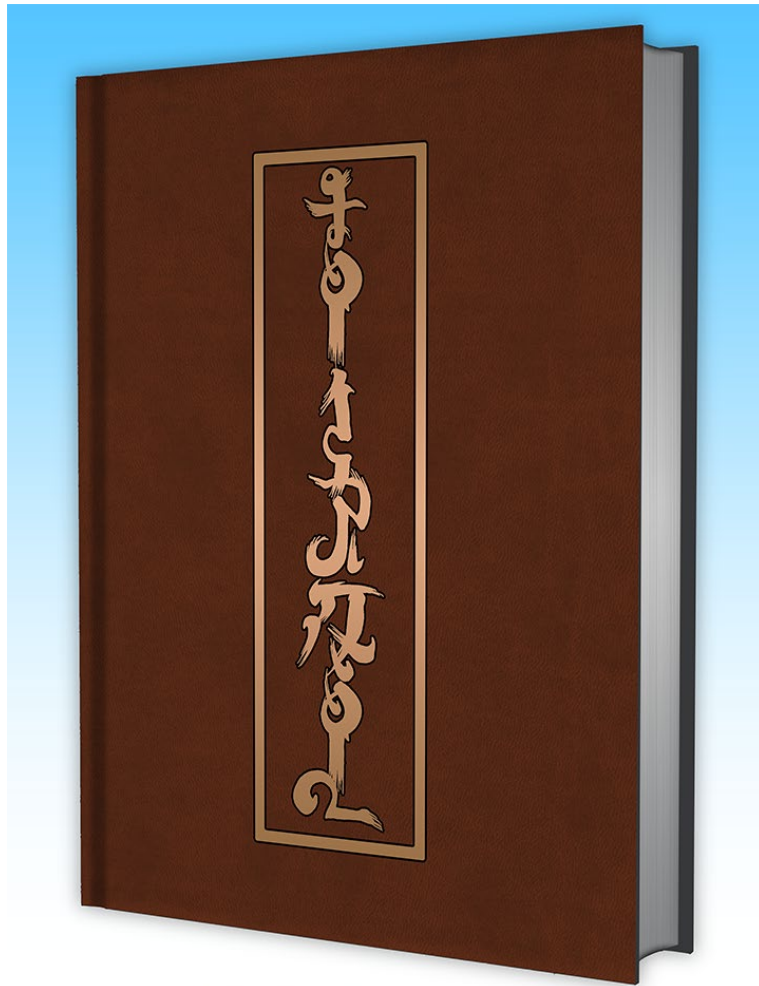


ALCHEMICALS

FORGED BY THE MACHINE GOD

Backer Draft Manuscript

– Chapter 3 + 4 –



NOT FINAL DESIGN

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Chapter Three: Character Creation

This chapter details the process of creating Alchemical player characters.

Traits

You'll make a number of choices about your character's system traits in character creation. It may help to skip ahead and read about those traits or reference their description in **Exalted Third Edition**. A quick summary:

Caste: Your Caste is an archetypal role as a Champion of your community. Each Caste has three associated Attributes, which are easier to increase. Your Caste also determines your anima powers. See p. XX

Attributes: Your character's innate strengths and aptitudes (**Exalted**, p. 148). Attributes determine what Charms you can learn. In addition to the discount on Caste Attributes, you'll choose one Favored Attribute to receive the same discount, broadening your character beyond their Caste's archetype.

Abilities: Your character's skills (**Exalted**, p. 149).

Specialties: Your character's specific areas of expertise within their Abilities (**Exalted**, p. 123).

Merits: Miscellaneous traits associated with your character's origin and backstory (**Exalted**, p. 157). Some provide mechanical advantages, while others give narrative benefits, like wealth or minions. If you want an artifact, you'll take it as a Merit.

Charms: Divine god-machinery installed in an Alchemical, providing them with supernatural prowess. Charms are the most complicated part of the game, but you don't need to read them all — just those available at Essence 1. Each Charm requires a certain Attribute rating, so you may want to pick Charms before Attributes. See Chapter 5.

Charm Slots: Unlike most Exalted, Alchemicals can't use all of their Charms at once. Instead, they can only install a limited number of Charms. Each Charm slot can hold a single Charm, and must be purchased separately from them.

Submodules: Submodules are upgrades to Alchemical Charms. They don't require additional Charm slots.

Intimacies: Your character's relationships, beliefs, and other aspects of their personality (**Exalted**, p. 170). It's harder for social influence to sway you against your Intimacies, but it's easier to convince you to do something your Intimacies support. Charms and other magic may also draw on your character's Intimacies.

Step 1: Concept and Caste

Start character creation by talking with your Storyteller about her plans for the game, and discussing character concepts with your fellow players. Think about your character's origin, personality, skills, and the heroic archetypes that inspire her. Determine which of the Alchemical Castes (p. XX) fit her best.

If you're playing an Alchemical in Autochthonia, you should also choose which of the Eight Nations you belong to:

Claslat: The largest of the Eight Nations and unofficial first among equals, boasting enormous wealth and political cachet.

Estasia: A militaristic nation whose mercenary army is Autochthonia's greatest fighting force.

Gulak: The melting pot of the Eight Nations, Gulak's cultural diversity makes it a cultural hotbed. However, its cosmopolitan society is still plagued by discrimination, oppression, and social fault lines.

Jarish: Famed for its populace's piety and work ethic, Jarish is ruled by its Theomachy, a priestly class that maintains both morale and orthodoxy throughout the nation.

Kamak: Both the wealthiest and the most isolated of the Eight Nations, Kamak's economy are built around its immense surplus of natural resources — a surplus that's begun to wane in recent years.

Nurad: Renowned for innovation and scientific progress, Nurad now finds itself threatened by both the exhaustion of its natural resources and the creeping spread of the blight.

Sova: Sova has expanded its territories into Autochthonia's reaches to combat population density. Its recent war with Yugash has bred paranoia and jingoism.

Yugash: A nation on the edge of ruin, still recovering from devastating losses suffered in a war and the tumult of a Populat revolt.

Step 2: Attributes

Each Attribute begins with one dot. They're grouped into three categories: Physical (Dexterity, Stamina, Strength), Social (Appearance, Charisma, Manipulation), and Mental (Intelligence, Perception, Wits).

You'll choose one of these categories as primary, another as secondary, and the third as tertiary. Distribute eight dots between your primary Attributes, six dots between your secondary Attributes, and four dots between your tertiary Attributes. Attributes can't be raised above five.

You gain three *Caste Attributes*, as follows:

Orichalcum: Charisma, Intelligence, Strength

Moonsilver: Appearance, Dexterity, Wits

Jade: Charisma, Stamina, Wits

Starmetal: Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation

Soulsteel: Manipulation, Perception, Stamina

Adamant: Appearance, Perception, Strength

You'll also choose one *Favored Attribute*, based on your character's individual aptitudes. Your Favored Attribute must be chosen from your primary or secondary Attributes.

Step 3: Abilities and Specialties

Divide 28 dots among your Abilities. Each starts at zero, and can't be raised above three without spending bonus points. Abilities can't be raised above five.

Assign four specialties (**Exalted**, p. 123). You must have at least one dot in an Ability to take a

specialty in it.

Step 4: Merits

Choose ten dots of Merits. Alchemicals who belong to one of the Eight Nations distribute five additional dots among the Backing, Command, Contacts, and Influence, and Resources Merits.

Step 5: Charms and Charm Slots

Choose fifteen Charms to fill them. Most Alchemical Charms require a minimum rating in their associated Attribute — if you don't qualify, you'll need to raise that Attribute's rating with bonus points.

You also begin with fifteen Charm slots. Note that Essence 1 Alchemicals can't have more than eighteen slots total, even if they buy additional slots with bonus points.

You can take Evocations, Martial Arts Charms, and spells in place of Alchemical Charms. Learning Martial Arts Charms requires Perfected Style Matrix (p. XX), while sorcery requires Man-Machine Weaving Engine (p. XX).

Alchemicals and Martial Arts

Alchemicals don't need to take the Martial Artist Merit, as Perfected Style Matrix provides it for free.

Step 6: Intimacies

Choose Intimacies (**Exalted**, p. 170) to represent your Alchemical's beliefs and relationships. Intimacies can represent motivations, religious beliefs, worldview, friends and enemies, morals, idiosyncrasies, or other important parts of her life.

Many Champions have Ties toward the community they belong to. Among Alchemicals in Autochthonia, Ties to the Great Maker are also common, as are Principles reflecting an Alchemical's views on the Eight Nations' politics, culture, and economics.

There's no maximum on how many Intimacies you may choose at character creation. Starting characters must have at least four Intimacies. At least one must be Defining, and one must be Major. Likewise, at least one must be positive, and one must be negative.

Step 7: Bonus Points

You have 15 bonus points that can be spent any time during character creation to raise your character's traits.

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TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute	3 per dot
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute	4 per dot
Ability	2 per dot
Specialty	1

Merits	1 per dot
Caste/Favored Charm	1
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	2
Charm Slot	3
Submodule (3xp)	1
Submodule (6xp)	2
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	4
Spell (Intelligence non-Caste/Favored)	5
Martial Arts Charm	5
Evocation	4
Willpower	2 per dot

<END TABLE>

It's most cost-effective to spend bonus points on Caste and Favored Alchemical Charms, to raise Attributes from 4 to 5, or to raise Abilities above 3.

Spending bonus points to buy Charm slots, Evocations, Martial Arts Charms, and spells is the least efficient way to use them.

Step 8: Finishing Touches

You begin at Essence 1. Alchemicals have $(11 + [\text{Essence} \times 2])$ personal motes and $(27 + [\text{Essence} \times 6])$ peripheral motes, for 13 personal motes and 33 peripheral motes at Essence 1.

You begin with five Willpower, which can be raised with bonus points.

You begin with seven health levels: a -0 level, two -1 levels, two -2 levels, a -4 level, and an Incapacitated level. You may gain additional health levels with Strain-Resistant Chassis Modification (p. XX).

Legendary Champions

The above rules are for creating Alchemicals who were created or unsealed no more than a year ago. For more experienced Champions, make the following changes:

- Your starting Essence is 2.
- Choose thirteen dots of Merits, in addition to bonus Merits from your nation.
- Choose twenty Charms. (You don't gain additional Charm slots).
- Spend eighteen bonus points.

Character Creation Summary

Step 1: Concept and Caste

- Consult with the Storyteller and other players, and come up with a character concept.
- Choose your character's nation, if playing in Autochthonia.
- Pick a Caste. Note its anima powers.

Step 2: Attributes

- Place one dot in each Attribute.
- Divide 8 dots among primary Attributes, 6 dots among secondary Attributes, and 4 dots among tertiary Attributes.
- Mark your Caste Attributes.
- Select one Favored Attribute, which must come from your primary or secondary Attributes.

Step 3: Abilities and Specialties

- Divide 28 dots among all Abilities. None may be raised above 3 without spending bonus points.
- Assign four specialties.

Step 4: Merits

- Select 10 dots of Merits.
- If you serve a Deathlord, gain them as a Mentor and distribute an additional five dots among their associated Merits.

Step 5: Charms and Charm Slots

- Take 15 Charm slots.
- Select 15 Charms.

Step 6: Intimacies

- Choose at least four Intimacies, including at least one Defining Intimacy, one Major Intimacy, one positive Tie, and one negative Tie.

Step 7: Bonus Points

- Spend 15 bonus points.

Step 8: Finishing Touches

- Record Essence (1), personal notes (11 + [Essence x2]), peripheral notes (27 + [Essence x6]), health levels (-0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incapacitated) and Willpower (5).

Castes

Orichalcum: Orichalcum Castes are built for leadership, whether as visionary politicians, crusading reformers, trailblazing intellectuals, or commanding generals.

Caste Attributes: Charisma, Intelligence, Strength.

Moonsilver: Moonsilver Castes excel in cunning and subtlety, serving their communities as

assassins, spies, explorers, and masters of deception.

Caste Attributes: Appearance, Dexterity, Wits.

Jade: Jade Castes are heroic laborers endowed with superhuman resilience and tenacity, making them closer to Autochthonia's Populat than any other Caste.

Caste Attributes: Charisma, Stamina, Wits.

Starmetal: Starmetal Castes are masters of manipulation and long-term planning, orchestrating events from behind the scenes as intriguers, propagandists, and social engineers.

Caste Attributes: Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation.

Soulsteel: Soulsteel Castes are dreaded figures of justice, inquisitors who root out heresy, dissidence, and corruption.

Caste Attributes: Manipulation, Perception, Stamina.

Adamant: Adamant Castes are inspirational heroes, serving as mentors, muses, and spiritual guides.

Caste Attributes: Appearance, Perception, Strength.

Bonus Point Costs

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TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute	3 per dot
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute	4 per dot
Ability	2 per dot
Specialty	1
Merits	1 per dot
Caste/Favored Charm	1
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	2
Charm Slot	3
Submodule (3xp)	1
Submodule (6xp)	2
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	4
Spell (Intelligencer non-Caste/Favored)	5
Martial Arts Charm	5

Evocation 4

Willpower 2 per dot

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Chapter Four: Traits

The Alchemical Exalted are both human and machine, wrought from clay and metal in place of flesh and bone. This chapter details their unique traits, Castes, Great Curse, and character advancement rules.

Alchemical Physiology

An Alchemical's body is made from clay and magical materials, but their anatomy and physiology are fundamentally identical to that of any other human. They can breathe, eat, and sleep. The crystalline Essence reservoir that is their heart pumps liquid energy through their veins. They're just as susceptible as any other Exalt to poison, disease, and injury. They differ from flesh-and-blood humans in only a few respects.

Alchemicals don't need to eat, drink, or breathe. They're still able to, and typically enjoy it. Nutrients and oxygen are sublimated into pure Essence within their respiratory and digestive systems. Alchemicals must still breathe to speak.

Additionally, Alchemicals are incapable of sexual reproduction. It's unknown what would come of an Alchemical employing a neomah or other magic to have a child.

Not a Robot

Alchemicals aren't automatons. Magic that affects automatons doesn't apply against an Alchemical unless the Storyteller decides it makes sense for that specific effect under the circumstances.

Martial Arts

Alchemicals must permanently install Perfected Style Matrix (p. XX) in order to learn Martial Arts Charms. That Charm provides the Martial Artist Merit for free. Martial Arts Charms don't require Charm slots. Alchemicals don't benefit from the Mastery keyword, but aren't limited by the Terrestrial keyword.

Sorcery and Necromancy

Alchemicals must permanently install Man-Machine Weaving Engine (p. XX) to learn sorcery. They can initiate into sorcery's Celestial Circle. Spells don't require Charm slots.

Apostates have access to a forbidden, blighted Charm that mirrors Man-Machine Weaving Engine, but for necromancy. They can initiate into necromancy's Shadow Circle, but can't use Celestial Circle sorcery.

Evocations

Alchemicals are resonant with the magical material of their Caste, and neutral with all other materials. They can use Resonance Harmonizer (p. XX) to gain resonance with other magical materials.

Adamant and Artifacts

Adamant is a diamond-like magical material, mined from lodes that form among extreme temperatures, isolation, and stillness. It's more common in Autochthonia than Creation, and the Eight Nations' artificers have developed specialized tools for cutting and carving it into superior designs.

Adamant is associated with clarity, precision, keen senses, and graceful action. Its Essence is unyielding, timeless, and eternal. Adamant artifacts magnify, reflect,

and refract, enhancing or distorting traits like light split through a prism. It's also associated with sharpness, fascination, illusion, scrying, logic, order, protection, and extremes temperatures — the heat of focused light and the crystalline luster of ice.

Merits

The following conditions apply to Merits for Alchemicals in Autochthonia.

Backing

Backing is generally limited to the branches of the Tripartite.

Command

This Merit represents military authority granted by the state, with units typically consisting of rigorously drilled Populat volunteers and officers drawn from junior members of the Tripartite. High levels of Command are uncommon outside of Estasia.

Cult

Worship of the Alchemicals is considered heretical and rigorously suppressed — sometimes by the very Champions they venerate. However, this prohibition hasn't been a historical constant within the Eight Nations. In the present day, Nurad has begun experimenting with the use of state-sanctioned cults to empower its Champions.

Demesne/Manse

Autochthonia's demesnes are most often found near large deposits of magical materials in the far reaches. Their inaccessibility and the shifting nature of Autochthonian geography make the Demesne Merit rare among Alchemicals, and the Manse Merit even rarer.

Familiar

In most of Autochthonia, rats and cockroaches are the only animal life. Instead, Alchemicals can gain construct familiars with the Clockwork Companion Template Charm (p. XX).

Followers/Retainers

These Merits typically represent personnel assigned to support an Alchemical by the state or subordinates that she oversees directly.

Hearthstone

While demesnes are rare, many metropoli have Municipal Charms capable of creating hearthstones.

Influence

Alchemicals serve their nations, rather than ruling them. They can't gain Influence 5, barring extraordinary circumstances.

Languages

The native tongue of the Eight Nations is known as Autochthonian, a language that developed from Old Realm. Each of the Eight Nations has its own dialect, as do many cultures outside of the Octet. These

dialects are mutually intelligible, though the Storyteller may require an (Intelligence + Linguistics) roll to communicate or understand to translate certain messages.

Resources

The Eight Nations don't have a standardized monetary system. Instead, this Merit represents the accommodations and luxuries provided to a Champion by the state, and the ability to requisition additional resources.

It's uncommon for Alchemicals to have low ratings in this Merit. This typically results from state-imposed sanctions, interference from political rivals, or deliberate austerity to preserve a nation's resources.

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Orichalcum Caste

Orichalcum is the metal of heroic arete, majesty, and unbridled power. From it, Autochthon forged his Archons, gleaming, golden heroes imbued with the metal's divine glory and overwhelming force. They are the mighty Flames of Autochthon, burning away the terrors that lurk in the Realm of Brass and Shadow's darkness, and illuminating the future, for those with the strength to achieve it. They exemplify force in every action, ever radiant with undimmed glory as they serve the Machine God and his faithful. By their excellence, they exhort the Eight Nations to greater excellence still.

Orichalcum Castes are trailblazers, innovators, and paragons of physical might, always pushing the boundaries of what is possible. Few can rival them in their brilliance, their political acumen, and their devastating martial force. But despite their genius, despite their glory, they do not rule. They exist to show the Eight Nations the way forward, not to force them down that path.

The Flames of Autochthon can only be ignited by heroic souls distinguished by visionary brilliance, larger-than-life ambitions, or unwavering conviction. In one life, they might have been a Theomachry cleric who instituted sweeping doctrinal reforms. In another, the charismatic leader of a mass strike of the Populat that forced major concessions from the Tripartite Assembly. Before that, an engineer whose breakthroughs in design brought about technological revolution.

Orichalcum Caste metropoli are wonders of architecture and urban planning, built according to the Alchemical's own unique, innovative designs. These Utopias' skylines are dominated by towering monuments, laboratory complexes, architectural experiments, and Essence-channeling god-machinery. Some are fortified bastions devoted to advanced weapon design and manufacturing, while others are erudite conclaves where philosophy and scientific research flourish. These metropoli still take an active role in matters of governance, offering the Tripartite guidance from their city-selves' unique perspective.

Anima Banner: An Orichalcum Caste's anima banner is typically brilliant gold, arcing with actinic lightning. They're sometimes accompanied by the pulsating thrum of machinery, peals of thunder, waves of intense heat, or the smell of ozone. Metal touched by the anima sometimes arcs with electricity for a few minutes afterward.

Iconic Anima: An enormous spinning gear, crackling with lightning; a blast furnace lit with golden flame; blueprints and schematics for impossible machinery that gradually take on form; cathedrals of stained-glass machinery.

Anima Effects: Orichalcum Castes' animas can charge their attacks with crackling electricity, amplify the force of their commands, and draw power from their beliefs and convictions (p. XX).

Charms: An Orichalcum Caste's Charms tend toward clean, streamlined designs that favor burnished brass, gold, and orichalcum. Crystal windows might reveal a Charm's interior, revealing bubbling fluids, spinning gears, or sliding pistons.

Caste Attributes: Orichalcum Castes are forceful beings in every respect: immensely strong, confident and brilliant without measure, and undeniably awe-inspiring. Their Caste Attributes are Charisma, Intelligence, and Strength.

Sobriquets: Archons, Flames of Autochthon, Radiant Ones, Utopias (metropoli).

Concepts: Ambassador to the Octet, brilliant general, champion athlete, eccentric artificer, military ethicist, philosophical luminary, prophet of the Great Maker, renowned orator, utopian visionary, weapon engineer.

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Moonsilver Caste

Ever-shifting moonsilver is the most protean and adaptable of all metals, the stuff of secrets and trickery, deft wits and uncanny insights. The Great Maker knew that could not foresee every threat that the gods would face in battle against the Primordials, nor predict the crises that would befall his faithful in the Realm of Brass and Shadows. The Razors of Autochthon were made to stand against the unknown, exemplifying moonsilver's adaptability.

Moonsilver Castes make powerful tools of state intelligence and security, acting as peerless spies, infiltrators, assassins, and saboteurs. They seek out hidden threats from within and without, ensuring that no secrets are kept from the Tripartite Assemblies that they report to. Other Moonsilver Castes guard against the unknown through guerilla warfare, scouting missions into the Far Reaches, works of artifice and on-the-spot engineering, and conspiratorial intrigues carried out in the state's best interests.

Only a heroic soul distinguished by feats of quick-witted ingenuity, cunning, or adaptation to adversity can catalyze a Moonsilver Caste's Exaltation. In one life, she might have been a medic in the midst of crisis, stretching inadequate supplies and improvising solutions to save lives. Before that, an ambitious plutarch's aide who maneuvered herself into a position of political power after years of clandestine intrigue. In another, a Populat laborer who turned the tide of a raid on her metropolis by diverting the flow of her factory's molten runoff.

Moonsilver Caste metropoli can be breathtakingly beautiful, their architecture predominated by flowing curves and almost organic curves that seem to defy gravity. Conspiracies and foreign intelligence operations rarely last long in these Outposts. Few who live in a Moonsilver Caste metropolis notice how its elegant architecture obscures and misdirects the eye, concealing secret compounds and labyrinths of hidden tunnels. Not all Outposts conceal extensive military installations and covert headquarters, lending plausible deniability to those that do.

Anima Banner: Moonsilver Caste anima banners radiate out as shimmering ripples or intertwined tendrils of light, flickering between pale silver and white. They're sometimes accompanied by a sudden drop in temperature or a heavy metallic tang in the air.

Iconic Anima: Raining droplets of sizzling mercury; a whirlwind of razor-edged blades, polished to a mirror sheen; an ever-changing assembly of protean machinery; an intricate latticework of silver wires stalked by machine sentinels.

Anima Effects: Moonsilver Castes' anima powers heighten their speed and reaction times to inhuman levels, grant them greater subtlety when their anima banner is hidden, and allow them to tell lies that are all too easy to believe (p. XX).

Charms: Moonsilver Castes' Charms tend toward smooth, organic curves and shimmering, reflective surfaces, lending these Alchemicals an alluring but alien beauty.

Caste Attributes: Moonsilver Castes are cunning and graceful, masters of quick thinking, espionage, and infiltration. Their Caste Attributes are Appearance, Dexterity, and Wits.

Sobriquets: Enigmas, Razors of Autochthon, Quicksilver Blades, Outposts (metropoli).

Concepts: Agent provocateur, alluring spy, assassin for the Tripartite, counterintelligence agent, deep cover infiltrator, explorer of the Reaches, guerilla warfare specialist, quick-witted engineer, scout behind enemy lines, unpredictable trickster.

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Jade Caste

The five colors of jade embody the harmonious balance of elements, the union of primal forces to birth a greater power yet. Autochthon carved his Arbiters from it that they might bring societies together in harmony, forming a whole greater than the sum of its parts. All Champions serve the people they live among, but the Jade Caste is closer to them any other, the Stone Hands of the Great Maker reaching out to his faithful.

Jade Castes are heroes of industry, leading work crews on enormous public works projects and putting the social policies and economic planning of the Tripartite into action in the face of difficult realities. The Arbiters aren't afraid to get their hands dirty — whether it's taking on ten work shifts, using their bare hands in place of a malfunctioning triphammer, or walking through molten slag to reach the shut-off, they see that the work is done. Other Jade Castes devote their efforts to mediating conflicts, drilling metropolitan defense forces, and leading Populat volunteers on gremlin raids.

Compassion, duty, and self-sacrifice are the foundation upon which a Jade Caste's Exaltation is raised. Her heroic soul's past life might have been an engineer who sealed herself in with a deadly gas leak to stop it spreading any further. A soldier who exposed herself to enemy fire time and time again to rescue wounded comrades. A factory worker who ensured that no shift went uncovered, taking on extra work again and again to keep her fellow laborers from exhausting themselves.

Jade Caste metropoli typically have blocky, geometric architecture that's stable, solid, and functional. These Bastions are centers of industry even compared to other metropoli, abundant with factory complexes, processing facilities, and vast systems of infrastructure. Of all Alchemicals, Jade Caste metropoli are the most predisposed to interacting with their citizens on an individual level, at times taking on a parent-like role toward their populace.

Anima Banner: Jade Castes' anima banners shine with the hues of jade, whether in a single color or a kaleidoscopic radiance, often exhibiting geometric lattices of intersecting polygons. They're sometimes accompanied by the sounds of heavy machinery, like the hissing of steam or the boom of pistons firing.

Iconic Anima: An abstract mesh of interlocking gears and churning machinery; an industrial crucible pouring out molten steel; a deafening assembly of steam-driven hammers; a blossoming tree of metal and polymer with an angular, geometric design.

Anima Effects: Jade Castes' anima powers grant them physical resilience in the face of danger, aid in forging bonds of unity, and make their loyalty unshakable (p. XX).

Charms: Jade Castes' Charms tend toward simple, blocky designs, favoring functionality over aesthetic appeal.

Caste Attributes: Jade Castes are tireless and tenacious Champions, whether leading work crews or commanding Populat militias in battle. Their Caste Attributes are Charisma, Stamina, and Wits.

Sobriquets: Arbiters, Hammers of Autochthon, Stone Hands, Bastions (metropoli).

Concepts: Advocate for the Populat, beloved performer, charismatic morale officer, dedicated peacemaker, even-tempered mediator, folk hero, guardian of the community, labor czar, shock worker, tireless sentinel.

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Starmetal Caste

Starmetal is the stuff of fate and possibility, the metal of mysteries, the ephemeral, and the esoteric. Wrought from fallen stars, the Starmetal Caste are possessed of extraordinary foresight, divining the future from streams of data. Autochthon forged the Plot Weavers to see the grand scheme of things, to prepare for crises long in advance, and to foresee the far-off outcomes of decisions made today.

Starmetal Castes gather, collate, and analyze information on every issue imaginable: economic planning, social analytics, military strategy, trends in Populat culture, and more. The results of their analysis offer information to guide the Tripartite's decision-making, providing information to support or oppose various policy proposals. The Plot Weavers also exercise a subtler hand, acting as spymasters, propagandists, and disinformation agents in service to their nations. Unsurprisingly for a Caste of spin doctors and social engineers, Starmetal Castes are viewed favorably throughout the Octet.

A Starmetal Caste's Exaltation requires a soul possessed of both insight and initiative, the soul of heroes who understood what had to be done and were willing to take charge...even without authorization. A plutarch who pushes for policies that her contemporaries have yet to see the need for, a soldier who disobeys orders to carry the day, a lector who embezzles resources from the Theomachracy to provide for his congregation. Such is the will that tempers starmetal.

Starmetal Caste metropoli often resemble orreries or web-like lattices, smaller in size than other metropoli but making impeccably efficient use of space in all three dimensions. Every aspect of urban layout and architecture is designed with purpose, optimizing their citizens' productivity in a thousand subtle but significant ways. Untold quantities of data are routed through the metropoli's massive cognitive processing infrastructure daily, though citizens scarcely notice anything but the faintest of mechanical hums from this.

Anima Banner: Starmetal Caste anima banners are typically deep blue, green, or purple, shot through with lines of prismatic static. They're sometimes accompanied by the whirring of intricate machinery, synthesized harmonies, or the crackle of encrypted signals.

Iconic Anima: A web-like tracery of prismatic light; a cascade of shimmering glyphs streaming downward; a clockwork orrery of the cosmos; a strobing varicolored light that trails afterimages after the Alchemical.

Anima Effects: Starmetal Castes' anima powers let them act with precognitive perfection and anticipate hidden dangers, while also unveiling the inner workings of others' minds (p. XX).

Charms: Starmetal Castes' Charms tend toward delicate, minimalistic designs, their metallic components often traced with braided coils of starmetal filigree. The loops and whorls of this wirework occasionally sparks with Essence when the Alchemical is deep in thought.

Caste Attributes: Starmetal Castes are calculating masterminds, acting with surgical precision and methodical planning to accomplish their goals through the smallest of acts. Their Caste Attributes are Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation.

Sobriquets: Whispers, Ciphers of Autochthon, Plot Weavers, Nexuses (metropoli).

Concepts: All-knowing spymaster, calculating strategist, disinformation agent, excessively scrupulous auditor, eccentric social engineer, genius mathematician, intelligence analyst, patriotic propagandist, planner for every contingency, prophet of Clarity, shadowy mastermind in service to a greater cause.

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Soulsteel Caste

Soulsteel is an accursed thing, a metal tainted with fear, suffering, and above all, death. Its presence in Autochthonia may be a symptom of the Machine God's Blight, or of some unwise interest in the Neverborn's fate. But all things have their use to the Great Maker. The Soulsteel Caste were forged from this tormented to be living weapons, servants of grim necessity. They do not slow. They do not stop. There is no escape for those caught in their sights.

The Sentinels' service to their nations is simple: the elimination of that which threatens society's survival. Their duty is a grim and ugly thing, compared to the heroics that other Alchemicals are known for. Sentinel gremlin hunters pursue techno-organic horrors back to their lairs in the blight zones, returning bloodied, scarred — and at times, twisted. Others are inquisitors and interrogators, rooting out social dissent, institutional corruption, voidbringer cults, and other internal threats through force and coercion. Few Sentinels take pleasure in doing the state's dirty work. For most, it is simply a matter of duty and grim necessity.

Only a soul with a legacy of heroism regardless of cost or consequence can endure a Sentinel's grim duty. Unworthy souls are devoured by a nascent Champion's soulsteel-infused frame, joining the tormented shades within. An uncompromising regulator who pursues a conspiracy to the Tripartite's uppermost echelons. A tactician who sacrifices troops en masse to secure a victory that saves countless more lives. An autocrat who enacts a policy that she knows will end her career, but bring prosperity to her city.

Soulsteel Caste metropoli seem like grim fortresses from the outside, with their architecture defined by clean lines, hard edges, and sharp angles. Some of these Panopticons truly live up to their name: quiet, orderly cities, peaceful with the stifling security of omnipresent surveillance. Others are arsenals and arms factories, manufacturing terrible machinery and biochemical weaponry.

Anima Banner: Soulsteel Caste anima banners are shadowy clouds of smoke, streaked with black and blue lightning. Twisting, indistinct figure can sometimes be glimpsed in their depths. They're sometimes accompanied by the sounds of grating machinery, eerie sirens, or far-off screams, or the smell of smoke, sulfur, or burning diesel.

Iconic Anima: A whirring dynamo that crackles with black and pale green lightning; an eerie procession

of damned souls; coiling chains of barbed metal that twist and writhe like serpents; a larger-than-life silhouette of the Champion, cast by glaring white light.

Anima Effects: Soulsteel Castes' anima powers make them figures of imposing terror and deadly adversaries of those who threaten their communities (p. XX).

Charms: Soulsteel Charms' design favors flat planes, jagged edges, and riveted plates, often incorporating roughly hammered black metal.

Caste Attributes: Soulsteel Castes are implacable hunters, ever-vigilant sentinels, and experts in psychological warfare. Their Caste Attributes are Manipulation, Perception, and Stamina.

Sobriquets: Sentinels, Scourges of Autochthon, Grim Watchers, Panopticons (metropoli).

Concepts: Avenger of the wronged, boastful gremlin hunter, devout inquisitor, foul-tempered detective, philosophically minded sniper, psychological warfare specialist, silent watcher, stoic brawler, troubleshooter for the Tripartite, wetworks operative.

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Adamant Caste

Adamant is imbued with crystalline clarity, precision, and grace, its facets glittering with light. From this perfect jewel, Autochthon carved his Muses to bring inspiration, beauty, and understanding to the world. They are elegant in action, keen in insight, and magnetic in their allure. Like a diamond refracting and magnifying light, the Adamant Castes inspire others to greatness, showing them the light that was already within them.

The Exemplars' role within the Eight Nations is many-faceted. As philosophers, mystics, and savants, they offer guidance and insight to those facing ethical quandaries, wavering convictions, or crises of faith, whether high-ranking members of Tripartite Assemblies or hard-off Populat workers who catch a compassionate Adamant Caste's eye. They act as muses to artists, propagandists, and other cultural figures, inspiring entire artistic movements that shape the souls of nations. As mentors, they hone their disciples to diamond-like perfection, finding students' every fault and flaw and mercilessly eliminating them.

An Adamant Caste's Exaltation requires a soul that has spent lifetimes in contemplation of deep mysteries and spiritual truths, the soul of heroes made virtuous through contemplating virtue. In one past life, she might have been a factory laborer who spent her work shifts in ceaseless prayer to push through starvation and fatigue. In another life, a pious cleric whose theological epiphanies inspired the Populat to renewed faith even as they drew censure from others in the Theomachracy. A graffiti artist using phosphorescent gel to paint her sacred dreams of another world on a metropolis' walls.

Adamant Caste metropoli unfold outward into faceted, crystalline complexes. They resemble natural formations of crystal, ranging from rough-edged, uncut fortifications to elegantly faceted cathedrals. A Sanctuary's architecture and urban planning provide ample opportunities for citizens to take in the city's beauty, to pause for a moment in quiet reflection, and to ponder the Great Maker's benevolence.

Anima Banner: Adamant Caste anima banners are piercing white auras tinted with shades of purple, blue, or red, casting a radiance like an illuminated stained-glass window. They're sometimes accompanied by a crystalline chiming, a deep resonant hum, or the sound of shattering glass.

Iconic Anima: An endlessly unfolding fractal pattern; dozens of prismatic wings that seem to grow from the Alchemical; a swirling cloud of sparking diamond dust; a surge of kaleidoscopic light refracted through the Champion's body.

Anima Effects: Adamant Castes' animas powers make them inspiring figures, uplifting faltering hearts and guiding allies in battle (p. XX).

Charms: Adamant Castes' Charms tend toward efficient, symmetrical designs, often incorporating faceted glass, quartz, or adamant. Ornamental touches are rare, though there's an undeniable but alien beauty to them.

Caste Attributes: Adamant Castes are creatures of cold, austere glory, inspiring others with their commanding presence, calculated strength, and piercing insight. Their Caste Attributes are Appearance, Perception, and Strength.

Sobriquets: Exemplars, Muses of Autochthon, Diamond Sages, Sanctuaries (metropoli).

Concepts: Beloved guardian of the metropolis, celebrity war hero, eccentric mentor, frontline general, hermit of the Far Reaches, idol of the Populat, incisive cultural critic, moral philosopher, jocular mystic, warrior poet

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Anima Banner

As an Alchemical expends Essence, she becomes wreathed in the radiance of her anima banner. **For every five motes of Peripheral Essence she spends in an instant, her anima banner rises one level.**

BEGIN TABLE

Anima Level Effects

Dim The Alchemical's anima banner is invisible.

Glowing The Alchemical's anima banner outlines her body in light, while Essence sizzles around her soulgem. Stealth and disguise rolls suffer a -3 penalty.

Burning The Alchemical's anima banner flares into aura of radiant light, while Essence crackles across her body. Stealth is impossible.

Bonfire/Iconic The Alchemical's anima banner ignites into a bonfire stretching into the sky, visible for miles around. Her anima completely illuminates her surroundings within short range. Stealth is impossible. Upon reaching bonfire and at suitably dramatic moments, her anima manifests a personalized iconic display.

END TABLE

Anima Effects

Orichalcum Caste

Commanding Authority (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice on a persuade roll that leverages a positive Tie to herself or a community she serves.

Once per day, she can retry a failed persuade roll without resetting it.

Forged in Righteousness (Permanent): When the Alchemical gains Willpower from upholding a Major or Defining Principle, she may exchange it for (Intimacy + 5) motes. A sorcerer may gain sorcerous motes instead. This also raises her anima to bonfire.

Radiant Glory Nimbus (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): Crackling with electric Essence, the Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) to the raw damage and **withering** attacks and doubles up to (Essence) 10s on a **decisive** damage roll. This is free at bonfire.

Moonsilver Caste

Cognitive Overdrive (5m; Reflexive; Until next turn); Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical can defend against attacks whose successes equal her Defense, and adds (Essence) non-Charms dice on Join Battle rolls and movement actions. She also gains this bonus on any roll involving reaction time or quick reflexes. This is free at bonfire.

Mercurial Facade (Permanent): While her anima is dim, the Alchemical inflicts a -2 penalty on rolls opposing her Guile, Stealth, or disguise.

Quicksilver Cunning (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on roll to instill a Principle of belief in a lie. Once per day, she can retry a failed instill roll without resetting it.

Jade Caste

Clay Becomes Stone (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): The Alchemical adds (Stamina/2, rounded up) to her soak and gains Hardness (Stamina). Both calculations include bonus dots from Transpissant Stamina Upgrade (p. XX). She also adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on Stamina rolls to resist environmental hazards. This is free at bonfire.

Hand of Friendship (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on a roll to instill positive Ties toward her or weaken negative ones. Once per day, she can retry a failed instill roll without resetting it.

Unbreakable Loyalty (Permanent): The Alchemical gains +2 non-Charms Resolve against influence that would cause her to intentionally harm someone she has a positive Tie toward. This increases to +3 for Major and Defining Ties.

Starmetal Caste

Perfection in Motion (5m or 0m; Reflexive, Until next turn): The Alchemical perceives the optimal course of action in a prismatic halo of colors trailing just slightly ahead of her. She rerolls up to (Essence) 1s on physical actions and ignores up to (Essence) points of penalties caused by external conditions. This is free at bonfire.

Precognitive Foresight (Permanent): The Alchemical adds (Essence) non-Charms dice on rolls to detect hidden dangers.

Social Engineering (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice when she reads someone's intentions in hope of finding an Intimacy that will help her deceive or subtly manipulate him. Once per day, she can retry a failed read intentions roll without resetting it.

Soulsteel Caste

Inhuman Terror (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms

dice on a threaten roll. Once per day, she can retry a failed threaten roll without resetting it.

Screaming Metal Cacophony (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): The Alchemical stirs the souls trapped in her soulsteel body. The cacophony of their moans and whispers inflicts a –2 penalty on attack rolls and other hostile actions against her. This is free at bonfire.

Void Hunter's Judgment (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day, the Alchemical can add (highest Caste Attribute) to her base Initiative after landing a **decisive** attack against someone who threatens a community she has a positive Tie toward or one of its mortal members. This calculation includes bonus dots from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade. Gremlins, fae, and the undead always count as threats. This power can only be used once per day.

Adamant Caste

Inspiring Guidance (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): Allies within close range of the Alchemical gain +1 non-Charms Resolve and add (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up) non-Charms dice on attack rolls and influence rolls. The Alchemical doesn't gain this bonus. Outside of combat, this lasts long enough for each of the Alchemical's allies to take one action. This is free at bonfire.

Refracted Glory (3a; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day, the Alchemical can refract her anima into a varicolored radiance that illumines her allies. Each ally within long range of her gains (her Essence) motes and Initiative. Exalted may immediately flare their own animas to bonfire, tinging it with the colors of the Alchemical's anima for the scene.

Scintillating Muse (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on an inspire roll to spread positive emotion. She can also add this on an instill or persuade roll against someone who considers the Alchemical to be his mentor, muse, spiritual guide, or the like. Once per day, she can retry a failed influence roll without resetting it.

Increasing Traits

Alchemicals must undergo the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX) to spend experience points on Alchemical Charms, Charm slots, or submodules, or to increase their Attributes. This uses the standing training times for the purchased trait (p. XX), requiring the Alchemical to spend extended periods of downtime inactive for the Rite.

Autochthonian Artifice

Creation's First Age artifice is known to the Eight Nations as Autochthonian artifice, wonders worthy of the Great Maker's name. The Octet's magical infrastructure and exotic components harvested from the Great Maker's body allow Alchemicals to craft such artifacts without needing to meet the arduous requirements of First Age artifice. This includes the requirement to use Craft (First Age Artifice) — only Craft (Artifacts) is necessary.

Creating Autochthonian artifice requires access to a metropolis's magical infrastructure. Additionally, the Storyteller may require the Alchemicals to retrieve exotic materials or components, typically requiring an expedition into Autochthonia's reaches.

For more information on First Age artifice, see **Exalted**, p. 243 and **Arms of the Chosen**, p. 116.

Character Advancement

Alchemicals earn five experience points at the end of each session.

<BEGIN TABLE>

TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute	Current rating x3
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute	Current rating x4
Ability	Current rating x2
New Ability	3
Specialty	3
Purchased Merit	New rating x3
Caste/Favored Charm	4
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	6
Charm Slot	4
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	8
Spell (Intelligencer non-Caste/Favored)	10
Martial Arts Charm	10
Evocation	10
Willpower	8

<END TABLE>

Alchemical Experience

Champions can earn Alchemical Experience by fulfilling Experience Bonuses and Role Bonuses, which grant two Alchemical Experience each. Alchemical Experience can be spent on any experience cost, except for Alchemical Charms or submodules. It can be spent on Charm slots.

Expression Bonus

Once per session, a Champion can earn two Alchemical Experience from:

- Expressing or upholding Major or Defining Intimacies in a way that reveals something significant about her or provides character growth.
- Facing significant challenges or danger to uphold Major or Defining Intimacies.
- Facing significant obstacles from Flaws (**Exalted**, p. 167).

Role Bonus

Once per session, a Champion can earn two Alchemical Experience from:

- Intentionally ceding the scene's "spotlight" to another player character to set him up for an

interesting or dramatic moment or directly supporting him in such a moment.

- **Orichalcum Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through leadership; convincing another character to uphold one of the Alchemical's Major or Defining Intimacy in a way that has a meaningful impact; remove a significant obstacle to her or her Circle's goals with a forceful approach, whether physical or social; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through innovation or intellect.
- **Moonsilver Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through cunning or subterfuge; removing a significant obstacle to her goals or her Circle's through infiltration, surveillance, or subterfuge; uncovering a hidden threat to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through a cunning or unpredictable approach.
- **Jade Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through endurance, persistence, or hard work; enduring great hardship for the sake of a Major or Defining Intimacy; resolving a meaningful dispute within a community; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through physical labor.
- **Starmetal Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through planning or manipulation; accomplishing a long-term plan that advances her goals or her Circle's; advancing her goals or her Circle's by concealing or falsifying information; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through manipulation or secrecy.
- **Soulsteel Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to by removing threats to it; uncovering a hidden danger to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies; removing a significant obstacle to her goals or her Circle's through ruthless or brutal means; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy by refusing to compromise.
- **Adamant Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through teaching, inspiration, and guidance; advancing her goals or her Circle's by finding a significant flaw in someone or something, bolstering the morale of someone wavering in his duties; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through precision or insight.

Training Times

Raising traits with experience points requires training or time spent gaining practical experience. Multiple traits can be trained simultaneously if it makes sense. A mentor can reduce the times listed below, as can devoting one's time fully to training.

BEGIN TABLE

Caste/Favored Attribute (New rating + 1) weeks

Non-Caste/Favored Attribute (New rating) months

Ability (New rating) weeks

Specialty Two weeks

Purchased Merit (New rating) weeks

Caste/Favored Charm (Attribute minimum) days

Non-Caste/Favored Charm (Attribute minimum + Essence minimum) days

Charm Slot One day

Submodule One day

Martial Arts Charm (Martial Arts minimum + Essence minimum) days

Spell (Circle x2) weeks

Evocation (Essence minimum x4) days

Willpower One month

END TABLE

The Alchemical must undergo the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX) to increase an Attribute or purchase a Charm, Charm slot, or submodule. She must spend her entire training time this way as her body is augmented and reconstructed.

Raising Essence

An Alchemical's Essence increases once she's spent a certain amount of experience (not including Sidereal experience). She must then cultivate her Essence while meditating in a vats complex or similar infrastructure, though a player character's Essence may increase instantly in dramatic, character-defining moments.

BEGIN TABLE

Essence 2 50 xp

Essence 3 125 xp

Essence 4: 200 xp

Essence 5: 300 xp

Essence 6: Only available at Storyteller's discretion.

END TABLE

When using experienced character creation rules, (p. XX), reduce these thresholds by 50.

Clarity

Alchemicals don't gain Limit or experience Limit Breaks like the Solar Exalted. Instead, their Great Curse manifests as Clarity (p. XX). Clarity affects an Alchemical's Intimacies, strengthening those that align with its efficient, emotionless perspective, while weakening Intimacies that oppose it — primarily those based on emotion. Note that not all Intimacies align with or oppose Clarity; some are simply neutral.

Gaining Clarity

Alchemicals gain Clarity under the following circumstances. They roll a certain number of dice and gain Clarity equal to their successes. She can't roll more than three dice per scene.

- When she violates an Intimacy in a way that aligns with Clarity, she rolls (Intimacy – 1) dice.
- If a person or community that the Alchemical has a positive Major or Defining Tie comes to significant harm as a result of her own failure, she rolls three dice.
- If she goes a full week or a period of downtime without any interaction with mortals, she rolls (higher of Essence or 3) dice.

Losing Clarity

Alchemicals lose Clarity under the following circumstances. They roll a certain number of dice and lose Clarity equal to their successes.

- When she upholds an Intimacy in a way that opposes Clarity, she rolls (Intimacy – 1) dice. She can't roll more than three dice per scene this way.
- If she spends a full week or a period of downtime immersed in interaction with mortals, she rolls (6 – Essence) dice, minimum one.

Accomplishing legendary social goals doesn't reduce Clarity.

Effects of Clarity

Unlike Solar Exalted, Alchemicals don't experience Limit Breaks. High levels of Clarity alter an Alchemical's Intimacies, weakening those that oppose it while strengthening those that align with it.

Clarity also grants an Alchemical a non-Charm bonus on mental rolls involving memory, analytical deduction, or dispassionate self-control. This doesn't apply on rolls involving sorcery or crafting artifacts or manses.

However, Clarity also inflicts a penalty on influence rolls, except for those based on fear. This penalty also applies on read intentions rolls to discern or understand the emotion of others. These penalties don't apply on interactions with Clarity 3+ Alchemicals, machine spirits, or automatons — instead, they're converted to a bonus.

Clarity 0-2: No effect.

Clarity 3-5: The Alchemical gains +1 die on appropriate mental rolls and a –1 penalty on appropriate social rolls. Minor Intimacies that oppose Clarity are suppressed unless they directly aid or oppose the Alchemical in accomplishing her present goals or provide a regular material benefit or hindrance to her. The Alchemical can avoid having a Tie suppressed by shifting its emotional context to one that doesn't oppose Clarity.

Clarity 6-8: The mental bonus increases to +2 and the social penalty increases to –2. Major Intimacies that oppose Clarity are reduced by one step, as above. Minor Intimacies that align with Clarity count as Major.

Clarity 9-10: The mental bonus increases to +3 and the social penalty increases to –3. Defining Intimacies are reduced by one step, as above, while Major Intimacies are suppressed entirely. Minor and Major Intimacies that align with Clarity count as one step higher.

Apostates and the Great Curse

The Blight that corrupts Apostates (p. XX) warps the nature of their Great Curse. Instead of the cold, dispassionate reason of Clarity, Apostates are consumed by Dissonance. Like Clarity, Dissonance diminishes an Alchemical's empathy and

emotions, overriding them with twisted urges to cruelty, needless violence, and destructive sabotage.