

Fringeworthy
Savage Worlds Edition
Playtest Edition

Fringeworthy

Savage Worlds Edition

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Fringeworthy

LONG AGO

Before the dawn of recorded history, a race of gentle beings called the Tehrmelern created a vast network of inter-dimensional pathways that spanned both space and time. For a hundred thousand years they traveled and traded to these alternative worlds, spreading their love of peace. Then, almost overnight, an unforeseen terror ended the Commonwealth of the Tehrmelern, leaving their greatest creation to those who would follow.

PRESENT DAY EARTH

A Japanese research team, lead by Takahiro Hatsumi, was investigating the ecological effects of an unusually warm Antarctic summer, and they made a startling discovery that was destined to change man's role across the universes.

They found an alien building buried deep in the melting Antarctic ice, the dead body of Captain Oates of the Scott expedition laid near the door. In his hand was a softly glowing crystal tetrahedron. The building contained a 25-foot, gleaming silver ring. The team stepped through the center of the ring without harm. They turned and to their surprise, one member of their expedition had vanished without a trace, Sayuri Tenuma.

OTHER EARTHS

A week later, Sayuri Tenuma stepped out of the ring with a wondrous story. She told of other portals and of walkways that lead to other worlds, alternate Earths, and to a strange guardian called "Schmert" who talked in rhyme and told her that she had a key to the portals.

They presented this information to the United Nations, and sparked a UN seizure of the buried base, deep under the Antarctic ice. At the same time, the UN creates the Interdimensional Agency: UNIDA.

FRINGEWORTHY

It was quickly discovered that only one person in a hundred thousand possessed that unknown quality which allowed them to travel the dimensional pathways. A desperate worldwide search began to find and train explorers for this greatest frontier. The world press soon began to label these pathways "Fringes" as the first Inter-Dimensional Exploration teams were established in UNIDA. These UNIDA personnel became the first of humanity to cross the Fringes. Young and old, rich and poor, from every nation they came. These are the Fringeworthy, sent to unlock a modern day Pandora's box ... or die trying.

WELCOME TO UNIDA

You are that special one in a hundred thousand. You are Fringeworthy.

FIRST MISSION

INTERLUDE 1

In a treatment room in Sydney, Australia, Dr. Armand Menzies was placing Sayuri Tenuma into a hypnotic state. His soft, calm voice, lulling her into a suggestive state.

"Take deep breaths and concentrate on the red and blue concentric circles on the wall," said Dr. Menzies, the uniformed psychologist. "When your eyes tire, let them slowly close, and we'll begin the hypnotic induction."

"I really want to know the truth", muttered Sayuri. "I want to know what happened to me."

"Then we must go back to the beginning, my dear. Just listen to the sound of my voice and you'll find yourself there again."

From behind a one-way mirror, two men listened intently...

DISCOVERY

The Sapporo University Meteorological Expedition had established itself on White Island, 13 kilometers south of McMurdo Base. The expedition consisted of Dr. Takahiro Hatsumi, his niece, and several of his students from Sapporo University, and the men from New Zealand Antarctic Expedition Outfitters Company.

Out of the warmth of his tent, Dr. Takahiro Hatsumi stepped into the cold and adjusted his sunglasses in the bright glare of the Antarctic sun. His niece, Sayuri Tenuma, followed him out of the tent, with a worried look on her face. "Oji san, are you sure?" she asked.

Takahiro nodded, "My dear, it's a simple confirmation of what I already knew. The Ross Ice Shelf is melting at an accelerated rate. All that fresh water will play havoc with the deep water currents and affect the mid-Pacific currents. The consequences..." He shook his head. "I don't know if we can fix it." Just then, a voice rang over the snow and ice.

"Sensei!" the voiced called out. "Sensei! A crevasse opened near the north side of the island." It was one of his grad students, Kenji Saki, waving his hand and gesticulating northward.

On occasion ice crevasses would open up in the sheet along the shoreline. For the most part, they were just a jumble of ice shards and deep trenches, all quite dangerous. But this new crevasse in the ice sheet was different... It was bigger and deeper than any they had ever seen before.

Takahiro stood at the edge of a long gentle slope down into a blue darkness. The ice sheet had literally cracked open and split more or less cleanly apart. Deep within the crevasse was ice hundreds of thousands of years old, an unparalleled history of climate on the Earth. Two members of the expedition, Kenji and one of the New Zealanders from the Antarctic Expedition Outfitters Company, were rappelling down into the blue tinted depths.

"Sensei, it looks too jumbled for clean sample," called out Kenji. "Too much contact with the island. Do you want us to go deeper?"

Takahiro mused for a moment, then nodded, "Hai, go deeper but keep an eye open. This crevasse could close at any time."

Standing next to him was Reggie Danswold, the owner of Antarctic Expedition Outfitters, the firm that had been hired to assist the expedition. "Not to worry sensei, Oscar will keep the lad safe," he said in Japanese. "We've done many a crevasse."

Sayuri had her camera out and was taking pictures. "It looks so deep! I think this almost goes down to the sea floor." She took another snap of the inky blue depths.

"This is near that submerged piece of land, so it is possible," replied Takahiro pointing to slight hump in the ice a quarter of a kilometer from the island. Everyone knew of the small hump of land that was just north of the main body of White Island. The ice sheet constantly broke over this piece land and the common opinion among most researchers was the ice would eventually wear the hump away.

"Sensei!" Kenji yelled from deep down in the crevasse, his voice muffled by the ice. "You have to see this!"

The Kiwis manned belaying lines that shuttled Reggie, Takahiro and Sayuri down into the crevasse. At the bottom of the crevasse, they unhooked and followed the trail blazed through a tunnel by Kenji and Oscar with glowing green chemstick lights. At the end of the tunnel, they saw a blue glow. Swallowing, they followed the trail into the glow.

Sayuri stepped out in to a frozen conifer forest lit by the glowing blue ice overhead. The trees were nude, bare of any needles. The needles now carpeted the floor of what looked like a massive ice dome. Through the trees, a building could be seen, though what type of building it was, Sayuri couldn't tell.

"My God," said Reggie, "what the Hell is this place? What's keeping the bloody roof up?"

"Calm down Reggie," said Takahiro, "there must be a logical explanation for this."

Sayuri stopped and said "Like what?"

Everyone stopped and looked at each other.

"Like what oji san?" she repeated. "This is impossible, this place shouldn't exist!" She looked around and then said in a whisper, "It could be... aliens."

"Blimey, long gone aliens I hope," replied Oscar.

Kenji and Yoshiro Ifukube came trotting back their faces filled with wonder. "You have to see it for yourself! What's with the faces?"

"Did you see any aliens?" asked Sayuri.

"No, but we did find a road!" replied Kenji.

They made their way through the trees and stepped out on a paved road. Sayuri kneeled down and looked at the surface. It wasn't concrete, nor was it anything she knew of. Then she saw the footprints. They were outlined in hoarfrost crystals and there was one set headed down the road, and another, different set headed to the large building at the end of the road.

"Looks like someone walked down this road and some poor bugger limped back," observed Oscar kneeling next to Sayuri. "How long would it take the frost to form like that Doc?"

"Years," observed Takahiro. "At least a century or so. I don't know who made them, but I think it was the same person, and he was hurt. That is frozen blood." He pointed to a reddish ice crystal near the set of footprints.

They looked in both directions and decided to follow the bloody footprints, as they headed for building that dominated the other end of the dome.

They followed the footprints, careful not disturb them and headed to the large building. It was wide and made from some white material that wasn't concrete or metal. It was curved into a long dome shape. A wide opening stretched along one side of it, though it was too dark inside to see anything.

It was Sayuri who saw the body. "There! Over there!" she said, pointing to the prone form.

It was a man dressed in old fashion arctic gear. He was on his back, looking up at the ceiling, arms outstretched. He was frozen solid, his face stretched from being freeze-dried by the arid cold air of the dome. Takahiro and Reggie knelt to investigate the body.

"He's been dead for a while," replied Takahiro, "you do not get that kind of desiccation in a year or two. He's been down here for at least eighty or more years."

Reggie checked the frozen pool of blood by the body's leg. "Blighter must have broken his leg and tried to get back to this building. I wonder who he was?"

Takahiro noticed a dog-eared notebook sticking out of a pocket. He gingerly pulled it out. It was an old styled notebook and there were several pencil stubs shoved in between the cover and the hardboard of the notebook's binding. He carefully opened it up and read some of the entries. A pressed orchid was at the back of the notebook. His eyes widened in shock as he read the entries, and he blurted out, "My God! This is Captain Oates! Of the Scott expedition!"

Everyone stood in shock. Oates was well known for sacrificing himself so that the rest of the Scott expedition to the South Pole could survive. He died a noble death somewhere on the ice. Only, now, he was here, in this strange place.

"How? Why?" Sayuri stammered. "What is he doing here? We are fifty kilometers from where he died... left the Scott expedition." She knelt by him and put her hand on his outstretched hand. A thrill went up her arm. "What the... Something shocked me... in his hand."

Reggie looked and said, "There's something glowing in his hand." He reached out and said, "Pardon me captain, but we want to see what you got in yer mitt." He carefully pried up the frozen fingers and freed a small, triangular shaped grey crystal. It glowed right up until Reggie touched it, then it stopped. "Bugger didn't shock me. Here, see, it's just a bauble the captain picked up." With that he dropped the crystal into Sayuri's hand.

The crystal flashed brightly for a moment, then settled down to a stable glow. Sayuri felt a tingle shoot through her entire body, but it quickly went away.

"Blimey!" observed Reggie.

Kenji stepped inside the building and a dim light turned on. "Sensei! Sensei! Look at this!"

"You know, we ought to put a leash on that boy," Reggie wryly observed.

"I've tried, but he's too much of an explorer to tame," replied Takahiro as he stood up.

Inside the building was a silver metal ring, floating on its edge above the ground. The center of the ring was pitch black, blacker than any material should be. It ate the light and gave none of it back. Silver colored metal ramps lead up to either side of the ring. A short metal cylinder was standing by the foot of the ramp that faced them.

"It's a portal," said Takahiro.

"What?" replied Reggie, "What do you mean it's a portal? A portal to where?"

"You must have seen some science fiction movies or programs Reggie," replied Takahiro. "It's plainly obvious that is a gate to... somewhere. A gate to other stars, perhaps to other times? There is only one way to find out."

Striding past Kenji, Takahiro walked up ramp, reached out and touched the surface and stepped through the stygian darkness. He was gone.

"Oji!" yelled Sayuri.

"Doctor!" yelled Reggie in English.

"Sensei!" yelled the grad students that had followed them down.

Takahiro's voice rung out clearly, "Not to worry. I am fine."

Sayuri walked to the base of the ramp and said tearfully, "Where are you oji san? Are you safe?"

"More than safe," said Takahiro, as he stepped off the top of the ramp on the other side of the ring and onto the ground, "I never left the building." He poked his head around the ring and gave her an impish grin.

Everyone exhaled and laughed, relieving the tension. Takahiro walked around the ring and gave his niece a hug. After she wiped eyes, she said, "That was very

irresponsible of you. You could have ended up anywhere, and with no way for us to bring you back!"

"I know, but the chance to be the first..." he said with his eyes aglow, "it was just too much for me. Besides, I had to do it before Kenji did."

That got a laugh from everyone, including Kenji, who promptly walked up the ramp and stepped through.

"That is weird," he said, stepping off the ramp on the other side. You should all try it."

The other grad students lined up and walked through the portal. Sayuri was at the end of the line and last to go through. As she stepped up to the portal, she hesitated. She knew it wouldn't hurt, but still, something nibbled at her thoughts. Then, gingerly, she reached out and touched the surface.

She felt a thin tug on her hand as though it was being drawn through the blackness, a hazy tingle that just existed where her wrist intersected the surface. She tried to pull back, but found that she was being pulled through the surface. 'Strange,' she thought, 'no one else mentioned this.' Shrugging, she stepped forward and through the black surface. She saw a spot form in her vision, but then she could clearly see again.

Only, she wasn't in the ice dome anymore. She was somewhere else.

She tripped down the ramp onto a hard silver surface. Above her were stars, twinkling in alien constellations. She panicked, turned and ran through the portal yelling "Oji san!" only to pass through the black surface without returning back to ice dome in Antarctica. Skidding to a halt, she found herself in front of an edge that fell away to forever.

Her pulse raced and she was short of breath, but she managed to go back up the ramp again and tried stepping through once more. But she still remained on what she was able to determine was a platform floating in space.

She sat down on the ramp and tried to calm herself. She took stock of the situation, and realized that she had somehow activated the gate. With sudden realization, she reached into her pocket and pulled out the glowing crystal. Was this the trigger?

She looked about and saw that there were seven more rings and ramps, just like the one she stepped through, and there was a single larger ring, about twice the size of the others, to the right of her ring. She also noticed that it was very warm. She was sweating in her parka and pants. It took her a couple of minutes to pull off her arctic gear and tie them into a neat bundle, which she then sat on.

Looking at the other smaller rings, she assumed that they were just like the one she was sitting in front of. This larger one next the ring that she had stepped out of, it might be different. Standing up, shouldering her makeshift pack, she stepped down the ramp and went over to the larger ring. She noted that it didn't have the small pylon in front of it, just the metal ramps on either side. Looking back at the ring she had come through, she thought for a moment, walked over and then placed a chemstick light under rotating ring.

She turned back, walked over and up the ramp into the blackness of the ring. She stepped through onto a long straight ribbon of metal that stretched to the horizon. It looked long, but the air hazed the end of the path. It was absolutely flat as far as she could tell. Shrugging her pack onto her shoulders, she started walking down the path.

For some reason her watch had stopped, but she did her best to count her steps and estimate how long it took her to walk the length of the metal ribbon. At about four hours, she could see what looked like a bump at the other end of the ribbon. Turning around, the ring she had left looked about the same. She knew that she had come about halfway on the ribbon. Pulling out her insulated thermos, she took a sip of the now tepid tea, sealed the flask and continued walking.

Eventually she reached the other and stepped through the ring and onto a portal that was nearly identical to the one she had left. Nearly identical, though this one had three more of the larger rings. She dropped another chemstick light by the portal she stepped out of and then onto the platform.

She looked around, at each of the other portals, until she looked at the third small one on her right. For some reason, she felt a need to go to that one and step through. She walked over to it and after a moment's hesitation she stepped up and into the ring.

Sayuri stepped through the portal onto a lush and green world. The sky was a beautiful blue with azure clouds that changed color as she watched. She looked around and saw a giant tree with an umbrella like canopy that stretched out over a wide area. As she walked, Schmert pointed out some plants he had designed in his spare time...

They walked together talking... about something. Sayuri mostly listened and occasionally nodded or shook her head to questions put to her. The words just flowed around her, not impinging on her consciousness.

They arrived at the tree. It was immense, nearly five hundred meters tall and a hundred meters in diameter at the base. "This is my home, my sanctuary," said the white furred cross between a bear and a dog. "A place to stay, to sleep when I am weary. Come inside, do not tarry, you need to rest, your feet must be achy."

The trunk was not a single entity. Instead it was made up of many smaller trunks twining together, in some places forming windows, in others ledges. Schmert spoke to the tree, "Grawdthr, open your doors for us please. Make ready to put our guest to ease."

The trunks parted revealing a chamber inside. Living wood surrounded her as the two of them walked along winding corridors that she swore were being made as needed. They entered a large chamber that had a several organic looking tables and chairs spread about. On one table was an array of fruit and vegetables in various bowls and plates.

"Come, breakfast with me," said Schmert, leading Sayuri to the table. "A meal and a rest, then we'll sightsee!"

She had never seen anything like the fruits and vegetables that were laid out before her. She watched Schmert peel fruit with a bluish skin and deep red flesh. She found one like it and copied Schmert's motions. She was rewarded with a juicy, nectar sweet flavor.

"These are very good sir," she said, wiping her mouth. "Where did you get them from?"

Gesturing to their surroundings, Schmert said, "It is the art and artifice of my tree, Grawdthr. Her abilities are many and astounding. They are not just mere."

Setting down a delicious root she had found, she stood up and bowed to the wall, while saying "Thank you Grawdthr for this delicious food." Standing up, she smelled the scent of lilacs in the air.

"A rare compliment will turn any woman's head," said Schmert. "My dear Grawdthr excels at pampering me and keeping me fed. When our repast is done, I will tell you tales of the moon and sun. I will tell you tales of my people. I will tell our woes, the true gospel. It all starts with a simple little rhyme, about a people who ran out of time..."

Sayuri found herself standing at the base of a small portal, fully dressed in her parka and pants. Somehow she knew it was the one that she had first stepped through... when? She thought for a moment and then realized that she had been gone for at least two weeks!

Suddenly she was worried and mortified that her uncle would be so worried about her. She wondered what he had done while she was away, learning from Schmert. Though that time was hazy, more like a dream half remembered.

Shaking her head, she walked up the ramp and through the portal, back to Earth...

INTERLUDE 2

"Preposterous!" exclaimed General Borodin from his plush seat in the observation room behind a one-way mirror. "The Earth Prime Portal has never kept anyone from returning from Fringe Space. They have been utterly reliable when they work correctly."

"Perhaps Schmert wanted to meet with Sayuri," replied Dr Takahiro Hatsumi. "He probably knew all the other portals were locked on the platform. He knew Sayuri would find her way to him."

General Borodin looked at the monitor that showed the EEG tracings from the young woman on the couch in the next room. He was an expert on Russian troop maneuvers, arctic weather, but not this. Experts who were told him they were abnormal. Altered.

"You should have been there when my announcement of the portal under the ice rocked that Special assembly of the UN," Hatsumi continued. "They thought it was about a major find in global warming." He chuckled. "Oh there was plenty of heat after that."

OCCUPATION

The Royal Australian Air Force Transport swooped over the ice, the pilot and copilot looking for an unbroken patch of ice to land their Hercules C-130 on. Down on

the ice, a worried Yoshiro Izumi, a senior grad student from Sapporo University, watched the first of the invaders approach their discovery.

Eight hours ago, Dr. Hatsumi had just announced at a special session of the UN the existence of the alien portal under the Antarctic ice. The students, their New Zealand guides, and a handful of scientists and technicians from McMurdo base, had rigged a relay for a video camera under the ice. This broadcasted via satellite the wonders under the ice to the UN and any news agency or person tech savvy enough to tap into the feed. By now, that video must have bounced around the globe hundred times already. Yoshiro checked his satellite phone and a friend in Sapporo had text him that it was number one on YouTube.

Standing next to Yoshiro was Reggie Danswold, the head of the Antarctic Expedition Outfitters, the firm Dr. Hatsumi had chartered for his global warming expedition in Antarctica.

"Don't worry yerself mate," said Reggie, "Them be good blokes, they are Ozzies. Bonzer blokes every one of them."

"Hai, mister Danswold," said Yoshiru in his broken English. "But, people they come from, are they 'bonzer blokes'?"

Reggie wrinkled his nose and said, "Aye, as the old bard said, there's the rub."

The Herc pilot found a spot and swooped in for a bouncy, but safe landing. As the airplane taxied across the ice, it got into trouble when it got mired on a pressure ridge, right across from where the Hatsumi expedition had pitched its tents as well as the parked CATs from McMurdo Base.

Both the students and the scientists had a good laugh at the plight of the C-130, that is until the snow suited commandos from the Royal Australian Army's 1st Commando Regiment piled out of the Herc onto the ice.

In minutes, forty of Australia's best were stomping through the snow and over ice ridges to the team's encampment. They approached Yoshiro and Danswold, who stood ready to greet them.

"Captain Jason Ridgely, 1st Company, of her Majesty's 1st Australian Commando Regiment," saluted the commander of the unit. "Is this where the... thing is? We're here to secure the, um, thingie."

Yoshiro smiled and said, "Yes, item is down that crevasse. We have people down there right now keeping an eye on things." Specifically Kenji Saki, the expedition's hyperactive student, who had tried repeatedly to transit through the portal like Sayuri had done, and only stopped when Sayuri told him he didn't have the right "spark" to enter.

Ridgely nodded in reply and then detailed out ten men to rappel down into the crevasse and secure the portal dome.

As his men disappeared down the crevasse, ten Black Hawk helicopters with USMC insignia on their sides appeared over nearby Ross Island. They flew low to the ice, and landed within yards of the tents, the prop wash blowing every loose item about. US Marines spilled out, also in white snow gear.

One of the marines approached the men standing by the ice crevasse and said, "Captain David Wright, United States Marine Corps! Sir we are here to secure the portal and area. All Unauthorized personnel will be moved to a safe location."

"Now wait one minute," said Ridgely, "this is international territory, you Yanks can't come here and claim ownership."

"We are under orders by our Commander and Chief," said Wright. He then leaned forward and said in a hoarse whisper to the other man, "Jesus Jason, what in the Hell is down there?"

"I'm under orders by the Prime Minister to protect this site from being destroyed or stolen," replied Ridgely, who then leaned over and replied covertly, "You got me there, Dave. I just sent ten of my men down to make sure nothing comes through that thingie. Perhaps you'd better send some of your boys as well."

"Dammit, I'm under orders to clear this are of all non... authorized personnel. Forcibly if need be Jason."

"Bugger that, you lay a hand on me, my missus will take your missus to the mat and you know it. Can't we just get along and both guard this portal thingie?"

Before David could answer, a smaller air transport, sporting New Zealand colors, came in for a landing. "Looks like it's going to be a circus, eh mates?" said Danswold.

The smaller transport skipped over the pressure ridges and nearly fell into the crevasse itself before coming to a stop amongst the USMC helicopters. Twenty New Zealand soldiers piled out and some almost kissed the ground before marching on the Marines and Commandos.

The soldiers were all Maori, but they were lead by a bewhiskered Caucasian. He saluted the other two officers and declared, "Major Robert Farnswold, First Battalion of the Royal New Zealand Infantry. Gentlemen, I'm here to take command of this operation."

"Like Hell!" exclaimed Wright. "I'm under orders by my commander and chief to take charge of this operation and to clear all unauthorized personnel from this site."

Farnswold leaned forward and said, "Like you Yanks like to say, 'You and wot army?'"

The three men began arguing at each other, and the two latecomers sent a contingent of their men down into the crevasse to "guard" the portal. After an hour of bickering, they went back to their aircraft and contacted their respective governments.

By that time, Kenji and the other people who had been down in the dome were now on the surface. Kenji reported that the soldiers were all keeping an eye on each other, as well as on the portal. Then Kenji pulled up his handheld computer and called up the video camera that they had left running down there.

"As you can see," he said in Japanese, "they are watching each other like jackals eyeing a carcass."

Reggie shook his head, and replied in Japanese, "Crikey, you think that they'll go at each other?"

"I hope so," said Kenji with a smile, "this is going out live on the satellite and dozen webcam sites around the world."

This fact was not lost on the three commanders, who were soon crowded around the students, demanding that they shut the feed down.

"No! This information must be free!" said Kenji, the more English fluent of the students, besides Sayuri. "We are representatives of the sovereign nation of Japan. You have no authority over me or my fellow nationals. Besides, if you now cut the feed, everyone will think you are trying to steal the portal. And then the other nations won't send little planes. They will send divisions to stop you. You and your governments do not want that, yes?"

"Young Kenji is wise beyond his years," said Reggie quietly in Japanese to Yoshiro.

"Young Kenji just repeated the speech Captain Cryostar gave to the Verlons in the anime 'Firestar Base 1'," said Yoshiro.

"Crikey," said Reggie.

The three commanders seethed for a minute, but eventually they agreed to let the feed run.

As he smiled in his victory, Kenji's smile turned to a puzzled look, and he peered over the broad shoulders of Captain Wright and asked, "Who would be flying here from the South?"

Everyone turned to look at the Antarctic equipped aircraft that skimmed just above the surface of the ice. It was a propeller driven bi-plane, equipped with skis for a snow landing.

The pilot for the New Zealanders said, "Blimey, that's a Antonov-3! The Russians are coming!"

The pilot of the Antonov-3 made a picture perfect landing, and easily taxied up to the base camp without any problem. After the plane stopped, the hatched opened and large bear of a man stepped out, with the rank insignia of a general hastily pinned on his parka. Behind him were two men and one woman.

The man crunched through the snow to the crowd that had gathered around Kenji, walked past them, and headed straight to Yoshiro. "You are Yoshiro Izumi?" he rumbled in English.

With a quick nod of his head, Yoshiro said timidly "Yes."

The man smiled in a way that did not comfort Yoshiro at all. "I am General Alexander Borodin," he said turned to face the rest of the assembled soldiers, students, and scientists. "I am now the Commander of UN forces and personnel here at this base camp. Do you all understand?"

He didn't say the last very loud, but everyone heard. Every soldier snapped to attention and saluted him with a "Yes sir!"

"Good," he replied after he returned the salute. "Now take me to see this portal..."

Borodin had been the base commander of the Russian Antarctic base Mirnyy, when the call came from Moscow that the UN Security Council decided that they needed a military commander at the base who was well versed with Arctic and Antarctic conditions. Before becoming the Mirnyy base commander, he had served in the Russian Army for thirty years, originally in the Soviet Army's Arctic Frontier Group, later he commanded the Arctic Regional Frontier Administration after the Arctic Frontier Group was reorganized. He had a lifelong passion for the Arctic and polar science, but he had to make it a hobby due to his position in the Russian Army. Later he resigned his commission and then he took the post at Mirnyy to pursue his interest in Antarctica and its environs. It was this background that made him perfect to take command of the Hatsumi base camp and the alien device under the ice.

Despite his size and fifty-two years of age, he was quite adept with the rappelling line and ice picks. He was more impressed with the ice dome and Oates' body than he was with the portal, even after walking through it. He did so on the chance that he might have this spark that Sayuri and the people she had found on her trip to New York had. He didn't transit to the platform, much to his chagrin.

Satisfied, Borodin then used the student's video camera to report that the portal was secure in UN hands and the rest of the world could relax. He then placed the video feed under UN jurisdiction over the protests of the students. He then ordered that a team be put together to recover Captain Oates' remains for a future autopsy and eventual return to his family for burial.

After returning to the surface, he met with the McMurdo base commander, who had taken a CAT out to meet with Borodin.

"So commander," Borodin said with his unique smile, "what can we borrow from McMurdo base?"

By the end of the week, White Island was dotted with huts from McMurdo Station, tents from nearly thirty countries' worth of military troops and various press agencies, as well as numerous aircraft, not a few them mired or bogged down in ice crevasses or pressure ridges. The blue UN flag was flying from a pole near the crevasse, and all the troops were wearing the blue UN helmets or berets.

General Borodin wasn't satisfied with the base, with its generators dotting the compound on the island, their cables snaking everywhere, but it was what he had to work with on such short notice. He still had two months of Antarctic summer to work with, and he had plans. Grand plans...

INTERLUDE 3

"Sayuri. So brave, yet so driven," mused Borodin. "Even for someone who embraces this land of ice. I think you came back a

different woman. You booked a zigzagging route through every major airport between White Island and New York so you could search for others of your kind. So you could present that list of candidates to the UN. You proved that explorers were so rare that only an international team could be formed. Ah, Sayuri, we shouldn't have let you go out again. We kept the crystal, but we had already lost you to the stars."

MISSION

In the morning, after a hearty breakfast and several cups of coffee and orange juice, the first team of explorers, Sayuri Tenuma, Gordon Conrad, and Wei Lei, were standing by their bikes. Each bike was loaded down for a long trip; each had saddlebags over the front and rear wheels. Plenty of water and rations were loaded, as well as a unique selection non-electronic equipment, and one laptop computer with a small fuel cell that barely weighed twenty pounds. That was on Gordon's bike. The news agencies were back in force, but this time with a five second delay just in case Gordon decided to give another language lesson to the world.

On their first attempt to visit Schmert on the pathways, they had driven a Hummer into the portal, where its battery had been drained and all their electronics disabled. Gordon had exited the portal cussing up a storm, a storm that was heard by every microphone in the dome and broadcasted to the world. That was not going to happen this time.

General Borodin shook their hands and gave a short speech on human unity and how this was a step forward for global peace. This was overshadowed by the morning news from Africa. It was not good. Another nation had fallen into rebellion.

After Borodin's speech, Dr. Hatsumi spoke.

"Today you travel to meet another race, mankind's first contact with another intelligent species. The burden you bear is great, but I know that your shoulders can carry this weight. You are our representatives, our emissaries to the great beyond. Do not forget this. Go with God, and with all our blessings."

The trio bowed, waved to the cameras, before they mounted their bikes and, trying not to wobble, headed up the ramp and into the portal. They passed through and out onto the platform, a view that they were now used to, as they had been put to work testing out what the limitations of living on the platform for the two weeks after their failed first attempt. The results of these two weeks of testing were the bicycles and the experimental computer.

Sayuri steadied her bike and looked at the others. "OK, are we ready? Really ready?"

"Yeah," replied Gordon. "Let's go see Schmuck and his wonders."

"Schmert, Gordon," corrected Wei Lei. "He's from a race that built all this. We should be respectful to him, no matter what."

"Yes, that is correct," said Sayuri. "So, as you say it Gordon, let us 'saddle up' and get going."

They pushed their heavy bikes and Sayuri lead the way through the large portal.

After pedaling at a fair pace, the trio rode in a single file on the narrow band of silver. Wei Lei gripped her handlebars and slowed down. Her eyes kept drifting to the edge of the path and the void below. "I can't stand it!" she cried. "I'm going to fall off!"

"Look up, at the, um," Gordon paused as he looked at the dot far away that was the other end of the pathway. "OK, look at your front wheel."

Wei Lei tried, but her eyes kept drifting the black void.

"You can do it Wei Lei," said Sayuri, at the head of the pack, "Just don't think about the edge... tell us about your home."

"My home?" said Wei Lei in a hoarse voice. "Yes, alright. My home. I grew up in Huairou, a small village north of Beijing. It's not much; we had electricity, running water and bus that ran to Beijing twice daily. My father worked at the local fish hatchery our village operated. The hatchery made more than eight million Yuan last year. Our fish are sold mainly in Beijing, but many go to other cities. I used to go to my neighbors house, the Jins, to watch movies. They had a DVD player, and Mr. Jin would trade DVDs at a market in Beijing. Mr. Jin made his money as the bus driver between our village and Beijing."

"Did you ever visit Beijing?" asked Gordon, noticing that Wei Lei was back up to speed.

"Oh yes, with my mother and father. We would take the vegetables the village grew to sell at one of the farmers market. No collective harvesting, we were allowed to grow and sell what we wanted."

"But not as an individual family," said Gordon. "'To each according to their need.'"

"It takes a village to raise a child," retorted Wei Lei with a smile. "As a village we all succeed or we all fail. There is no leaving behind anyone. Greed is not good. Three quarters of my salary is going to my village. They will be able to start a new school for young women next year because of that."

"You're giving away all that money!" said a shocked Gordon. "Are you insane?"

"The needs of many outweigh the needs of the few or the one," Wei Lei replied. "I really don't have a need for that much money, so I spend it on my village and neighbors. And I'm happy to do so. In fact, thanks to the UN, I am receiving an education that was beyond my dreams. I'm happy to share my fortune."

"Crazy," said Gordon. "You're just crazy. S*** with all that money, I'm going to buy me a gold plated Mercedes!"

"And hire a dozen armed men to keep it safe," said Wei Lei. "You'll end up living in a secure box loaded with security cameras and bodyguards to protect you. All alone. While I will have a big family and lots of grandchildren to dote on."

Gordon looked ahead at her and just pedaled along.

They rode in silence for a while and then Wei Lei said "Gordon, thanks, talking helped me with my vertigo."

He laughed and said, "No, thank you. I was thinking... I was thinking how much my local Boys Club and YMCA could use some extra money, and how a little park in one of the abandoned lots would look. I really don't need that much money to be happy, and some of the folks in the hood need someone to look up to."

"Going to put a statue of yourself in that little park?" asked Sayuri.

"Yup, with my hand out the so the pigeons can land and crap on it!" he laughed.

They all joined in, and laughed, which petered out. They pedaled in silence for a while longer.

Gordon looked down at his odometer and said, "How long is this thing? We've gone about 20 miles so far."

Both women had to make the conversion to metric and Sayuri said, "It took me just over a day's worth of walking to cross it. I figure I can walk about forty two to fifty kilometers a day, so I estimate that this pathway is sixty to eighty kilometers long."

It was Gordon's turn to convert from metric and said, "OK, what are we going to use for measurement? Good old American miles and feet, or that screwy kilometers and meters?"

"Metric," said the other two in unison.

"S***," said Gordon. "Hey, I thought communists didn't vote?"

"We vote, and in many races these days we have a choice of candidates," said Wei Lei. "So Gordon, tell us about your life. It must have been interesting."

Gordon laughed so hard he almost lost control of his bike. He had to stop and sit down. The other two stopped and walked their bikes over to where he was sitting. He had a bottle of water out and took a deep swig. "I was just thinking," he said, putting down the water bottle, "I know what I would do if I had to make a nature call. Right over the edge. And, if I had to... do the other... I don't know if I could do it with my butt hanging out over nothing..."

"You have filthy mind," said Sayuri, taking a drink from her water bottle.

"He has a point however," said Wei Lei. "We have the portable chemical toilets, but I do not relish using them. Relieving myself over the edge... It has its practicality. No waste, no clean up."

Sayuri looked at the edge and then pulled out a tissue and tossed it off the edge. It floated for moment then it began to rise up into the air. "What goes up..."

The other two watched the tissue rise and thought about where it was going. Gordon spoke up and said, "OK, no whizzing or other stuff off the edge, otherwise we'll

be wearing it later." He stood up and straightened his clothes. "OK troops, let's mount up and head out. We probably have another hour or so to go, so times a wasting!"

They mounted their bikes and pedaled off down the strip of silver, while Sayuri's tissue rose higher in the sky.

Three hours later they arrived at the other platform. It took Sayuri a moment to orient herself and point to the portal on the right. "That's the one I went through. I left a chemstick light under this larger portal." She looked for a moment under the rotating ring and fished out the now dull plastic tube. "See."

Taking a swig from his water bottle, Gordon asked, "Did you tag the other portal?"

Sayuri looked over at the other portal, her brow twisted in thought. "I don't... I'm not sure. We can check."

They pedaled over to the portal that Sayuri had indicated and fished around under the ring. A wad of tissue was found. "Looks like you did," said Gordon. "OK, let's walk our way through and go and see the wizard."

They walked side by side and pushed their bikes up the ramp and through the portal.

"Well," said Gordon, putting the kickstand down on his bike, and looking out on a garbage strewn, grassy field, "where is he?" The area around the portal was clear, but beyond the ring station, the ground was littered with junk and garbage. Not all of it was recognizable. Beyond the junk, the sky and horizon were extremely curved. He felt a shock of vertigo for a moment and shook it off.

"It should be here," said Sayuri, looking about anxiously. "I remember going through the portal across from the large portal and stepping through. There I saw a grassy field and large tree... It's all a false memory, isn't it?"

Kicking a soup can for a brand of soup he never seen before, Gordon looked up and said, "I guess so. Schmuck really f***** with your mind didn't he? What now? I got this here piece of paper to give to the bastard, plus an invitation to visit, and this ain't even the place he's supposed to be waiting at!"

"Wah! The sky is curved!" said Wei Lei, staring at a sharply curved horizon. She dropped to the ground and held on. "Wah! I'm going to throw up! The world is warped! It's too strange!"

Sayuri and Gordon went to the hapless young woman and knelt down next to her.

"Close your eyes Wei Lei, and breathe deep," said Sayuri, kneeling down and hugging the frightened woman. "Relax. You're OK, you're with your friends."

"Yeah, we won't let you get hurt," chimed in Gordon.

Eyes welded shut, Wei Lei breathed slowly "I'm sorry, I have bad vertigo. I never could stand heights."

"No need to babe," said Gordon. "This place gives me the willies too. There's sunlight, but no sun. What the f*** is up with that?"

"F*** if I know!" swore Wei Lei, and then laughed nervously. They all chuckled at that. Wei Lei rarely if ever swore.

"Calmed down?" asked Sayuri, and Wei Lei nodded. "Good, now slowly open your eyes, but don't look up, just keep your eyes on the ground."

Wei Lei opened her eyes, and took a deep breath. The other two helped her stand up. She ventured a look at the horizon, and quickly looked back at her feet. "Wah! There is a lot of garbage here." At her feet were candy wrappers and several bottle caps, all of which were a variation on the Coca Cola logo. "What is this place?"

Looking about, Sayuri said, "It's a small world, a pocket world. A Pokiwo!"

Wei Lei giggled, "A 'Pokiwo'? Gotta get them all! Though looking at this place, you can keep it." They all laughed at that. She looked up again and sighed. "I'm getting used to it now. It was just so... so different. They all will be like this, won't they?" The others nodded.

"So, we're still one Schmert short of a mission," said Gordon. "What now?"

Grabbing her bike, Sayuri said, "We explore!"

They biked around wrecked vehicles, refrigerators, washing machines and other kinds of machines. They stopped by a yacht and took pictures. Soon they were back at the portal station.

"By my odometer, we traveled about 40 miles... um, about 64-65 klicks. It's a small world after all. Want to grab some souvenirs?"

They picked up various small objects that caught their eyes, including a poster with a picture of Franklin Roosevelt in front of a hammer and sickle, a coke bottle with Mayan glyphs ringed it, and other oddball items.

Laden down with their finds, Gordon asked, "So, do you want to check out one of the other portals?"

Both women shook their heads. "Not until we work out a plan to approach any natives or scout out what is on the other side," said Sayuri. "Besides, we must report the failure of our mission to our superiors."

"I thought you'd say that," said Gordon. "But you're right. From what old Oates had to say about some of those worlds, I want a BFG on each hip just to be safe. Trouble is that we're looking at another five hours of cycling. I'm bushed, let's make camp on that yacht and then we'll head home after we rest up. So let's eat, I'm dying to try out those self heating MREs."

They biked back to the yacht and climbed aboard. Gordon found that the bar was still stocked with liquor. "Hey, if the date on the calendar is right, this s*** is hundred year old scotch!" He waved a bottle in the air.

"Put in your kit bag and bring it home," replied Sayuri. "We're on duty and all we have for weapons are pistols. I don't want you passed out if we need your firepower."

"Besides, how much would you make if you put that bottle on eBay?" quipped Wei Lei.

Gordon looked at the bottle with newfound respect and plundered the rest of the bar, putting the bottles in a haversack that he found in a cabin. One of the bottles was already open, so he poured a shot for himself, and after offering, one for each of the women.

"Here's to capitalism!" he toasted.

"Kanpi!" toasted Sayuri raising her glass.

"Wen lie!" said Wei Lei, then she started to sip her shot.

"Nope, you gotta knock it back," said Gordon, "right Sayuri?"

Sayuri replied by drinking hers in one swallow. Then she started coughing.

Smiling Gordon knocked his back, as did Wei Lei. Then both of them started coughing.

"God that's smooth!" choked Gordon. "Woowee! OK, that's enough for tonight. This is stuff for sipping, not for slamming back. OK, who wants the meatloaf?"

The two women looked at each other and then quipped, "'Meatloaf again!'" They both ended up giggling.

Shaking his head, Gordon said, "I never should have snuck that movie in for movie night at the base." He blinked, something wasn't right. He tried standing up and found that he couldn't, without wobbling. "Jesus, I think I'm wasted on a single shot! This stuff will go for a fortune."

Wei Lei laid her head on the table and giggled some more, then started singing a song, badly, in Mandarin. Sayuri found her thinking muddled, and her vision blurred. She reached out and read the bottle's label.

"It says sixty proof," she said incredulously. "That can't be right. This is more like two thousand proof."

Gordon took the bottle away and carefully re-corked it. "No more for any of us. We'd probably get alk-alk-alkaline poisoning or something. Food, we need food."

Wei Lei was passed out, and Sayuri slid under the table.

"What the Hell is gonging on?" slurred Gordon. He sat down abruptly, and then passed out...

Blinking, Gordon found himself sitting in a park, a cup of tea in his hand. Looking around he found that he was sitting next to a furry creature sipping tea.

"OK," he said, "I'm dreaming?"

"Perhaps," replied the creature, "or perhaps you're not."

Gordon sat his teacup down on a picnic blanket and tried to look at being next to him, but found that it refused to focus and define itself. "OK, this must be a dream, and you're not Schmert."

As soon as he said the name, he could see the creature. It had a bear-like snout, a bipedal body, and long bushy tail. "Are you sure?"

"Yup," replied Gordon, looking out over the scene, realizing it wasn't the same as he had first seen it. "You're a piece of mutton, a bit of undigested cheese."

"Perhaps I'm Schmert f***** with your mind," said the creature.

"I don't think so," said Gordon. "Sayuri said you talked in rhyme, and you ain't talking in rhyme."

The creature looked thoughtful for a moment and then nodded, "You're right, you can't rhyme to save your soul and I don't know how to do poetry in English. Doesn't prove a thing you know. Why am I having in depth conversations with myself?"

Standing up, Gordon looked around and noticed that if he just scanned the horizon, he didn't see anything but a blur. But if he focused, he saw trees, a stream, a mountain, and never in the same place twice. "My figment is talking to itself. I'm definitely not sober," he replied, "and I'm not sober right now. So, why did I dream you up?"

The creature stood up and changed shape to Sayuri. "Who said that you're the one doing the dreaming?"

Gordon laughed said "Because this is my dream my dear Sayuri, not yours."

She looked at Gordon and shook her head, "This is a odd dream. The figments of my imagination are claiming to be real."

Another voice echoed, "No, no, no, this is not right. What are you two doing here?"

Both looked and saw Wei Lei standing next to them. Gordon also realized that he couldn't see her body, nor Sayuri's, all he saw was the impression of a body. "Oh great, I really must be having an episode!"

"What do you mean, you're having an episode?" replied Sayuri. "I can understand imagining you in my dreams, but not her. Wei Lei why are you here in my dream?"

Wei Lei cringed and tried to move, but she couldn't. "It's not supposed to happen like this! You're not supposed to see each other or me! This is all wrong!"

"OK, what are you talking about?" asked Gordon.

"I can't! My mother told me I'd be persecuted if I told anyone!" cried Wei Lei.

Sayuri tried reaching out to Wei Lei, but couldn't reach her. "Wei Lei, what are you talking about? Persecuted for what?"

"I can read minds a little bit," she sobbed, "but not like this! Not at all like this!"

Gordon shook his head. "Mind reading?" he said. "What kind of bulls*** is that? You can't read minds, it's impossible."

"You're not helping!" snapped Sayuri coming to a realization. "Don't you understand? She's in our minds. We're in hers!"

Gordon looked at her and realized that she didn't look the same as he normally saw her. He looked at Wei Lei and noticed that she didn't look that way either. They both looked, better, prettier, more idealized. "Don't take what I'm going to ask as proof that I believe that this is nothing more than a dream, but... how do I look?"

Both women looked at him and Sayuri said, "You could wear some clothes, but... you look like a well muscled, very handsome young man."

Wei Lei didn't reply. She seemed to be fighting to be free. "I have to free myself. Why did this happen? Why!"

Sayuri said aloud, "It was Gordon's saké. It's done something to us."

"What did you say?" asked Gordon. "Saké? What saké? It was scotch... That's what you'd say, wouldn't you? This is real. Oh my God. Get Out Of My Head!"

At that they fell apart into darkness.

Gordon was being shaken awake. "Gordon, get up! Wei Lei is gone!"

He was still in the chair he had passed out in, and he ached. "Oh God, my head... that dream..."

He sat bolt upright, "It f***** wasn't a dream! Where is she?"

"She's left!" said an anxious Sayuri. "She's gone! We have to find her!"

He stood up and ran to the aft of the boat. Scanning out across the field of junk, he saw her pedaling away. "She's heading in the wrong direction for the portal! I'll get her."

Sayuri looked up at the curved sky and saw Wei Lei cresting the horizon. "Wei Lei! Come back!"

Gordon jumped off the back of the yacht and grabbed his bike. "I'll get her!"

"She's got a head start, you'll never catch her..." said Sayuri.

"Honey, I was a bike messenger in New York City! Nobody can out race me!"

"Don't hurt her!" Sayuri cried.

That stopped Gordon as he was mounting his bike. "Maybe we should let her go."

Sayuri dropped to the ground. "No, we have bring her back," said Sayuri, "she's our friend, no matter what."

Gordon stood posed, half on, half off his bike, then he swore under his breath and got on. "I'll catch her," he said flatly.

He rode his bike between the piles of junk, jinking and twisting around the broken pieces and intact machines. Why am I going after her? He furrowed his brow and remember the times when the two of them were trying to learn each other's language, him flubbing on the tonal qualities of Mandarin, and her struggling with consonants she couldn't hear in English.

They had some hard times, and some fun times, Wei Lei shyness in personal relationships and his strong personality for the media made for an odd pairing, while Sayuri held the limelight... Sayuri.

He almost ran into a bracing, remembering her appearing his dream as Schmert. "Wei Lei! I'm sorry!" he yelled as he pedaled. He saw a metal plate lying at an angle ahead of him and he aimed for it. Shooting up the ramp, he soared into the air and in that brief moment not only did he see Wei Lei ahead of him, he nearly made orbit about the tiny world.

He hit the ground, bottoming out the shocks on the mountain bike, just behind her. "Wei Lei stop!" he yelled wincing from the impact. "Goddamn it, stop!"

She looked behind herself and saw his face. She screamed and rode faster.

"Mother f***!" he said panting, and then peddled harder. He quickly evened up the race and saw that she was crying.

"Wei... Lei... stop!" he panted. He then saw she hadn't seen a metal bar at head height just ahead. He steered right into her, knocking the two of them to the ground in a tangle of bikes, limbs, and saddlebags. He somehow managed to pull her off her bike and took the brunt of the impact himself.

Together they lay on the ground, both breathing hard, her with an occasional sob, Gordon with a gasp and not a little bit of pain.

"Are you OK Wei Lei?" he gasped.

She just hugged him and cried harder.

"It's OK honey, it's OK," he said. Then he said hesitantly, "You... you can take a look inside... my head, and see that it's OK."

She looked up at him, her eyes red from crying, and asked, "Are you sure?"

He nodded and said, "Yeah, just be careful, OK?"

She swallowed and waggled her head. She closed her eyes and suddenly Gordon found himself remembering his past thoughts, feelings and his decision to let her read his mind. And his memories of Sayuri...

"Whoa," said Gordon after she stopped. "That was freaky... I mean... um, damn. Sorry again," he finally said.

Wei Lei gave him a wan smile, nodded, and said, "I saw her as him too, just like you remembered. It's too specific, too detailed to be a dream image."

"That sounds like experience talking," said Gordon, gingerly sitting up, with some help for her. "Ow, I hurt. I don't think I broke anything," he said moving his arms and bending his legs. He winced, but he was sure that he hadn't broken anything. He knew what that felt like. "So why did you make me remember that stuff? Why didn't you just 'read my mind'?"

Wei Lei shrugged and said, "I can't. The mind is like a book, not the Internet. Only one person can read your mind, and that's you. So I somehow make you remember what I want you to remember, and you have to be awake, otherwise I get dreams or cause you to dream. It's not like it is in the movies."

Wei Lei had his bike up, the front wheel shaped like a pretzel. Hers, on the other hand, didn't show a mark. She looked at him and said, "I used to 'pick up' other people's dreams when I was little, and sometimes I could tell if someone was lying. You don't know how hard it's been for me not reaching out and reading other's minds these past months."

"That's a skill that could come in handy when we visit other places," said Gordon, slowly standing up. "Son of a b***, I don't have the tools to fix that sucker," he said looking his front wheel.

"I wish it was a skill," said Wei Lei, scanning the horizon, "but it is not. I don't know why it's working so well right now. Normally I'd get a brief glimpse or I would get a torrent and couldn't turn it off."

"It's that stuff we drank," said Gordon, shaking his head over the twisted spokes. "It probably boosted you... God knows how long it will last."

"Sayuri is on her way here," said Wei Lei. "I can see her. I couldn't see you."

He pulled a tie down strap from a bag and rigged a sling around the frame and over his shoulder so that the bike's front hung under his right arm, and then said "Let's go meet her. Keep an eye out for a bike in this stuff; we might be able to find a replacement wheel..."

Sayuri found them forcing a bike wheel on to Gordon's front forks. The axle was a hair too wide, but with judicious shoving, the wheel slid into place. The text on the rim and on the rubber of the tire was in Cuneiform.

"Are you two OK?" she asked. "I saw Gordon shoot into the sky like a rocket! I was sure he would be hurt!"

"Oh I'm a hurt'n," said Gordon, wincing from the bruising he took, "but not too worse for wear. Um Sayuri..." He looked at Wei Lei, who was using a moist towelette to wipe her hands off. She nodded, and he then said, "Sayuri, we have to tell you something..."

They were back at the yacht, the two women watching Gordon loft a bottle of scotch at a pile of garbage on the horizon. "If I throw them hard enough," he said as he threw the bottle, "I might get one into orbit about this place."

The bottle spun end over end in the air and vanished over the horizon. Turning Gordon waited, but after several minutes shook his head and said, "Huston, we have a problem."

He picked up the last bottle and looked at it. Over a hundred years old, he thought, and probably more dangerous than any atomic bomb. Looking at the other two he quipped, "Anyone want a final sip?"

"NO!" replied both women in unison.

"Our loss," he said as he threw it at the horizon, "the world's gain."

After it vanished and didn't return suborbitally, he sat down and said, "First things first. We don't tell them about Wei Lei... not just yet. I don't want them dissecting her to find out how she can read minds. But..."

Sayuri said sourly, "You want to tell them about me."

"You have your uncle and many people on your side," said Wei Lei, "and you are a victim of Schmert's meddling. They will try to help you. Me, I would be a freak, something to be afraid of because I can read their minds."

"That's right," said Gordon, "look at how I reacted! And I'm not completely comfortable with it now either. Can you still read either of our minds? You have my permission to."

Sayuri nodded as well, so Wei Lei closed her eyes and got... "Nothing. It's gone dormant again. Thank goodness."

Sayuri leaned back and said, "In any case, our mission is a failure, and they will want to know why. They will accuse me of lying about Schmert, and you two will then defend me by pointing out that I knew things that I shouldn't have known about. That we should do some memory regression to find out what really happened."

"Yup," said Gordon. "We're on your side Sayuri, and we'll stay there..."

INTERLUDE 4

"Well now," rumbled General Borodin. "That explains a lot."

“So, after a good night's sleep, they returned to the Antarctic base and the waiting world, “ interrupted Dr Hatsumi. “The news that there was no Schmert waiting for them was a major blow. People did accuse Sayuri of making him up and conspiracy theories abounded on the Internet.”

“But we who knew her and the information the other two told about having a psychic episode after drinking some alien scotch, even leaving out the fact that it was fueled by Wei Lei's ability, just confirmed to both of us, my dear general, that Schmert had done something to Sayuri.”

The session with Dr. Menzies, the base psychologist, to retrieve some of her memories of her meeting with Schmert continued. They were confusing, with Schmert acting more like an avatar than a real person. Her monologue abruptly stopped after Sayuri recited a long poem, in Latin:

"Mellor agrillum, homus ridiculum

Percuro arbum

Quoud ibit dici

Capis mei in sti

Sed nemo me respondei"

The Latin translator stopped the playback. "It's Latin alright, but it's odd. And I don't mean its poetic structure. That first word, 'Mellor', is more than likely not a Latin word. The closest I can come to it is the word 'Mellis', or honey. But by no means is 'Mellor' a regular form or 'Mellis'. Agrillum is a white clay used in Roman pottery, quite malleable."

General Borodin said, "Da, da, that is all very good. But what does it mean?"

The translator pushed his glasses back up his nose and said, "Well, I've only done that first stanza, but roughly it says:

"Mushy Mellor, funny fellow,

Running 'midst the trees.

'Who's there?' I said,

As I stood on my head,

But, no one answered me."

Dr. Hatsumi blinked and said, "That's gibberish. Schmert implanted gibberish in my niece's head. What is this 'Mellor' and why is he so humorous?"

"It is humorous," corrected the translator. "The gender on those verbs is all neuter. This 'Mellor' is an it."

"Well whatever it is, we need to find out!" said Borodin. "Complete the translation and let us know when you are finished." The two men left the translator with the audio files.

"Translate or be damned," he muttered. "Still, they are paying me good money to do this."

Putting on his headphones, he listened to the recording. "Who are you little Mellor? We want to find out..."

Barbara Meyer, BBC World News: "This is Barbara Meyer and this is BBC World News. Just minutes ago, an amazing announcement has been made at the UN by an Antarctic researcher. His team has discovered evidence that a highly advance civilization has visited our world by use of what can only be described as a portal to other worlds, other, parallel Earths. For more on this story, we switch to our reporter at the UN, Gwenyth Shapiro. Gwen, what's the reaction like there?"

Gwenyth Shapiro, BBC News embedded UN Reporter: "Pandemonium, Barb! Pandemonium! Dr. Takahiro Hatsumi, the researcher who announced this discovery, has been whisked to a closed session of the Security Council. Meanwhile, the rest of the UN is in turmoil, with some groups claiming that this is nothing more than a sham put on by the West."

Ugandan Ambassador, Obote Wemusa: [Translation] "It is a ruse by the American Government to claim power over the impoverished people of the world. I don't not trust the American president, he is a witch with an agenda!"

Gwenyth Shapiro: "While others wonder what this race might do to us, once we contact them."

Peruvian Ambassador, Ascencion Garcia-Toledo: [Translation] "You have seen what happens when a race with a superior technology imposes it's will on a lesser race. For most of our history, the 'superior' race was the West. Well now that shoe is now upon the other foot. The West will find out what it is like to have its culture decimated!"

Gwenyth Shapiro: "As we speak, rumors are running amok that the Western powers are sending troops to the Antarctic, to claim this portal for their country. It's going to get far more tense before we see a light at the end of the tunnel. This is Gwenyth Shapiro reporting for the BBC. Back to you Barb."

Barbara Meyer: "Thank you Gwen. The Prime Minister has issued a statement on behalf of the Queen and the British Government."

British Prime Minister, Robert Cox: "Ladies and gentlemen of the press, people of the Britain and the British Commonwealth, after much consultation

with her majesty and leaders of Parliament, we have come to the following decision: The Queen will order troops stationed in Australia and New Zealand to secure and protect the alien device found under the ice near White Island, in Antarctica. The Queen has contacted the prime ministers of both Commonwealth nations and consulted with them. I have ordered elements of the British Navy stationed at the Falkland Islands to assist in this operation. Currently we are in direct discussion with governments of the United States of America, Russia, South Africa, and the Peoples Republic of China on possible responses. In addition, our representatives in the United Nations Security Council are hammering out what to do in case this race turns out to be hostile. Rest assured that we have might and the will to drive back any invasion onto our planet. I will now take your questions...."

Barbara Meyer: "There you have it, contact with an alien race, and all the danger and hope that such contact can engender. Stay with the BBC for round the clock coverage of this and other breaking news as the world reacts to this momentous discovery..."

Players Guide

But still I could make out nothing distinctly on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like the narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmans say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity.

A Descent into the Maelstrom
Edgar Allan Poe, 1841

WELCOME TO THE FRINGES!

You are that special person, that 1 in a 100,000 that has that special *something* that makes you Fringeworthy, one of the Gifted. Why you were so blessed is a mystery, as there seems to be no rhyme or reason to those who have the gift and those that don't.

For those born on United Nations Earth, otherwise known as "Earth Prime", you were recruited by UNIDA to explore and exploit the riches of the Fringepaths. A million-million worlds and counting are out there, and your job is to contact those worlds and help forge a new Commonwealth of Worlds!

Earth Prime is still the fractious world that we know and love, but now there's the added element of contact with *other whens* and alternate cultures that will appear alien to our sensibilities. The earliest contacted world is Earth Primes strongest ally, Britannia Earth Prime, otherwise known on Earth Prime as "Victorian Earth" or "Steampunk Earth". (Which the Brits really dislike being called.)

In the next couple of years, more people will be encountered and added to the burgeoning collection of alternate cultures and people.

CAMPAIGN TYPES

Your GM may choose to run a campaign that takes place in the following campaign eras:

- The Early Years: From discovery of the Fringes to 5 years later when all the Fringe races in this book were contacted.
- Exploration Years: 5 to 20 years after the discovery of the Fringes. All the primary Fringe races have been contacted and you can now play anyone of them besides Earth Primers and the Victorians. [Towards the end of this era, the Fringeborn appear as a playable character type.](#)
- Established Years: 20 to 120 years after the discovery of the Fringes. Many more worlds have been contact and the start of the New Commonwealth beckons. Other Fringe empires are out there waiting and not all of them want to join.
- New Commonwealth: 120+ years after the discovery of the Fringes. The Big System is back online and new wonders and dangers abound. Everyone is Fringeworthy now.

CHARACTER GENERATION

[The Sheila Mortenson Story](#)

[Sheila Mortenson of Accounts Payable had said yes to a date with Ed Powers of the bank's IT department. They had taken in a museum showing of alternate world artifacts at the Kansas Museum of History. With her background in investment banking, she knew that at best,](#)

the "Fringe Tech" impact was still building, but right now, investing in Fringe Tech was a risky venture.

After the museum, Ed took her to the Blind Tiger brewpub for dinner and drinks. Shelia just bubbled over about what she had seen in the museum. "I mean it! If I were Fringeworthy, I'd jump at the chance to visit other worlds. Just think of it!"

"The toil and the tedium," said Ed, sipping a brew, "the danger. Did you hear about the third team of Fringeworthy? Mongols killed three of them! No, it's not for me, nothing would get me to join up."

"Ed," she replied, "you just got to learn to live a little. Besides, you never know what you'd do if the opportunity came up."

Outside, a dark sedan pulled up and four men dressed in black, wearing sunglasses, got out of the sedan, and surveyed the area. A small, slim Asian woman, dressed in white with a blue beret, stepped out of the rear of the sedan, holding a glowing crystal in her hand. She closed her eyes and slowly waved the crystal in the air. "This way," she said in flawless English, pointing to the restaurant.

Inside, after taking another sip of his drink, Ed said, "Besides, it's for the UN. You know, black helicopters and MIBs, that kind of stuff."

"MIBs'?" replied Shelia. "Ed, you watch too much sci fi. There are no 'Men in Black'..."

Just then the four men dressed in black entered the restaurant, the Asian woman in the middle of them. She focused her gaze into the dark interior of the restaurant. A waitress walked up, but was stopped by one of the men, who flashed a badge at her.

The Asian woman stepped forward, catching her bodyguards off guard. They quickly caught up with her as stepped up to Sheila and Ed.

Both of them stood there dumbfounded as the woman held a glowing crystal in front Ed, then in front of Shelia. When it was near Ed, the glow dimmed. In front of Sheila, it brightened. "Ma'am, please hold out your hand," requested the Asian woman. Shelia held her hand out and the woman dropped the crystal into it. It flared and Shelia felt a surge go through her.

"I'm Colonel Wei Lei of UNISS," said the woman. "Congratulations ma'am, you are Fringeworthy."

Ed just stared at the crystal, then up at Sheila with disbelieving eyes nodded and said, "Are you sure Sheila? Do you want to go through with this?"

Taking a deep drink of her beer, Shelia said, "Yes. What now?"

ARCHETYPES

Not everyone has an idea of what type of character they want to play. Sometimes you need a jumping off point to make your own character. And sometimes you need a quick character for a one-shot adventure or convention game. This list, coupled with the Archetype list in *Savage Worlds Deluxe* will get you started.

These are Novice characters from different worlds and races. Some will have a free Edge and some won't, it depends on their world of origin.

Victorian: Adventurer(ess)**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Taunt d6 +6 additional skill points**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor**Edges:** Alertness**Victorian: Air Marshal****Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6**Skills:** Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Intimidation d6, Streetwise d8**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor**Edges:** Investigator**Victorian: Archeologist****Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6**Skills:** Investigation d6, Knowledge (Ancient History) d8, Knowledge (Archeology) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, +5 additional skill points**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor**Edges:** Rich, Scholar**Victorian: Mad Inventor****Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4**Skills:** Investigation d6, Knowledge (Science!) d8, Knowledge (Steam Technology) d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Weird Science d10**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor**Edges:** Arcane Background (Weird Science), Gadgeteer**Victorian: Jungle Lord/Lady****Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Taunt d8, +6 additional skill points**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Beast Master

Golden Horde: Warrior

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Florentine, Quick

Golden Horde: Noble

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, +3 additional skill points

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Noble

Erder: Engineer

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Knowledge (Early Electronics) d6, Knowledge (Mechanical Engineering) d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Brawny, Handy Man

Erder: Whale Hunter

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Whaling) d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d8, + 5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Brawny

Norlander: Knight

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Riding d8, Survival d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 6; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Brawny, Florentine, Sweep

Gear: Horse w/barding, Chainmail armor, Sword

Norlander: Priest

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Healing d6, Knowledge (Religion) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 2; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Brawny, Charismatic, Healer

Pax Romana: Legionnaire

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: First Strike

Gear: Chainmail, Short Sword, Roman Carbine

Pax Romana: Freedman

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Knowledge (Specific type of Craft or Farming) d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Streetwise d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Brawny, Handy Man

T'Ziel: Warrior Priest

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Religion) d8, Notice d8, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: -2; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: One Major, one Minor, Outsider

Edges: Acute Sense of Smell, Hard to Kill

T'Ziel: Temple Guardian

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d8, Survival d6, +4 additional skill points

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: One Major, one Minor, Outsider

Edges: Acute Sense of Smell, First Strike, Brave

Blizniz: Healer

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Healing d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d10, +6 additional skill points

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Pacifist (Major), Bad Eyes (minor), All Thumbs

Edges: Calming Aura, Charismatic, Command

Blizniz: Counselor

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Knowledge (Psychology) d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Streetwise d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Pacifist (Major), Bad Eyes (minor), All Thumbs

Edges: Calming Aura, Charismatic, Elan

Dimixi (Spinner): Construction Worker

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d8, Knowledge (Civil Engineering) d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Throwing d6, +5 additional skill points

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: Acrobat, Handy Man, Quick

Dimixi (Hunter): Police Officer

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Knowledge (Dimixi Law) d6, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: One Major, two Minor

Edges: First Strike, Command, Quick

WORLD OF ORIGIN

Creating your hero for *Fringeworthy* is as easy as creating a character for any *Savage Worlds* game. Your hero will be a member of the United Nations InterDimensional Agency (UNIDA) and serve on an Interdimensional Exploration Team (IDET) that explores the world of the fringes. Or she can be a Victorian from Victorian Prime and be a member of Her Majesty's Trans-Æthereal Exploration Service.

If you are playing in the “Established Years” or “New Commonwealth” campaigns, a further character type is available for you play: The Fringeborn. The Fringeborn are the children of explorers who inherited the Fringeworthy ability and were raised to be Fringe explorers. They can be as young as 16 years old, but everyone has grown up travelling to the “safe” worlds of the New Commonwealth. [The Fringeborn start showing up at the end of the “Exploration Years” campaign. Whether or not they are available is up to the GM.](#)

TRAITS

Once you’ve decided on your hero’s world of origin, you now choose your character’s attributes and skills.

Attributes

Your character starts with a d4 in each of his five attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. You have 5 points to spread across these attributes as you see fit. It costs 1 point to raise an attribute one-die type, and you cannot raise an attribute above d12.

SKILLS

Heroes from United Nations Earth Prime, Britannia Earth Prime and Mat’Demka Prime have 17 skills points to spend, reflecting their more advanced education systems. All other heroes from other cultures have 15 skill points. It costs 1 point to buy a skill at d4, and 1 point to raise a skill by a die type, up to the same die type as the skill’s linked attribute. It costs 2 points per die type to raise a skill over its linked attribute.

All skills in the *Savage Worlds Deluxe* rules are available in *Fringeworthy*. However, the only Arcane Skills that are [initially](#) available are Psionics and Weird Science, along with their respective associated edges, Psionics and Weird Science. In addition, there is a new Arcane Skill that is automatically available for all heroes, *Crystal Key Use*. It is associated with the Fringeworthy edge.

For Heroes from Britannia Earth Prime, the Piloting skill also includes airships.

Driving includes various forms of animal-drawn vehicles for heroes from all cultures except those from United Nations Earth Prime, Erde Prime, and Mat’Demka Prime. Heroes from Britannia Prime also include steam-powered vehicles.

New Skill

Crystal Key Use (Spirit)

This is the skill that [all-only](#) Fringeworthy [gettake as a free skill at d4](#). It is the ability to command and use the [powers of the](#) crystal keys created by the Tehrmelern. [For more information on using Crystal Keys, see Arcane Background \(Fringeworthy\).](#)

LANGUAGES

There are over a thousand languages on Earth Prime, and even more on Victorian Earth, so a complete list of languages is impossible. But the top five languages in order are: However, the top five languages in order are:

- Mandarin
- Spanish
- English
- Hindi/Urdu
- Arabic

These represent about 50% of all spoken languages in the world, so there is a good chance that your character might speak one of them. Rounding out the top ten, here are the next five most spoken languages in the world:

- Bengali
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Japanese
- German

These represent 13% of all spoken languages. However, it's very likely that your character speaks none of these languages, and at best is only fluent in just one. This is a decision that you have to make when you create your character. In countries where more than one language is spoken, you will probably speak the official language, plus any local or regional languages or dialects.

Skill Ability

- d4** The character can read, write, and speak common words and phrases
- d6** The speaker can carry on a prolonged but occasionally halting conversation
- d8** The character can speak fluently
- d10** The hero can mimic other dialects within the language
- d12** The speaker can speak masterfully

Your character starts with a d8 in their native languages, but other languages must be learned. The die level is more of an indication of how well you can understand and comprehend a language. When reading a language, you may have to make a language roll to comprehend complex wording or phrases.

Additionally, when you step through a portal, the Fringe system will "gift" you with a new language at d8. This language will be the one spoken by the majority of the populace nearest to the portal on the alternate world within a hundred miles or so of the portal. You will speak the language in the local dialect and with no issues with the translation, as any colloquial phrases will be translated into ones you understand, within reason. There are always some phrases that don't translate well between cultures or species. In addition, you'll be able to read and write in that language. This language gift does not give you any cultural information or knowledge of mores and beliefs. You just speak the language like a native.

SECONDARY STATISTICS

Charisma is how likeable your hero is, and it is added as bonus to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls. Charisma starts at +0 unless you change it by taking Edges or Hindrances.

Pace is at 6", unless it is changed by Edges or Hindrances.

Parry is set to 2 plus half of your Fighting die type. Edges, Hindrances, and some equipment can modify your Parry stat.

Toughness is set to 2 plus half of your Vigor die type. Edges, Hindrances, and Armor can modify your Toughness. If your Vigor goes above d12, all fractions are rounded down.

HINDRANCES AND EDGES

At this point you can decide to add any Hindrances to your hero. If so, you can use the points gained to buy some of the benefits listed below. A major Hindrance is worth 2 points and minor Hindrance is worth 1 point. Your character can have a maximum of 1 major and 2 minor Hindrances.

For 1 Hindrance point, you can gain a new skill point. For 2 Hindrance points, you can raise the die type by one for an attribute or buy an Edge.

All Human characters start with one free Edge. The T'zeil, Blizniz, and Dimixi do not start with a free Edge. By default, all player characters get the Fringeworthy Edge; and can take Crystal Key Use if they wish skill at d4, and two Crystal Key Powers. See the Fringeworthy Edge for more information about this.

The **Arcane Background (Psionics)** is the only Arcane Background that can be initially taken by your character. Psionics are as rare as being Fringeworthy, but unlike being Fringeworthy, Psionics can be inherited. If you want to make your character Psionic, consult your GM to see if they are comfortable to have such a character in UNIDA and IDET. Currently, there is only one known Psi member of IDET: Wei Lei of IDET 1.

GEAR AND MONEY

Your hero is a member of UNIDA and serves on an IDET team. Your signing bonus as a Fringeworthy is \$1,250,000 -on Earth Prime or 200,000 £ on Victorian Prime (\$1,250,000 in equivalent value). All four team members of IDET 1 donated a large portion of their bonuses to charity, so there is a lot of peer pressure on other IDET Explorers to do the same.

You can buy all the non-military weapons and gear that you want, whether or not you can take it with you may be a problem.

Additionally, the first missions will have a budget assigned to it. This budget does not apply to your basic or combat load outs, or your assigned vehicle. The budget is for military items and items that are beyond your character's abilities to legally obtain. Yes, you can go to a nation that has less that rigorous regulations for military grade weapons and come back with an armful of RPGs and AK-47s. But you'll never get past customs in Australia, and if you fly directly to Hatsumi, General base commander Borodin will have your gear confiscated and send you back to Alice Springs for "retraining". Do not tweak the nose of the Russian Bear.

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

Now take some time to work out your character's background. What did he do for a living? Where did he live? Who are his friends and family? Remember your character didn't appear fully formed, he

grew up, had life experiences, all of which colors his life and history before he was found to be Fringeworthy. If you don't want to decide what country your character is from, you can roll on this table. This table represents the populations of the world: Roll a d100 to randomize your nationality.

100	D	Nation	100	D	Nation
-20	1	People's Republic of China	6	7	South Africa
1-37	2	India	7	7	Spain / Portugal
8-42	3	United States of America	8	7	Colombia / Peru / Venezuela / Chile
3-45	4	Indonesia	9	7	Myanmar
6-48	4	Bangladesh	0	8	Sudan / Ethiopia
9-50	4	Brazil / Mexico	1	8	Argentina / Paraguay / Uruguay
1-52	5	Pakistan	2	8	Poland / Hungary / Bulgaria
3-54	5	Russia	3	8	Tanzania
5-56	5	Nigeria	4	8	Kenya / Somalia
7-58	5	Japan	5	8	Morocco / Algeria / Egypt
9-60	5	Mexico	6	8	Israel
1-62	6	Philippines	7	8	Canada
3	6	Vietnam	8	8	Afghanistan
4	6	Germany / Scandinavia	9	8	Indonesia
5	6	Egypt	0	9	Nepal
6	6	Greenland / Iceland	0	9	Uganda / Rwanda
7	6	Turkey	2	9	Uzbekistan / Mongolia / Tuva
8	6	Iran / Iraq / Syria / Jordan	3	9	Saudi Arabia / Emirates
9	6	Thailand	4	9	Malaysia
0	7	France	5	9	Vietnam / Laos / Cambodia
1	7	United Kingdom	6	9	Philippines
2	7	Sub Sahara Africa	7	9	Central America
	7	Italy / Greece		9	Republic of China on

3		8	Taiwan
4	7 South Korea / North Korea	9	9 Romania / Albania
5	7 Ukraine / Georgia	00	1 Pacific Islander

We encourage you to write up a background for your character. Where did she grow up? Who are her friends? Is she married or engaged to be married? Lot's of questions. All of them potential plot hooks for your GM to use and make your game more enjoyable and exciting. The best way to do this is in steps. Feel free to alter these as the situation warrants. A T'Zeil would have a radically different early life from that of a person born on United Nations Earth.

Remember that this is optional, but it really helps in fleshing out your character and how she relates to the other characters on her team.

Step 1: Your early years

This is your character's early life from birth to about 18 years of age. These are the years that shaped your character and made them who they are as an adult. As you write it out, consider their family and upbringing. Always consider the following questions:

- Is the character's family rich? Poor? Well educated? Isolated? Religious? Politically active?
- How big is the character's family?
- Does the character get along well their family?
- What nation is the character from? What region? (See the random chart if you're stuck.)
- What kind of education did the character receive?
- Did the character have friends and what were they like? Did the character get into much trouble?

Step 2: Adulthood

As the character matures, they find out what they really are good at. This is the time people try a lot of things, before they decide on a course for their life. College life, military service, traveling the world, or even working at a low paying job, these are all things that can happen. Also first loves and marriage occur during this time, if at all. Things to consider:

- What was their first real job or even if they had one?
- Did they fall in love and get married? Are they just dating?
- Do they keep in touch with their old friends? What about new friends?
- Are their parents still alive? Still married? What about their siblings?
- Where do they live? The same place they grew up? In the country? In a city or town?

Step 3: I'm What?

Now they find out that they are Fringeworthy. They may or may not be offered an obscene amount of money to represent their country in UNIDA as an explorer. There will be a lot of pressure on them from family and friends, their workplace and especially their government. Things to consider:

- Did their spouse or significant other encourage them to sign up? Did they do the opposite and discourage them from joining UNIDA?
- Do they spread the wealth from their signing bonus or keep it all to themselves?
- Does their government want them to do things like get new technology or knowledge and not share with the world? Spy on other nations or worlds? Be an ambassador for your nation?

- In the early years, you get more than your allocation of 15 minutes of fame. You are a rock star. Do you have your stalker or stalkers? Do you get a posse of “new friends”? Do you like living in the Fishbowl that being Fringeworthy is?

Step 4: Welcome to Alice Springs, Australia!

After accepting the offer, (We knew you would, otherwise there wouldn't be a game if you didn't.), you and your family are shipped off to the growing community of Alice Springs Fringeplex. All basic training takes place at Alice Springs for all recruits. Of course the first thing that happens is that you're shipped off to Hatsumi Base and marched through the portal. This is done so that everyone in your training cadre speaks the same language. Then it's back to Alice Springs and your year of Hell. Remember, you can't fail basic training; you're just put into a job that fits your abilities. Things to consider while you're doing 50 pushups for the drill sergeant:

- How does the character on your right treat you? Do you both get into trouble? Become fast friends?
- Do you help this character with training or education UNIDA puts you both through?
- What do you do when you're not training? Do your families like each other?
- Do you get invited to one of Borodin's infamous parties where the vodka flows like water?
- Where were you sent for your final exam? This should be the same for everyone at the table. How well did you do? What did you screw up? Don't roll this bit out, talk it out with everyone and decide just how successful you were.

Step 5: Your first mission

This step is optional. The GM will provide the mission you all went on and whether or not it was successful, but the details will be up to the players to decide. As you write this one up, include the player character on your left. Something happened to them and you came to their aid or something happened to you and they came to your aid. Or you both get into a fix and require the team to get you out.

GMs, the mission should be a milk run, something that they shouldn't have screwed up or have a problem with. Things like collecting artifacts from the Pokiwol or delivering supplies to the underground base on Rebellion Earth. Something that couldn't possibly go wrong...

Again, don't roll this one out; you all survive, so it's a matter of what happened and how everyone worked together to find a solution to the problem. Once you finished writing this up from your character's POV, the GM is encouraged to give everyone an extra benny or two for the effort for your first real adventure.

Wrapping it up

As you do each step, obvious skills, Hindrances, and Edges will come to mind. Remember, you only have so many skill points which limits you as to what you can make a real skill, or something you learned but never put into practice. The GM might give you a +1 bonus to try and do the skill or remember things you learned in that 11th grade history class with that hunky teacher. But resist the urge to put everything and the kitchen sink into this background. Each step should be a couple of paragraphs at best, not a novel.

BASIC TRAINING

Basic training for your character adds 20 experience points to them. This represents 4 raises, and changes the rank of the character from Novice to Seasoned.

IDET Training

Once a Fringeworthy person is found and joins the IDA, she is trained for 6 months at the Alice Springs Military Base. All current knowledge of the Fringepaths and allied worlds is shared with the recruit. An intense course of physical conditioning, survival training, and first contact protocols is required of (some say inflicted on) each candidate, before she can be offered an assignment in IDET. A recruit who successfully finishes their training gains the following four advances:

- The character can raise lowest of the following attributes one die level:
 - Agility
 - Strength
 - Vigor

If there are two or more of these attributes at the same die level, you must pick one to raise and leave the rest at the original die levels.

- The character can raise both Fighting and Shooting skills one die level as long as they are less than their Agility attribute.
 - If the character does not have either Fighting or Shooting skills, they gain one of these two skills at d4, *player's choice*.
 - If both skills are at Agility, then increase one of the two skills by one die level.
 - If only one skill is at the same level as Agility, increase the other skill 1 or 2 die levels. If you only raise the skill one level, then you can spend the other skill point on any other skill that is below Attribute level.
- Two additional Advances to spend as you see fit.

At the end of their training, the IDET recruit will have 20 experience points and a total of 4 advances.

TÆSS Training

Once a Fringeworthy person is found and joins the TÆSS, they undergo a similar training regimen as IDET and gains similar but not identical bonuses:

- The character can raise lowest of the following attributes one die level:
 - Agility
 - Strength
 - Vigor

If there are two or more of these attributes at the same die level, you must pick one to raise and leave the rest at the original die levels.

- The character can raise both Fighting and Shooting skills one die level as long as they are less than their Agility attribute.
 - If the character does not have either Fighting or Shooting skills, they gain one of these two skills at d4.
 - If both skills are at Agility, then increase one of the two skills by one die level.

- If only one skill is at the same level as Agility, increase the other skill 1 or 2 die levels. If you only raise the skill one level, then you can spend the other skill point on any other skill that is below Attribute level.
- A d4 in Knowledge (20th-21st century technology)
- One Advance to spend as you see fit.

At the end of their training, the TÆSS recruit will have 20 experience points and a total of 4 advances.

The Sheila Mortenson Story

Sheila is a 30-something accountant. She's not a warrior, but she did take a class in self-defense, so she has some familiarity with Aikido. She's a fan of mystery novels, and her hobbies include amateur theatrics, nature hikes, and photography. She has a mild phobia about snakes, but she thinks it's under control. She lives in a condo in Topeka, Kansas, and worked at a bank. That was her world before she found out that she was Fringeworthy.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Knowledge (Accounting) d8, Knowledge (Acting) d6, Knowledge (Photography) d6, Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Tracking d4

Charisma: +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Curious, Loyal, Phobia (Snakes, minor)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Attractive, Brave

After much negotiation, she secured her signing bonus with plans to start a program for disadvantage kids in Topeka. Then she's off to Alice Springs to meet with her fellow inductees. With her on the flight is Jeremy Grage, a 50-year-old farmer from Kansas. He was in town and was recruited in the same sweep that found her. At Alice Springs, they meet Harlan Friemering of Canada, Gihei Nijo of Japan, Sanjiv Cheema of India, and Tia Montealegre of Mexico. Of the six of them, Tia and Gihei spoke no English. That was taken care of with a special trip.

After being introduced and assigned apartments on base, they were packed into a waiting aircraft and flown to Antarctica. "The reason we do this is that the portal gifts a common language to everyone who transits through it," said Lucas Welkert, the UNIDA rep flying with the recruits. "So, one of the existing teams will take you on through and back again so that you and your future teammates all can talk to each other."

"So we'll all be speaking English?" asked Sheila.

Lucas pursed his lips and said, "Not exactly..."

Landing on the ice sheet runway was interesting. The engines did not stop as the passengers and cargo were offloaded. Director Borodin was there to greet his new charges as well as Gordon Conrad of IDET 1. "This will be a short visit," said Borodin in his deep, gruff voice, "but understand that you will have to get used to this conditions here. It will be your home for half the year. Let me introduce you to Colonel Conrad, leader of Team 1. Colonel..."

"Thank you Director," said Conrad. Then he turned to the recruits, and the two translators. "OK, before you freeze your asses off here, let's get this shit out of the way right now. Follow me!"

Borodin winced, but nodded to Conrad, who led his charges to the elevator shaft. "Welcome to Deep Shaft 9," he said with a chuckle. "A joke that only nerds get. This shaft goes down to the ground floor of the dome. Some sort of sci-fi magic keeps the ice and water from drowning the place, and so far no one wants to mess with it."

Sheila listened with half an ear, as they slid down into the blue ice of the ice sheet covering the Ross Sea. She could hear the ice groan and crack as they descended. Then suddenly they entered a huge blue tinged dome of ice. Electric lights shown everywhere, dotting what looked like a village on the floor of the dome. There were roads that crisscrossed the surface and dead trees still standing. The focus of the village was a white building... not of human manufacture. Man-made buildings fronted it. It was to this building that Conrad led the recruits.

A small Asian man, who saluted Conrad, met them on the way. Conrad sloppily returned the salute back. The two spoke rapid fire in a language that Sheila couldn't understand. "This is Colonel Saidi of the Malaysian Army. It's their turn to guard the portal, and he says its effing cold." Conrad smiled, as did Saidi. "He'll escort us to the portal, so don't give him no lip. He does speak English, Japanese, and Hindu." Saidi smiled even bigger.

They walked through the village of arctic huts and buildings. The white building loomed over all of them. It's smooth curving sides defied conventional design. "It looks like something Frank Gehry would build," commented Harlan. "All curves and no straight lines."

They entered through a set of doors that took them past Quarantine and the vehicle entrance. Inside the building the walls curved and bowed unnaturally. Fortifications faced the center of the room. And in the center of the room...

It was a black, blacker than anything Sheila had ever seen. A thin silver ring contained it. And the portal and ring were suspended in the air above the floor. A silver ramp lead up to the face of the portal. Waiting for them were four soldiers with blue berets. "Fringe Division Peacekeepers" said Conrad. "Since none of you have any weapons experience yet, we're going in with an armed guard." The leader of the squad saluted Conrad, who returned it. Then the two clasped hands in a way that said they had some history together. "This is Mstislav Egorov, late of IDET 2, now second in command of the Fringe Division."

"Why do we need protection?" asked Gihei through his translator.

"Fringe pirates," said Mstislav matter of factly. "Though we haven't had a raid in a while, we can't take chances. Follow us." With that, he did a hand sign and the four soldiers moved through the portal and vanished.

"After you," said Conrad. "No sense in putting this off."

One by one, the six recruits walked up and through the portal. Sheila was the last one through. She went from the cold of the dome to the relative warmth of the platform. On the platform were the four soldiers, and four more manning a firebase in the middle of the platform.

Conrad stepped through last, and said, "So, can you understand me now?" Gihei and Tia both turned with an odd smile and nodded. "Good, this is where we put you through the initiation. Only Fringeworthy know about it."

He stepped forward and stood before the recruits with a serious look on his face. "OK, you're here, you're Fringeworthy. You can do whatever the f*** you want to do. If you want to go walkabout, then pick up some water and a couple of weeks worth a rations from the firebase and

go motherf***ing walkabout. However, if you want to learn what's out the f*** is out here, then repeat the following."

The five senior Fringeworthy stood at attention, then placed their left hands on their hearts and raised their right hand. Then in unison, they said, "I pledge my life to my comrades."

The recruits quickly stood roughly at attention and repeated the hand gestures and the opening preamble.

"I pledge to protect our homeworld from all enemies external and internal. I pledge to do my best to better my fellow man. I will go and find new worlds and new people and make them our friends. I will do so, even though I may lose my life doing so. I will do this because I am baddest motherf***er ever born. I will do this, because I am Fringeworthy. So I pledge."

The recruits echoed "So I pledge."

"OK," said Conrad. "Now you're Fringeworthy."

Initiation over, Conrad showed them sights of the platform and introduced them to the rest of the Peacekeepers on the platform. Then they exited the platform back to Antarctica and Hatsumi Base. As they stepped out, Colonel Saidi was there to welcome them back. "So, do you understand me now?" he asked in perfectly understandable Malaysian...

Afterwards there was a party back at Hatsumi base, at which they were introduced to the base personnel, and given the tour of the facilities. Next day, the recruits made their goodbyes to their new friends and flew back to Alice Springs. After setting up her apartment and familiarizing herself with base and the heat of the Australian summer, Sheila started basic training...

"I am Staff Sergeant Sayid Tuah," said the short Malay man facing the six recruits. "You will address me as Sergeant Tuah. Not 'Sarge' not 'Sergeant', and definitely not 'sir'. I am Sergeant Tuah to you while I train you and perhaps make you a better person. I wish I could wash you out of this program, but I can't. However, I will not pamper anyone who cannot keep up or not listen to orders. Do you understand?"

"Yes!" replied some. Sheila wisely replied "Yes Sergeant Tuah."

It took a bit of personal perseverance, because the training was hard, but no one was left behind. Sheila had thought she was in shape, but the training said otherwise. She learned to shoot a pistol and rifle, how to dig a latrine, how to move under fire, and she learned teamwork. After everyday, the six would get together at the base canteen and go over the days events and how they were going to kill Sergeant Tuah. Well, maybe not.

At the end of her training, Shelia had put on some muscle, and found that she was a better fighter thanks to her training. Their graduation exercise was to be dropped off as a team someplace on Earth with no resources and then make it to a UN office in that country. Their starting point was Marrakesh and they had to get to Casablanca, Morocco. It took them a week, but they ended up outside the UN office in a 1972 VW minivan dressed as Moroccans. That and a collection of odds and ends that ended up decorating their homes at Alice Springs and in the Fringeworthy bar at Hatsumi base. IDET 13 was now a team ready to go.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Knowledge (Accounting) d8, Knowledge (Acting) d6, Knowledge (Photography) d6, Fighting d8, Investigation d8, Shooting d4, Tracking d4

Charisma: +2; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Curious, Loyal, Phobia (Snakes, minor)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Attractive, Brave, Martial Arts (Knockout Blow)

FRINGEBORN

Availability: Established Years and New Commonwealth campaigns

You've grown up on the Fringepaths, eaten at the table of the Great Khan, seen the wonders of Rome, and hunted dinosaurs in your Fringe Scout troop. You are the Fringeborn. You were born with the Fringeworthy trait that you inherited from your Fringeworthy mother. You've been raised to be a Fringe explorer, Fringe scientist, administrator or other Fringeworthy career. You've also been trained how to survive and live on the Fringes.

The first Fringeborn were born in the early years of exploration. The child of a Fringe explorer, the first Fringeborn were treated as rare treasures and raised to be the very best Fringeworthy person they could be, whether or not they wanted to be one.

When you reached 4 or 5 years of age, you got to visit places other people only dream about. Meet people who treated you like a king, visited lands and see-saw sights that others only see in movies. You have-had the best education possible. You received training to survive in jungles, deserts, ice covered wastelands and places that defy logic. It's great right up to the point when you realized that your government expects you to do your duty and serve as a Fringeworthy. That-This usually happened around 16 or 17 years of age that this realization hits you.

You may have taken this news with a shrug, "I get to do the same things I'm already doing, and now I get paid for it."

You may reacted angrily over this development, "Just because I was born Fringeworthy doesn't mean I want to be drafted into the service!"

And everything in between.

So when making a Fringeborn character decide how they took the news that they were expected to serve and what they did about it. They won't be inducted into UNIDA or TÆSS until they reach 21 years of age, so that they get some higher education, the equivalent of 4 years of college, thanks the accelerated training regimes put into place by both-all Fringe services.

Remember, Fringeborn are only available in the "Established Years" or "New Commonwealth" campaigns types.

Creating a Fringeborn

You create your character as normal with the following changes:

- Because of their training and life experience, Fringeborn get 6 points to spend on Attributes.
- If you are playing a Fringeborn who is 16 to 18 years of age, they only get 15 skill points.
- You get the Fringeborn edge for free, in addition to the Fringeworthy edge.

After you create your base character, they then go through either IDET or TÆSS basic training. However, they do not get the free attribute raise. Instead, you get an additional Advance to spend as you see fit.

The First Fringeborn

Jason Conrad, the son of Gordon Conrad and Wei Lei-Conrad, has just graduated from the IDET Academy in Alice Springs, Australia. He's lean like his father, and like his mother, has the psionic gift as well. He's also bilingual thanks to his parents.

Before going to the Academy, his Attributes and skills were the following:

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Driving d4, Fighting d4, Investigation d6, Knowledge (History) d6, Knowledge (Fringepaths) d6, Language (Chinese) d8, Language (English) d8, Notice d6, Psionics d6, Repair d6, Shooting d4, Survival d4

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Curious, Transit Vertigo (minor), Stubborn

Edges: Fringeworthy, Fringeborn, Brave Arcane Background (Psionics), Luck

Powers: Empathy, Telepathy, Disguise

When he graduates from the IDET Academy, his Attributes and skills become the following:

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d4, Driving d4, Fighting d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (History) d6, Knowledge (Fringe Pirates) d4, Knowledge (Fringepaths) d6, Language (Chinese) d8, Language (English) d8, Notice d6, Psionics d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Charisma: -; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Curious, Transit Vertigo (minor), Stubborn

Edges: Fringeworthy, Fringeborn, Arcane Background (Psionics) Brave, Luck, Explorer

Powers: Empathy, Telepathy, Disguise

FREELANCERS

Availability: All campaigns

Not everyone works for UNIDA or TÆSS. Some folks find out that they are Fringeworthy and instead of joining up, sell their newfound ability to the highest bidder. Others are Fringewalkers, people who found a warp or Ring Station on their world, ~~and~~ stepped through, and never came back home. Some are UNIDA or TÆSS Fringeworthy who quit, and went into business for themselves. No matter where they came from, they are in it for themselves.

What ties them together is that they are Fringeworthy and they just want to see what's out there. They band together mostly for protection, but mostly because even though they are rugged individualists, they find that they have a common core with other Freelancers.

Freelancers are the mercenaries of the Fringes, selling their services not for money, but goods, food, ammunition, books, and whatever else strikes their fancy. They will take gold or silver, as that's easy to trade either for cash or directly for an item. They will scout new worlds, seek out adventures, and boldly go where no one has gone before. ~~And then~~ Then sell that information for whatever they can get for it.

Creating a Freelancer

Because their background is so varied, you have following choices:

- Ex-UNIDA or TÆSS
- Independent Fringeworthy
- Fringewalker.

Ex-UNIDA or TÆSS:

Create your hero as you would normally. Your GM may let you take an extra Advance to represent your time on the Fringepaths before you quit the service and went Freelance.

You will get to equip your hero with whatever she could buy before quitting. The only vehicle she'll probably have is a bicycle and lots of spare inner tubes and tires. UNIDA will take back all the standard issue weapons and gear, unless she quits while on a mission. If she does quit from UNIDA while on a mission, she automatically gets the Wanted (minor) Hindrance and going near any UNIDA or TÆSS teams can get sticky. However, if she returns items like their XM8-rifle, and issued computers, and her uniform, UNIDA may drop the charges.

Sadly, the Earl of Greystone is not so forgiving. If you quit from TÆSS while on a mission, you will get the Wanted (Major) hindrance, as the Earl will want to bring you back to Victorian Earth to stand trial for mutiny. You're better off resigning from service properly, and then petition for permission to use the portals on Victorian prime to travel the Fringes. The Earl will grant it, as he hopes that you'll see the error of your ways and come back to his service.

Independent Fringeworthy:

When they came a knocking, you thanked them for finding out that you were Fringeworthy, but decided that you didn't want to join, even after they threw tons of money at you or told you that you had to do it for Queen and Country.

After a while, you realized that you did want to travel and see the worlds, but you didn't want to do it working for the government. So, you either cashed in your life savings, started a Kickstarter, or got a grant from a foundation or corporation, and showed up at the base and told them, "Please let me through, I'm going to see everything."

Were you prepared? Well, you probably read every book published on being an explorer, you devoured the stories from the Fringes, and watched every documentary there was. So That's when you were certain that you could do it. And you were one of the lucky ones, you survived long enough to realize that you needed to join forces with other like-minded people and then go exploring.

Your hero is created usual, 5 attribute points, 17 skill points, but your starting funds can be a bit higher, as you've sold the farm, hocked your jewels, and sold all your comics on eBay. You start with 1d10 x \$1000 in cash. You would have more, but since you're paying someone to transport you to either

the Antarctic or the Congolese Protectorate, a good portion of your funds have been spent. Your remaining cash is all you have left to buy your personal transportation, weapons, ammo, and supplies for however long they will last.

Fringewalker:

This person has come from a totally different world and culture and may not even be human. Work with your GM if you plan to do a non-human hero by using the Making Races rules in the **Savage Worlds Deluxe** book. You start with 5 Attribute points and 15 Skill points. After you create your hero, you can then apply 1d4 Advances to him, representing his experiences on the Fringepaths.

Select what sort of gear would be available to the hero from his culture, starting cash is \$500 + d10 x \$10. Any cash left over can be turned into the equivalent amount of silver or gold at \$20 an ounce for pre-20th century cultures.

FRINGE CULTURES

Humans, United Nations Earth Prime

Platform: 0 Prime; **Portal:** 1

World: Earth Prime

First Contact: N/A

Technology Level: 10

United Nations Earth Prime Humans are the prime movers of the United Nations Interdimensional Agency (UNIDA) and the one of the peoples involved in the exploration of the Fringepaths. Primers have had a short and violent development period that all but ended in the later half of the 20th century.

Discovery of the Fringepaths united the majority planet into a spirit of brotherhood and adventure that was closely guarded by the United Nations. This spirit caught on with other contacted worlds and bolstered the hopes that the resources of unlimited worlds could create a golden age of technology and wellbeing. Psychologically, the discovery of new worlds and races also gave humanity a mirror to see how cultures grow, prosper, and fall.

Slow to see economic benefits at first, many now realize that the Fringepaths are a treasure house for Earth. Ecologists hope to resurrect extinct species. Industrialists know that the mineral resources and oil on other worlds can be tapped and supplement dwindling stocks on Earth Prime.

However, there are those who see the Fringepaths as something evil. Driven either by religious or xenophobia, there are those on Earth Prime that plot to destroy UNIDA and the pathways by whatever means possible.

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Free Edge

Earth Prime humanity starts with a free Edge at character creation.

Extra Skill Points

Earth Prime humanity starts with 17 skill points to spend at character creation.

Humans, Britannia Earth Prime

Platform: +2 Prime; **Portal:** 10

World: Victorian Prime

First Contact: 2012

Technology Level: 7+

The Britons were the first Fringe Culture that was encountered on the Pathways by IDET. This team of Brits from Her Majesty, Queen Victoria's Trans-Æthereal Exploration Service was investigating the Alternate 0,8 portal when they encountered the team from Earth Prime. The Brits had discovered the Fringepaths 6 months earlier than Earth Prime had. They had been exploring the pathways longer than the IDET teams and they had explored the Alternate platforms from Alt +2 to Alt 0.

While the Brits understood that they had little technical chance of defeating these people from the future, they still maintain an independent operation, working in conjunction with the IDET units in exploring this vast uncharted new universe. In the meantime, several members of the Trans-Æthereal Exploration Service are working with the UNIDA in the hopes of gaining a century's worth of technology in trade.

Strangely, this Alternate Earth had a similar history to Earth Prime's, but with a host of different people. There had been an American Revolution but it was followed by a re-conquest of the Colonies in 1813. The empire is still on the rise and respected across their world.

The Brits have become an integral part of the Alien Services and work closely with the UNIDA and adhere to most of its rules and decisions. They are still shaken by the cultural norms of Earth Prime, though a few have gone "native" on Earth Prime.

Languages

English (98%), Russian (10%), French (45%), Spanish (18%), Chinese (10%), German (20%), Arabic (15%), Hindi (35%)

Names

Variable, Viscount Terrance Greystone, Colonel David Wellington Smyth, Col Jonathan Drake, Dr. Henderson Cartwright, David Peters, Percival Forsyth, Winston Churchill, Lord William Barton

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Free Edge

Victorian humanity starts with a free Edge at character creation.

Extra Skill Points

Victorian humanity starts with 17 skill points at character creation.

Skill Restriction

Victorians cannot start with **Knowledge** or **Craft** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the 19th Century. Their **Common Knowledge** rolls are at -2 for 20th and 21st century technology until they reach the rank of Veteran.

Additionally, if a Victorian tries to repair a damaged piece of equipment or vehicle that uses modern technology, their **Repair** roll is at -2, until they reach the rank of Veteran. This skill restriction is only for the Early Years campaign setting.

Skill Availability

Victorians have the following new **Knowledge** skill focuses available for technology unique to their world:

- Steam Technology
- Babbage Computers
- Instruction Weaving (Programming Babbages)
- Steam Fitter
- Steam Vehicles
- Mechanical Devices

History:

Point of Divergence:

1812: War is averted when a fast sloop from Britain delivers news that the British Orders of Council of 1807 have been withdrawn. The Order prohibited neutral parties from trading with France and her allies during the Napoleonic Wars. This Order had caused much friction between United States of America and Britain, with many American ships trying to break through the British blockades to deliver goods to France.

Still, there is a movement afoot in America to conquer portions of Canada, though the New England states are against angering the British. In November, De Witt Clinton is elected President of the United States of America by the narrowest of margins.

In Europe, General Wellington is victorious over French forces in Spain. The Emperor Napoleon ~~however~~ was grievously wounded in Russia after an early crossing of the River Niemen on April 3rd, 1812 during the retreat from Moscow. The wound later became infected and Napoleon died on the way back to Paris on ~~December~~ April 8th, 1812. The war was over in Europe, as the French army withdrew and settled into an internal squabble over who now rules France. With no war, the more moderate Federalist candidate, DeWitt Clinton, wins the American Presidential election of 1812, 114 electoral votes to James Madison's 103.

1813 - 1815: In Europe, the French empire is in upheaval, and quickly descends into multiple civil wars, as ally fights ally. The British forces wisely withdraw from the continent and wait to see what arises after the dust settles.

In America, frontiersmen, angry that DeWitt Clinton won the election, stage a raid from Fort Detroit across the Detroit River on the city of Sandwich and Fort Malden. They are beaten back by the well-trained British troops.

In retaliation, British troops cross the river and take Fort Detroit and the surrounding settlements. President Clinton tries to negotiate a withdrawal of British troops when more frontiersmen from Buffalo Creek attack Fort Niagara. Consequently the talks break down and the British forces mass at the border. Reluctantly, Clinton asks Congress to declare war on Britain.

Wellington is sent to "teach those brutes a lesson" with several divisions of battle hardened troops. The British Navy successfully blockades the major ports, while the New England states surrendered to British forces.

The war is bloody; Philadelphia is burned, as is Washington. New York City switches sides and pledges loyalty to the crown, providing a major port in America for Britain. American forces are caught between two fronts in the northern states south of New York: British troops on the Atlantic seaboard, and troops from Upper Canada streaming through the captured Michigan Territory.

The Spanish besieged New Orleans, in an attempt to recapture the southern portion of Louisiana. Andrew Jackson manages to break the siege and drive the Spanish troops into the swamps, where they died by the hundreds at the hands of the Choctaw and other denizens of the swamps. A year later the British try their hand at capturing New Orleans, but again Jackson holds them off long enough to work out a deal with the Crown. By this time, the United States of America is no more, only pockets of resistance keeps British troops busy.

New Orleans and a portion of Louisiana become an independent state, with a generous trade agreement with England along with access to the Mississippi river. The remainder of the Louisiana territory is claimed by England, with Spain consolidating its hold on the Western portion of North America, up to the Columbia River. Above that, Russia laid claim to the land, Rossiyskaya Amerika.

The former United States are divided up into small provinces, each one assigned a governor appointed by the crown. Provincial assemblies are allowed, but could be disbanded at any time by the governor or the crown.

1820 - 1860: California breaks free from Spanish rule, backed by both Russian and British interests. Mexico soon rebels, and Spain loses its major foothold in North America. The only possession they have left is Florida, a benighted land of unruly savages and mosquitoes. A few years later, they sell Florida to England, who also doesn't know what to do with its new possession.

France settles into five separate states, divided by language and cultural lines. Kings rule two, one becomes a dictatorship, one restores the Republic in a smaller form, and the fifth attempts to create a socialist state, without a central government. It fails five years later, and is absorbed into the other four states: The New Republic of France, the Kingdom of Normandy, the Kingdom of Provençal, and the Republic of Gascony.

Gold is discovered in San Francisco, but is declared a national resource, stymieing any potential gold rush to the region. Claim jumpers are summarily shot by Californian soldiers. California becomes a major player in Pacific trade with two major ports: San Francisco and San Diego. Financed by the newly discovered gold, California becomes a trade powerhouse, with ships headed to every major port on the Pacific Rim. The Sandwich Islands are annexed by California, as are several other Pacific islands. The Sandwich Islands are renamed Isla de Patria de Hawai'i.

California is a unique blend of Spanish, Indian, Russian, and British cultures. The primary language is Spanish, though it is becoming a unique dialect thanks to the influences of the other cultures. It is a constitutional monarchy, with the Californian Dons tightly holding the reigns of government.

In 1850, Charles Babbage finishes his first Analytical Engine, demonstrating it to the Admiralty as a more efficient means to tabulate reams of data, even to calculate ranges on the fly. Later, using the work of the physicist Joseph Henry, Babbage added the ability for his engines to communicate with each

other telegraphically. This spawned a special kind of Babbage engine that dealt entirely with telegraphic communications, sending information across the world at lightning speed.

Britain's holdings in North America were consolidated into a single entity in 1855: the Commonwealth of America. The Commonwealth consists of Upper and Lower Canada, the former United States and its territories, and Florida. The seat of government is in New York City on Manhattan Island. (The city of Washington was destroyed and turned into several farms.)

However all is not well in the Commonwealth. The Sons of Liberty, the followers of Jefferson and Adams, are a constant thorn in the side of the British. They attack government offices with bombs, print treasonous tracts trying to instigate public unrest, and other terrorist style attacks. Their goal is to restore the American Republic or destroy it so the Brits can't have it.

1860 - 1897 (year of contact): The Commonwealth of America is fast becoming the major economic engine in the British Empire. The Republic of Louisiana is a major benefactor of this trade, due to their ownership of the mouth of the Mississippi River.

In 1870, the Great European War raged through most of Europe, starting when Prussia, Bavaria-Saxony, and Austria declared war against the New Republic of France. The Republic calls on its allies, and soon the Kingdoms of Normandy and Provençal took up arms. By 1871, Except for Britain, Europe was at war. Many new weapons and tactics were created and tested during the war, including the first military use of lighter than air airships. The Great European War ended in a muddle by 1876, with no one gaining or losing any territory.

Britain stayed neutral in Europe, but elsewhere in the world she took advantage of the conflict. First to go was the Belgian holdings in Africa, as Britain conquered the Belgian Congo and swept across the continent and added much of Central Africa to its territory. This new territory was formed into the Congolese Protectorate.

Mexico finally relented and allowed the people of Tejas to secede and form the República de Tejas. Mexico still controls the lower Rocky Mountains up to the lower Colorado River, but does not do much with the territory. The region becomes a no man's land of small bandit villages. These villages raid in all directions, but have special immunity because Mexico refuses to go after them and refuses to allow California, Rossiyskaya Amerika, and the Commonwealth of America to cross the borders and go after the bandits.

Along the Commonwealth border, Britain has established Her Majesty's Aerial Constabulary, commonly known as the Sky Marshals, to patrol the skies in massive airships, patterned on the designs created by the Bavarian-Saxon Count Von Zeppelin, along the border between the Province of Colorado and Mexico.

In late 1895, Viscount Terrence Greystone, son of the liberator of the Congo, Lord John Greystone, heard rumors about a white man that appeared years ago in the region of County Greystone and performed many tricks that Viscount Greystone recognized as a man using modern day technology. Only this had occurred in the 1780s!

Following local stories and rumors, Viscount Greystone visited a local shaman, Sese Ndango, one of the sources of the stories. Ndango used to visit the Viscount when he was a child, along with his friend, Cosgrove Shropshire, and tell them stories and let them play with his totems. One of which was a grey crystal that one day lit up for the Viscount, and then later on for Cosgrove.

When he visited Ndango about the stories, the old man led him to a warren of caves considered holy by the locals. Through a set of winding passages, Ndango showed him what he and his people guarded for so long: a perfectly hemispherical cavern, in the center of which was a silver ring that floated in midair...

Viscount Greystone returned two weeks later, brain full of stories about his trip, tales about a tree that was a house and creature known as Schmert. With Cosgrove at his side, he proved he wasn't insane, as the two of them entered and returned back through the silver ring.

However, it took a trip back to the cavern with observers from Her Majesty's Government to prove that he was not a raving lunatic to everyone else. Afterwards, Terrence Greystone found himself a new member of the Prime Minister's cabinet and the head of Her Majesty's Trans-Æthereal Survey Service.

Trans-Æthereal Survey Service

The British Trans-Æthereal Survey Service was created in 1897 as an official secret service. Her Majesty and the Prime Minister decided that for now, these portals and other worlds would be an Official Secret, and Viscount Greystone had to operate under tightest secrecy. A shadow MP was created and advice on how to deal with this discovery was sought out from Her Majesty's most trusted agent, Mycroft Holmes. He helped in creating the TÆSS charter, which included exploring new worlds and finding worlds that Britain could trade with. The new ministry was also to contact Schmert and the rest of the Tehrmelern and offer an alliance of sorts between the two peoples.

The first expedition was on horseback and consisted of the Viscount Terrence and his friend Cosgrove Shropshire, a native Congolese with some English blood in his family tree. They were to ride horses, but the animals proved skittish on the platform and nearly threw the two of them off when they stepped onto the pathway. Sending the horses back through, they made the trek on foot, camping out on the pathway about midway.

Unfortunately the first TÆSS mission to meet with Schmert was unsuccessful. The world that Viscount Greystone had visited when he first entered the portals was completely different. A pocket stop ~~dominated by a large mountain, and that was is~~ approximately 100 miles in circumference, ~~and~~ surrounded by a tall wall, ~~and dominated by a large mountain in the center. The mountain is 2 miles tall with 10-mile wide base~~. They dubbed the pocket stop "Olympus Mons". If you climbed over the wall, you would find yourself on the ~~other-opposite~~ side of the pocket stop.

After this mission failed, Viscount Greystone sailed to each of the British Empire's possessions and sought out others with the Gift. He found three others, Hong Chan, Captain Jason Dupree, and Ben Reiher. They formed the core of the TÆSS Explorer Corps. A steam lorry was built to run on the pathways, and the team learned how to operate it. Meanwhile the best of the British sciences built devices for them to use to explore other worlds. The Viscount formed two squads: Squad 1, consisting of himself, Cosgrove, Hong Chan, and Ben Reiher. Captain Dupree formed Squad 2, and using the crystal key, went looking for more recruits.

Squad 1's first mission was launched ~~six-several~~ months later. They explored the gates on their prime platform. Of the eight, only three were unlocked: the gate that was found in the Congo, a gate in the middle of the Great Victoria Desert in Australia, half buried in sand, and a submerged gate, but the warp was on land on the eastern shore of India.

The second mission of the TÆSS Squad 1 explored the alternate platform for the Victorian node. Seven of the gates were locked and not explored until later by a combined TÆSS and IDET mission. The only gate that was open was the pocket stop. So, with gear in place, they headed out to the System platform and found that the gates for Venus, a swamp covered world with dinosaurs, and Mars, a red

desolate world, with nearby ruins that did not look to be of human manufacture, were the only gates found to be opened.

The second mission took little over a week to complete, during which, Captain Dupree was dispatched, with the crystal key, to find more people with the Gift.

The rest of the first exploration team tested new devices to allow them to find out more about the other side of the portal before stepping through. One was a collection of brass pipes, each curved, and when assembled formed a spiral hoop eight feet in diameter. In practice the hoop was assembled as the first piece was inserted into the portal. The curve of the pipes brought them back through the portal and when fully assembled spun in place. There were hooks on the hoop, where various devices would be attached drawn into and through the portal to the world on the other side.

The devices ranged from a clockwork air sampler, to a scoop on a long chain that would be attached to a hook, and then the scoop tossed through the portal. The hoop would bring the chain back through, where it would be taken up by an explorer and pulled back through the portal. Hopefully the scoop would gather up soil or other samples from the other side.

The most used device was a small clockwork plate camera that would be attached to the hoop and then take a picture on the other side. The images that were taken on the other side were most informative. Subsequently, a modified Lecia camera that was purchased on an alternate world, would replace the plate camera.

After two months of searching, Dupree found five more people with the Gift. They made up the second exploration team, Squad 2. The Squad 2 was to continued on down the Victorian node and explored the Star platforms. They were the first to document the flashing lights on the pylons, and thanks to the Sample Hoop, were able to assign meanings to each of the lights. They did lose their sample devices and the hoop when they tried to sample an alien world. Luckily they had a spare.

Squad 1, in a steam lorry built by Ben Reiher, traveled to their "Line +1", otherwise known as Node +1 to the UNIDA mapping system. (Victorians put the prime platforms on top of the map, not at the bottom of the map as UNIDA does.) On this line, they found that all the Alternate platform portals were locked down. On the Prime platform, they found a single gate that opens to a forest primeval. They found signs of animals, but did not find any other signs of life.

On Line +2 (Node 0), they found two open gates: One that leads to the Junkyard pokiwol; and the other leads to Victoria Earth II, and here is where they encountered UNIDA and... well that would be telling. See "Victoria-Victorians" adventure for more information on the first encounter.

Relations with the United Nations and England

For the Government of Her Royal Majesty, Elizabeth I, Queen of the United Kingdom of England, Scotland, and Wales, recognized Sovereign of Commonwealths and Territories under the English Crown.

From the Government of Her Britannic Majesty, Victoria Regina, Empress of India, Queen of the United Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Wales, Sovereign of the Territories and Trusts recognized as Britannia.

Pax, HRM Victoria with great joy send heart felt greetings and well wishes for the health and prosperity of our cousins upon your own Earth. It is with much gladness that such a familiarity exists to bolster the success of our endeavors, as we embark upon a mutual journey of discovery of these realms that exist outside our own.

To which Our Sovereign, wishes to implore of yours assistance as can be rendered to our own. In this We may better travel together as partners, withholding nothing from one another. The amazement the advances in the Arts and Sciences made by yourselves leaves Us nothing short of breathless, and optimistic to wonder such a future holds for our own sake.

Firstly so that all matters of future commerce and assistance may be conducted for the mutual satisfaction of either Worthy Government, assistance regarding certain technical and educational aspects are most desirable.

Complete set of Royal Society of Engineers Proofs for Weights and Measures for the modern measurement system known as Metric. 100 sets to be distributed within the Britannic Empire as standardized samples for representation and comparison.

Complete sets of accurate text and graphical or artistic representation for the education of HRM Subjects from grammar school, through Years one to seven, to Collegiate level to bring into wider usage this system and integrate ourselves comfortably with your own.

Complete sets of the Royal Society of Engineers standards and agreements for Industry and Scientific concerns. For the distribution throughout the Britannic Empire to bring about a standardized, efficient, and compatible system to bring the industrial strengths and capacities into alignment with you in Our allied effort.

Complete sets of such testing, sampling, and measuring equipment as necessary for the administration under the Crown for enforcement as a regulatory Office, with such jurisdiction to overrule Parliament in matters regarding Law pertaining to Standards set for education, commerce, and industry.

We entreat you to see to the mutual aid such an agreement benefits the good commerce and lively friendship between both our Realms and to most readily pass such Law or Decree for this to come to pass.

Your Most Staunch Brethren,

Representing Her Royal Britannic Majesty's Empire and Prime Minister. Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury

Humans, Golden Horde

Platform: -1 Alternate; **Portal:** 4

World: Gazar Eer or Eje

First Contact: 2013

Technology Level: 4+

After grinding Europe and the Moslem world into dust, the Horde of the Great Khan returned home to create a dynasty that would last a thousand years, claiming to control the whole world, Gazar Eej. As each new Khan came to power, he would ride the road of tribute to the West and South. Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, all prayed for a long life to the current Khan, hoping to live in peace for at least a generation till the next Khan comes to power.

Each Khan can trace lineage back to the greatest Khan, Genghis Khan. It may not be a straight line, but the blood of Genghis flows through the veins of each of his “descendants”. The current Khan, Batai Khan, is in his middle age, and has six sons, Nyma, Orin, Boji, Jiny, Yekeg, and Banua, all serve him as generals or administrators of his realm. His eldest, Nyma, is in line to inherit the crown, pending approval of the Grand Council. His brother Orin, is in contention for the throne as well. He has many daughters as well, most of whom have been married off to various princes and lords to cement the hegemony of the empire. The ones who are still single, Javach, Sune, Boke, and Toqa, are either too young to marry off yet, or have proven themselves useful to their father.

By accident, the IDET explorers that surveyed this world were forced to tell scholars of the “Ways to the Worlds”. In a stroke of genius, though mostly to save their own skins, they offered the Golden Horde a partnership with the IDA to help make the Khan even wealthier and his children strong across a hundred Worlds. In a good mood that day, the Great Khan released the team and found a dozen Fringeworthy among his own people to go with the explorers back to Earth Prime.

This and subsequent additions to the Fringeworthy, mostly ignorant peasants and warriors, has lead to a diplomatic morass and the hope that education can help the Golden Horde achieve a stable society in the span of a generation or two.

Languages

Mongolian (98%), Mandarin (45%), Yue (10%), Minnan (10%), Xiang (10%), Wu Minbei (10%)

Names

Male: Chuli, Qutai, Geria, Bayanai, Joodu, Solai

Female: Nevnai, Damdai, Galdai, Mongke, Tengra, Chidai

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Free Edge

Heros from Gazar Eej start with a free Edge during character creation.

Warriors:

Born Fighters

The Golden Horde warriors are raised as fighters, and start with a *Fighting* d4.

Brave

On the whole, warriors are fairly fearless, and gain a +2 to all Fear checks.

All for the Khan!

The hero is loyal to the Khan and will try to bring back any new technology and other finds back to Gazar Eej.

Illiterate

Golden Horde warriors for the most part are illiterate, and cannot read or write.

Skill Restriction

Golden Horde Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the 15th Century.

Humans, Erder

Platform: -1 Prime; **Portal:** 02

World: Erde Prime

First Contact: 2012

Technology Level: 8

The Erders or Heavies, as the IDET teams called them, were one of the first two races invited to join the IDA. Their Earth is a colder and nearly glaciated world where the climate took a turn for the colder after the second century AD. This predominantly German stock adapted and grew to become this Earth's most technically developed race.

The average Erder is home oriented and driven by a strong work ethic. They stand a little under 5 feet in height are extremely stocky in stature and mostly wear beards. Their religion is an odd blending of Christian and Pagan beliefs strung together with its core being basically positive towards technology and continued growth. They are governed by a group of Elders.

Only Erder males have been allowed out on the Fringepaths so far. Their chauvinistic tendencies have angered some of the female Fringeworthy and amused others. The IDA considers them a heavy-duty asset to cooperation and development of the Fringes.

Languages

Deutsch (90%), English (60%), Slova (10%), Old Latin (40%), Old English (55%)

Names

Yoseff, Oakmann, Gordo, Bottcher, Yon Keiber, Tonn Ordd

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Brawny

Fringeworthy from Erde are a tough bunch, and start the game with the Brawny Edge.

Skill Restriction

Erde Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the early 20th Century.

Humans, Norlander

Platform: -5 Prime; **Portal:** 7

World: Airthai Prime

First Contact: 2013

Technology Level: 5

On this Earth Alternate, a plague of never before seen virulence cleansed the tropics and lower latitudes of most humanity in the 7th Century. Due to some superstition and some common sense, the virtually untouched high-northern populations stayed stable. Only after a century, did they explore the southern areas of their world. The devastation there was staggering.

By the turn of the millennium, these industrious people had begun to re-colonize the more temperate regions and install their beliefs and culture to the very few survivors they found. Settling North America, they pressed westward. In the East they passed the Urals and the rich farmlands of the Ukraine. In 1116 A.D., Olaf the Explorer and his band stood in the crumbling glory of Rome.

Empty lands and little politics have allowed these people room to grow. Now with printing, medicine and the help of the IDA, the Norlanders have a good chance to develop a stable and progressive society

Languages

Latin-Germanic (50%), Latin (50%), Norland Trade (50%)

Names

Lars, Olaf, Sven, or Orum. Often the surname is created by adding sson to the end of their father's name, such as Lars Larsson, (meaning son of), or they gain an appellation of some deed or special event from the persons past, such as Thorfin Skullsplitter. His son, Eric, would go by the surname "Eric Thorfinsson Skullsplitter"

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Strong

Norlander Fringeworthy are known to be strong, living a tougher life than Earth Prime humans, and start the game with the edge Brawny.

Skillful Fighters

Norlanders learn at an early age how to fight and defend their territory. They start with a Fighting d4 skill at character creation.

Skill Restriction

Norlander Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the early 16th Century.

Humans, Romana Universa

Platform: -2 Alternate; **Portal:** 11

World: Romana Universa

First Contact: 2011

Technology Level: 15th Century, social skills 12th Century

In this alternate, Rome did not fall. A few minor twists in politics saw a succession of fair but stagnant rulers who kept the empire on a status quo. One of the twists was an ex-Thracian soldier, sold into slavery, became a gladiator, led the largest slave revolt ever seen, defied the old Roman Republic, defeated every legion sent against him, and in the end conquered Rome and became her first emperor, Spartacus Licinius Thracius [in 70 BCE](#).

[The Roman Empire covers all of Southern Europe up to the Baltic Sea, as far east as the Volga River, Caspian Sea and the former Persian Empire. It extends southwards, including the entirety of the Arabic peninsula and North Africa, primarily along the coasts, as far south as Ætheopia on the east coast and Senegal on the West. The interior is still uncharted.](#)

While technology has advanced to the development of steel, the printing press, gunpowder and the beginnings of the mechanical age, social science is stubbornly mired in tradition and the printed word of Roma.

Slavery is still common and an emperor is on the throne, Spartacus Galenus Plinius Augustus. Colonies cover the world and the only problems left are the people on the other side of that Great Asian Wall. While trade is common with the East, a military presence still lines the border.

[The Roman pantheon, with various modifications and additions, including one simplification in 1123 CE, is still in place. Christianity is three small Judaic cults, with very little influence. Islam never formed, Mohamed was never born on this world, so various Semitic cults in the Abrahamic faith still exists, but never came together into a consistent whole. Judaism is still the dominant religion on the Arabic peninsula, though highly moderated by the Romans.](#)

[The Warp to this world is located in Southern England, near the city of Londinium. Most of the initial Roman Fringeworthy were either Brits or Legionnaires from across the empire. As time progressed, more and more Roman Fringeworthy were recruited from Roman Europe, Middle East, and North Africa.](#)

[The *Legio I Alternis Mundus Britannia* was formed and based in Londinium. Initially, the LEG I AMBRT was made of Fringeworthy that IDE teams found searching Britannia and Gaul. It was unconventional, as half the Fringeworthy were women. It took a special dispensation from the emperor to allow them to be part of the LEG I AMBRT. They were designated as *Mulieres Atque Pugnator*, or Women Soldiers. They were segregated into an Amazonus Cohort, but in practice, the women mingled freely with their male counterparts.](#)

[The Warp opened in Southern England and the IDET explorers were captured by local authorities. Given time, contact was made and the Pax-Roma Universa formed to help the IDA and gain new technologies for the empire. Facing minor rebellion in the provinces, slave revolts, waste-management and a mass of religious and ethnic intolerance, the IDA has its hands full.](#)

Languages

Imperial Latin (High) (75%), Latin (Vulgar/Common) (95/95%), - Latinized Celtic (720%), Greek (620%), Latinized Germanic (240%), Latinized Egyptian (30%), Various Semitic Languages (10%), Cushtic (15%), Berber (15%), Latino-Punic (5%)

Both versions of Latin have undergone grammar simplification. Imperial Latin has had the number of noun cases reduced from 7 to 5 and a normalization of verb conjugation. It still sounds like Latin when spoken, and native speakers can still read, somewhat, Latin texts from the early years of the empire.

Common Latin has become even more simplified, reducing down to just 4 noun cases and a very simplified set of verb conjugations. It only recently in the past 150 years has become a written language, as it is the language of the people. It sounds a bit like modern Italian, but it's not. It has many Celtic, Germanic, African, and Persian loan words in it, such that a modern Italian speaker would have to make a language check at -4 to understand what was being spoken.

In the Londinium region, the main language spoken is a heavily Latin influenced Celtic Brythonic. So when Fringeworthy enter this world through the nearby portal, they will speak Celtic Brythonic natively.

Names

Roman citizens use three names: The *praenomen* or personal name, only used by family members, the *nomen gentilicum* or surname to indicate to which gens or family group they belonged to and the *cognomen* or nickname which distinguished between different members of the family who had the same two first names. Example names: Caius Horatius Epidianus, Tiberius Manlius Ruricius, Livilla Pollia Gnaea, Sabina Viria Naissa, Secundus Treblanus Osterianus.

Non-citizens gaining citizenship, such as discharged auxiliary soldiers, usually took the *nomen* of the current Emperor. Current names: Secundus Fulvius Licinius Philadelphus, Hostia Memmia Licinia Nicia

Officially, slaves did not have their own names but used their owner's *praenomen* with the suffix "por" from *puer*, "boy" (Marcipor, Publipor, Quintipor) for male slaves and the suffix "pola" from *puella*, "girl" (Marcipola, Publipola, Quintipola). In some quarters it is fashionable to give them Greek names, often followed by the genitive form of the owner's name. A freed slave generally took his former master's praenomen and nomen with his own personal name as a cognomen but some chose their own praenomina.

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Free Edge

Romans start with a free Edge during character creation.

Skill Restriction

Roman Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the 15th Century.

Reptilian, T'Ziel

Platform: -3 Alternate; **Portal:** 4

World: Trazon

First Contact: 2012

Technology Level: 4

The Trazon Portal station was a guarded religious shrine. The priests and guardians of the gate were always those who made the crystals glow. While they knew of the platform, they believed it a holy place and entry was forbidden except for the Emperor and his immediate family. Every day, the Emperor, his "wives", and his children, cross over to the Fringe platform and leave a sacrificial offering of meat for T'Mak.

The IDET explorers who arrived on this world, noticed the pile of rotting meat in front of the portal and went through. While this could have spelled disaster, the IDET explorers realized the significance of the shrine and were treated like gods. Breaking a commander's orders, the team zoologist helped save the wounded T'Ziel Emperor, T'Baal. This was the highest honor and in time the council of the wise began to understand that the Platform was a gateway to other worlds and newfound friends. The T'Ziel became 'bound' to the IDA to serve, protect and gain honor for the T'Ziel across countless worlds.

Their religious beliefs circle around the Portal station; it was a solid, immutable artifact of the great god T'Mak. T'Mak appeared to the T'Ziel long ago and watched over them, teaching them the arts of metalworking and civilization. The emissaries of T'Mak would come and take the shape of the T'Ziel and help guide them along. For millennia the T'Ziel and the emissaries worked together.

Then came the great sundering. The emissaries became demons and T'Ziel slew them all. T'Mak came one more time and told them that he had to leave, but that one day, new emissaries will take the place of the slain ones. And then he left.

And then there was a religious war over who was going to guard the temple. The current emperor, T'Baal, has held his position for the past 60 years. His primary qualification for his rule is that he can make the sacred crystals of T'Mak glow. These crystals are set into the temple's entrance and are fiercely guarded by the priests of T'Mak. All of who can make the crystals glow.

The average T'Ziel is lizard-like and over 6 feet in height. The average lifespan of a T'Ziel is 48 years. With modern medicine, their lifespan could easily double. They have limited binocular vision, but have superior peripheral vision and their eyes can operate independently of each other. Their body colors range from green to black, with patterns based on where they live, such as stripes, mottled patches and dots.

Their magnificent lacquered armor bristles with blades, making them a fearsome sight. Most T'Ziel feel a firearm has little honor in combat and will not use one if a blade or bow is handy. The T'Ziel value honor over almost anything else. They don't form lasting relationships with members of the opposite sex, other than for the regular act of procreation. To human eyes, there is no difference between male and female T'Ziel. The T'Ziel sexes emit different scents, pheromones, and their acute sense of smell is how they distinguish between male and female.

Trazon is an Alternate Geological Earth. The day is 36 hours long, and the continents are radically different from those on Earth Prime. The Moon is 5% smaller, and has a 20.2 Trazon day cycle (30 Earth Prime days). The average temperature on Trazon is 20°C (68°F), and only the poles get below 0°C.

The T'Ziel family practices were a shock to the first IDET team to encounter them. The females will lay a clutch of 3 eggs on average about a mile away from the nearest village. For the next 64 days, (96 Earth Prime days), the eggs are tended by their mother. She makes sure that they are at the right temperature and well protected from predators. Except for the last day.

On the last day of gestation, the eggs are left alone. The hatchlings must now use their superior sense of smell and fighting instinct to make their way back to the village or home. Only 1 hatchling in 5 survives the gauntlet.

The IDET team were appalled by this, and tried into intercede and were not very politely told to keep their snouts out of what was none of their business.

T'Baal is unique among the other rulers of alternate races as to have actually traveled to Earth Prime and spoke to the UN in New York City. There are several T'Ziel living in Alice Springs, Australia, and Death Valley, USA.

Physical Properties

Size: 6' to 7' 4" tall.

Gestation: 96 days. 2-4 children, 80% infant mortality

Lifestyle: 48 years

Languages

T'Zienn (100%), T'Ziel (98%), Trade (40%)

Names

Male names: De'Keerak, Ta'Hranni, Sk'Rugss

Female names: Su'Lurrage, Y'Vruni, Wo'Gii

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Strong

T'Ziel's are naturally stronger than humans and start with d6 Strength instead of a d4.

Outsider

Due to their reptilian appearance, they have a -2 to their Charisma to humans.

Acute Sense of Smell

The T'Ziel possess an acute sense of smell, equal to that of a bloodhound, vulture, or T-Rex. They gain a +2 to scent based Notice rolls, as long as there is an atmosphere to carry scents. They gain a +2 to Tracking rolls.

Lukewarm-blooded

T'Ziel are lukewarm-blooded creatures and like hot weather. Their preferred temperature range is between 15° to 55° C (60° to 130° F). In temperatures between 15° and 7° C (60° to 32° F), they must make a Vigor roll or incur -1 Fatigue. Temperatures below 0°C (32°F) will force the T'Ziel to make a Vigor

roll every 30 minutes at -1 for every 6°C (20°F) below 0°C (32°F) or receive -1 Fatigue. When they fail their third Vigor roll, they will fall unconscious and must make a Vigor roll every 30 minutes or die.

Normal winter weather gear does not work for T'Ziel, as they do not produce enough body heat. A heated parka or other similar gear will protect them from cold weather. Bringing the T'Ziel into a warm environment (+15°C/60°F) will stop any the effects of cold and the T'Ziel recovers Fatigue 1 point every hour.

Skill Restriction

T'Ziel Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** skills that make use of technology or knowledge later than the 13th Century.

Elephantoid, Blizniz

Platform: +5 Alternate; **Portal:** 7

World: Zarbachee

First Contact: 2012

Technology Level: 4

The elephantine form of the Blizniz and their strong herding culture make them an unlikely combination for sentience. Their gentle ways in a World-Savanna of predators made no sense when the predators avoided them like the plague. As an IDET filmed these odd and friendly creatures, the Blizniz approached and presented the explorers with gifts of turnips. Not only were these creatures sentient but also they were universally Fringeworthy.

Of the millions of Blizniz that live on their world, only a few dozen of the younger have joined with the IDA. Learning amazingly quickly, they have specialized in Medicine and Philosophy while adding rich essays and their long oral history to mankind's records. From humanity and other races they collect literature and printing technology to create a written language for themselves.

IDET explorers at first winced at the thought of working with Blizniz. In time a few admitted that they actually liked them. In turn, the Blizniz admire humanity's dedication to peace.

Physical Properties

Size: 5 foot tall, 6 foot long, 3 foot wide.

Gestation: 450 days. 1 child, 10% infant mortality

Lifestyle: 85 years

Languages

Blizniz (98%), Philosophical Blizniz (30%), Archaic Blizniz (25%), Ancient Blizniz (05%), Old Blizniz (50%)

Names

Obafamy, Olugbata, Oluyemi, Onithede, Owodunni

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Strong

Blizniz's are naturally stronger than humans and start with d6 Strength instead of a d4.

Large

Blizniz are large creatures and gain a +2 to their Toughness, but they are also easier to hit, so they are also +2 to hit.

Tough

Blizniz large and tough and start with a d6 Vigor instead of a d4.

Calming Aura

The early in their evolution, the Blizniz developed the ability to exude a psionic calming field around their person. This aura is the size of medium burst template. Any creature with hostile intent that enters this aura must make a Spirit roll or become calm, and non-violent.

If two or more Blizniz are close enough to have overlapping auras, the auras reinforce each other and boost the calming effect. Creatures entering these reinforced auras must make a Spirit roll at -1 for each Blizniz reinforcing the aura, up to a maximum of -4.

Pacifist

These gentle creatures are mentally incapable of attacking another sentient being, but they can defend themselves and their friends. They become physically ill at the thought of initiating violence.

All Thumbs

The Blizniz have a hard time using human fashioned technology and suffer a -2 to repair or use any piece of human or humanoid technology.

Bad Eyesight

Lacking binocular vision and poor eyesight, the Blizniz suffer a -2 to Notice rolls to see anything more than 5" away. This condition can be corrected with special glasses.

Skill Restriction

Blizniz Fringeworthy cannot start with **Knowledge** that make use of technology or knowledge later than the 13th Century.

Arachnoid, Dimixi

Platform: +4 Prime; **Portal:** 3

World: Mat'Demka Prime

First Contact: 2012

Technology Level: 9

Mankind's third ally on the Fringepaths was found on Prime Platform +4. These creatures are descended from a large spider-like ancestor. Having an even lower incidence of Fringeworthy in their population than humans, (1 in 500,000), Earth's spider-like ally was eager for peaceful contact and a sharing of any technology to supplement their dying world. Dimixi are even closer to humans in personality than Slargs. With the same social, political and family structure as humanity, they mirror mankind's progress and development.

Dimixi come in two racial types and a variety of ethnic colors. Surprisingly, this species has antennae that have no other function other than the fact that they move when the Dimixi talks or feels intense emotion, and as a form of sexual attraction. Size and the shape of the antennae's lobes, coloration, patterns all add to the attractiveness of an individual. They have 8 limbs: The first two are their fine manipulating limbs, ending in intricate 4 digit manipulating claws. The second set of limbs are used as gross manipulating limbs and walking limbs. The last four limbs are strictly walking limbs. They can assume a "centaur" pose, freeing up their second set of limbs and attain their maximum height.

Dimixi breathe through spiracles through their sides into a unique set of flow-through lungs. The "exhaust" spiracles have sphincters that can be vibrated by the expelled air and let's the Dimixi to make a series of sounds. Because of their flow-through lungs, and that they do not possess vocal cords, the Dimixi voice is a wheezing buzz to human ears.

Many of the larger species of Arachnoid on Mat'Demka have this same lungstructure. Smaller forms of crustaceans have more primitive versions of this lung system. All forms of higher life on Mat'Demka are invertebrates, all descended from ancient crustaceans, some of amazing sizes. The largest known form of life on this world is the great Do'Matku. It is a giant crustacean, some 15' long, 8' tall, and 6' wide armed with great pincers. It is a herbivore, and due to its full grown size, fairly immune to the veldt Sto'Soka, Sto'Kiuko and other predators.

All creatures on Mat'Demka molt and shed their old exoskeleton for a new one. For a full-grown Dimixi, the molting process takes a full day and the Dimixi can do nothing other than talk. During this time, the Dimixi are incredibly vulnerable, as their new exoskeleton has yet to full harden. Dimixi molt once a year, typically in the fall.

Dimixi come in two physically different races, one that specializes in hunting and one that specializes in spinning as a way of life. Hunters have become economic specialists and authority figures and Spinners have become the Dimixi thinkers and technicians. Hunters are taller and thinner than Spinners, and have a smaller abdomen. The two different races can interbreed and produce viable offspring of either type.

Spinners can produce thick webs from their spinnerets, up to 15 mm (0.57") in thickness, and it only stays "sticky" long enough to be incorporated into a structural web. The thinnest they can make their webs is 5 mm (0.19").

Hunters can produce two kinds of web: sticky, capture web, and thin "tripwire" web. In the pre-industrial age, Hunters would go out and lay several tripwire webs and then weave a capture 4' wide

capture net. When a suitable prey animal trips the tripwire web, the Hunter would run quickly along the web and throw the capture web onto the prey, entangling them.

Dimixi form long-term relationships and have large extended families. A female Dimixi lays up to 6 eggs in a clutch in a web-lined cocoon. The first children to hatch will kill and eat those that didn't hatch in time. The survivors then make their way out of the cocoon and start the process of growing. Because of the short gestation period, Dimixi are now facing a population explosion situation.

Dimixi construction techniques may revolutionize high-rise construction on Earth Prime and other IDA worlds. They have heavily industrialized their world. In fact, they have come to realize that they have nearly passed a point of no return when it comes to their environment. They are now desperate for new, greener technology and energy sources to replace the polluting sources that they are using now.

Physical Properties

Size: Spinners: 4' 7" tall, 6' 9" long, 3' 5" wide; Hunters: 4' 9" tall, 7' long, 2' 8" wide

Gestation: 86 days, 2-6 offspring, 50% infant mortality

Lifespan: 38 years

Languages

Barjiel (95%), Stejiel (95%), Technical Stejiel (45%), Akiel (95%)

Names

Taka-Gaa Mil'Deh, Sko-Ghe Mil'Taka, N'Aqra-Tae Mat'Taka - The names listed are a Father, son and daughter.

Racial Edges & Hindrances

Agile

Dimixi start with a d6 in their Agility attribute.

Natural Born Climbers

Dimixi are all, natural born climbers and start with the Climbing skill at d4.

Carapace

Dimixi have a +1 to their Toughness due to their exoskeleton armor. However, any damage done to the exoskeleton will not heal until the next exoskeleton is formed and the old exoskeleton shed during molting. For two hours after they shed their old exoskeleton, their new exoskeleton is soft and pliable and in fact allows the Dimixi to grow in size by a few millimeters. During this time, they lose their +1 to toughness until they exoskeleton hardens. Young Dimixi shed as much as once a week as they grow.

Blunt damage from an object, such as a club or a sledgehammer, will crack the carapace and carapace cannot heal this damage. This only happens if the character takes a wound from combat. If the wound is soaked, no damage is done to the carapace.

Internally, the wound effects will be healed, but the Dimixi will be prone to various diseases and fatigue quicker because the exoskeleton no longer has secure muscle attachments. A Dimixi with a damaged exoskeleton has a -1 to all Fatigue and Vigor rolls until their next molt.

Large

Dimixi are large creatures and gain a +1 to their Toughness. They are also easier to hit, so they are +1 to hit.

Web spinning

Dimixi can spin webs from the spinnerets on the tip of their abdomen.

Spinner Dimixi can spin up to 20" of thick super strong 15mm web, or 60" of thin strong 5mm web. When they do this in a single spinning session, the Spinner gains a point of fatigue, and has to eat and rest to recover. Super strong web has a Toughness of 15, while strong web has a toughness of 12. It takes a round to make 1" of web of either type.

Hunter Dimixi can spin up to 20" of 5mm strong web, or 100" of tripwire web. Hunter strong web can be spun with extra adhesive and stays sticky for up to four hours before it dries out. Hunters would weave a capture web the size of a small burst template and throw that web up to 4" to snare a prey. The capture web is always attached to a length of non-sticky strong web for retrieval of the prey.

Tripwire web is very strong and very thin thread-like webbing that is used for hunting. Typically, a Hunter would weave a ground web of tripwire threads about 10" in diameter. They can make a Notice roll to determine if the prey is of sufficient size. This can give them the drop on the prey if they get a raise on their Notice roll. Like Spinners, if the Hunter Dimixi spin a full length of web of either type, they gain a point of fatigue.

Because of the thread like nature of their tripwire web, many Hunters learned to weave cloth from their webs, which they later used to make clothing, coverings, and other fabric items. Sufficient layers of tripwire cloth can give a +2 Toughness against projectile weapons. However, it is very flammable and cutting or blunt weapons ignore this toughness.

Both races can use their strong web for rappelling down the side of structures. They produce sufficient web to reach the ground and then attach and climb down the web. They receive a +2 to their climbing roll when they use their web.

Poor Touch

Because of their carapace, Dimixi have a poorer sense of touch. They are -2 to any touch based Notice rolls.

Scary Appearance

Dimixi have a -2 Charisma with all non-Arachnoid based sentients. They also cause a Fright check when first encountered by individuals that have never met a Dimixi before.

Skill Availability

Dimixi have the following new **Knowledge** focuses available for technology unique to their world:

- Web Weaving
- Web Construction
- Tension Structures (Building structures that use tension as a structural element.)

HINDRANCES

All the standard *Savage Worlds* Hindrances are appropriate for use in *Fringeworthy*. Additionally, a hero can take several new Hindrances when you create your character. After all, nobody is perfect.

Cruel (Minor)

Your hero has a cruel streak running through him. He takes delight in the suffering of others and to cause suffering in others. As a child, he took delight in pulling the wings off of insects and teasing other children. He has a -2 Charisma with those people who are aware of his cruelty unless he makes a Persuasion roll and convinces them that he's changed.

Fringe Vertigo (Major)

Fringespace is not on good terms with your sense of balance or your sense of wellbeing. All Agility trait tests are at -2 on the Fringepaths or near the edge of a platform. If you are forced to the edge of a platform or Fringepath, you immediately take a d8 fright check against Spirit. If you fail the check, you suffer from minor panic attack, become Shaken, and then fall to the ground paralyzed with fear. You must make a Spirit trait test to recover from the panic attack. You do not become jaded from repeated exposures. Some pocketstops, such as the 0,2 Junkyard pocketstop, will force a one time check when you first enter them.

Transit Vertigo (Minor/Major)

For the minor version of this hindrance, you become shaken when you pass through a Ring station, a transit portal or a warp.

For the major version of this hindrance, you must make an immediate Vigor roll or become ill from the transition for d12 minutes, basically you are shaken. If you roll a one on the Vigor die, you not only become ill, you suffer a point of Fatigue.

Wild Talent (Major)

You have uncontrollable psionic powers. This manifested at birth, puberty, ingestion of psychoactive drugs, or through the Psi inducing drug, TK-47. This Hindrance allows you take the Psionic skill as though you have the Arcane Background (Psionics) edge.

The effects of this hindrance are that when you are stressed, the Wild Talent will invoke a randomly GM selected power and use it against the cause of the stress. No skill roll is required.

Taking a Wound during combat, or losing a Social Conflict by 5 or more causes this stress. To resist the Wild Talent, you must make a -2 Spirit check. On a success, you resist the urge to lash out with your mind. On a failure, the GM randomly selects a power and uses it on either the source of the stress or on the hero, depending on the power, for the duration of the power.

On a critical failure, you lose it, and you go on a rampage attacking everyone, including allies, either physically or psionically, using whatever powers the GM selects. Every round, you must make a -2 Spirit test until you succeed to stop the rampage, or when you're rendered unconscious.

You can try to do a controlled invocation of the Wild Talent, by making a -2 Psionics skill check. If successful, the GM randomly choses a power and you can control it normally. On a failure, nothing happens. On a critical failure, you suffer from Backlash. See the Arcane Background section for more information.

Xenophobic (Minor/Major)

While the character has no problem with dealing with other people from his homeworld, when it comes to aliens and other “cousin” races, like Neanderthals, that’s another thing. The character has an intense dislike of these alternate races. The character finds dealing with aliens to be an unpleasant task, and he has an intense dislike of being in the presence of other alien races. When dealing with alien races, the character suffers a -2 to Charisma for the Minor version, and a -4 to Charisma for the Major version.

If the character openly voices his beliefs and hatred of other races he can then face ostracism or open conflict.

EDGES

Background Edges

Actor

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d6

You are a natural entertainer. You thrill the audience and make strong men weep. You gain a +2 to the *Persuasion* skill when you perform on stage, impersonate someone, or take on a role.

Fringeworthy

Requirements: Novice, Free to Player Characters.

All player characters start out with Fringeworthy as a free edge. For more information, see “Arcane [Background Power](#) (Fringeworthy)” for more information.

Handy Man

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6

When it comes to working with your hands, you’re second to none. You can make just about any object or device, given the right resources and sufficient time. You gain a +2 to the *Repair* skill and to all craft or construction based Knowledge skills.

Combat Edges

Combat Driver

Requirements: Seasoned, Agility d8, Driving d6

You are Hell on wheels when it comes to driving while in combat. You can make your vehicle dodge and dance around adversaries. During a chase, you get to add a +2 to your Driving skill roll. In combat, if you make a successful Drive roll, your vehicle is -1 against all ranged combat rolls. On a raise, the vehicle is -2 against all ranged combat rolls. This use of this edge takes an action.

Combat Veteran

Requirements: Seasoned, Spirit d6

War is Hell, and so is the 2AM shift in ER in Chicago, as is working Homicide as cop or as a CSI with a bug fetish. You’ve seen things that would make other run away gibbering. You don’t take it in stride, but you can keep your lunch down and deal with what’s left of your buddy. You gain a +2 to your

Spirit rolls during combat situations or post combat areas (such as finding corpses after a battle) as well as dealing with emergency situations. While you're immune to gore, other types of horrors still can affect you.

Martial Arts

Requirements: Novice, Agilty d8, Fighting d8

This edge can only be taken once. The martial artist is skilled in one of the many kinds of martial arts. He is never considered unarmed in combat and so is never subject to the Unarmed Defender rule. With a successful unarmed attack, he adds +d4 to his Strength damage roll (as if he were using a small weapon).

Opponents without the Martial Edge do not gain the *Gang Up* bonus when fighting the Hero.

The martial artist must take one of the following bonus abilities:

- **Knockout blow:** On a raise to their *Fighting* roll, the martial artist may deliver a knockout blow. The opponent must make a Vigor roll or fall unconscious, otherwise, they are shaken, and they take normal damage from the blow.
- **Hands of Death:** The martial artist can deliver deadlier blows than a normal person. They get a +2 to damage.
- **Weapon Parry:** The Hero can parry weapons with their hands. If an opponent scores a hit on the Hero, they can make a *Fighting* roll at -2 to block the weapon. Only applies to melee combat or to attacks by arrows.

Martial Arts, Improved

Requirements: Veteran, Martial Arts, Fighting d10

The character now adds +d6 to his barehanded damage.

Additionally, the special abilities are modified as follows:

- **Knockout blow:** On a raise to their *Fighting* roll, the martial artist may deliver a knockout blow. The opponent must make a Vigor roll at -2 or fall unconscious, otherwise, they are shaken, and they take normal damage from the blow.
- **Hands of Death:** The martial artist can deliver deadlier blows than a normal person. They get a +4 to damage.
- **Weapon Parry:** The Hero can parry weapons with their hands. If an opponent scores a hit on the Hero, they can make a *Fighting* roll with no penalty to block the weapon. Only applies to melee combat or to attacks by arrows and spears.

Martial Arts Master

Requirements: Legendary, Improved Martial Arts, Agility d10, Fighting d12

The character now adds +d8 to his barehanded damage.

The martial artist gains the following benefits for their special ability:

- **Knockout blow:** On a raise to their *Fighting* roll, the martial artist may deliver a knockout blow. The opponent must make a Vigor roll at -4 or fall unconscious, otherwise, they are shaken, and they take normal damage from the blow.

- **Hands of Death:** The martial artist can deliver deadlier blows than a normal person. They get a +6 to damage.
- **Weapon Parry:** The Hero can parry weapons with their hands. If an opponent scores a hit on the Hero, they can make a *Fighting* roll at +2 to block the weapon. Only applies to melee combat or to attacks by arrows and spears.

Professional Edges

Doctor

Requirements: Seasoned, Intern, Healing d8, Smarts d8

You are a medical doctor and you are trained in healing and caring for the sick and injured. You get a +2 to your *Healing* skill rolls. Up to 8 other individuals in a group can gain a +2 to their natural healing rolls when you travel with them.

Fringe Diplomat

Requirements: Veteran, Charismatic, Spirit d8, Intimidation d8, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8

The Fringe Diplomat edge allows the hero to withstand the sometimes-offensive nature of alien cultures. He is able to eat living creatures and suck down grotesque substances without gagging or making offensive gestures. He is immune to the shock of being in the presence of other sentients with naturally terrifying forms (like the Dimixi) and is even able to make close physical contact with these beings. This ability only applies to other sentients. You get a +2 to any fear checks when encountering a intelligent species not of your own species.

The Fringe Diplomat has to be part cowboy to keep up with the unbelievable level of intricacy that alien races bring to the table. He must be able to switch protocols on a dime in order to appease customs that appear counter intuitive or against all rational belief systems. He has to be able to shake the hand of a known tyrant and work deals that the devil would shy away from in order to complete the mission and bring everyone home alive. The Fringe Diplomat is not always required, but when he is, there is no substitute. The Fringe Diplomat can make a Common Knowledge roll for an alien culture at no penalty to understand etiquette and cultural mores.

Fringe Explorer

Requirements: Veteran, Smarts d8, Notice d8, Streetwise d8, Survival d8, Explorer

The Fringe Explorer is a special type of explorer. She's part woodsman and part city rat, the Fringe Explorer knows what it takes to survive. She is trained to use the same principles used by the U.S. Marines; improvise, adapt and overcome. The Fringe Explorer's main purpose is to get the team to the mission and to get them home in one piece. She is trained to acquire whatever the team needs; be that food, water, guns, or petrol. No team is complete without their Fringe Explorer. They gain a +4 to Notice, Streetwise and Survival skills. Additionally, they can make a common knowledge roll against a foreign culture after living in that culture for 1 week.

The Fringe Explorer edge allows the hero once per encounter or scene to scrounge whatever equipment, supplies, or transportation needed for a given situation. They can only scrounge for one item, though the item can be a collection, such as a toolbox full of tools. Generally, this item will not be brand new or in the best of condition, but will suffice in a pinch.

To use this ability, the Fringe Explorer has to make a Streetwise roll. On a normal success, they find an item of average quality. On a raise, the hero finds an item of good or better quality. Rolling a 1 on

the primary die results in a critical failure that can put the Fringe Explorer into danger, as she is caught “scrounging” for the item by the item’s owner.

Explorer

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6, Survival d6, Notice d6, Streetwise d6

The hero has received training unique to interdimensional explorers. They have learned to live anywhere and survive. The hero receives a +2 to *Survival*, *Notice*, and *Streetwise* skills, and can make a common knowledge roll against a foreign culture after living in that culture for 2 weeks.

Intern

Requirements: Novice, Healing d6, Smarts d6

You are training to become a doctor and you have some medical training. You get a +1 to your *Healing* skill rolls. Up to five other individuals in a group can gain a +1 to their natural healing rolls when you travel with them.

Master Crafter

Requirements: Veteran, Smarts d10, Handy Man

You are a master at creating, building, and crafting objects or devices given enough time. You gain a +4 to the *Repair* skill and to all craft or construction based Knowledge skills.

Thespian

Requirements: Veteran, Spirit d10, Actor

You are a master at performing any role. You can emote with the best of them. You thrill the audience and make strong men weep. You gain a +4 to the *Persuasion* skill when you perform on stage, impersonate someone, or take on a role.

Power Edges

New Power

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background or Fringeworthy

An arcane or Fringeworthy character may learn a new power or Crystal Key power by taking this Edge. He can take this edge multiple times, and he can choose from any of the powers that are normally available to his Arcane Background or from the Crystal Key Powers list.

Power Points

Power Points are not used in Fringeworthy. See **Using Arcane [Backgrounds Powers](#)**.

Social Edges

Fanatic

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d6

You are true believer in a cause, religion, or other belief, and nothing will sway you from this belief. Attempts to persuade you are at -2, and you get a +2 to resist Intimidation attempts that force you to act against your beliefs. You have a -2 to your Charisma if others know that you are a fanatic to a belief system. You are quite willing to die for your beliefs.

Weird Edges

Fringeborn

Requirements: Novice, the “Established Years” or “New Commonwealth” campaign types

You inherited your mother’s Fringeworthy abilities and were raised to be a Fringe explorer. You spent a good portion of your childhood on worlds other than that of your birth. Because of this you are familiar with the local Fringe races near Earth Prime. You can make a common knowledge roll for any of the player Fringe races worlds and cultures in this book at no penalty.

Because of your training, you get a +2 for any Fringe-related Knowledge checks.

Fringe Attuned

Requirement: Veteran, Notice d6, Fringeworthy

You seem to have a 'sixth sense' when travelling the Fringepaths, and pick up on subtle clues others miss. Even when there seemingly **are** no clues, you can generally trust your hunches. When you're on the Fringepaths or platforms, you gain a +2 Notice bonus.

Fringe Sensitivity

Requirements: Veteran, Fringe Attuned, Notice d8

The hero has formed some sort of connection with the fringe system. He is able to detect fringe portals and warps without the need of a crystal. He can make a Notice roll to detect a nearby portal or warp. On a success, he can detect a portal within 10". On a raise, the range increases to a 100".

Also, the hero has an uncanny knack for finding his way around the fringe system. Whenever he steps onto a platform he may make Notice roll to determine how many platforms positive or negative he is from his home platform. On a normal success, he knows how far he is from his from his home portal within 2d10 platforms. On a raise, he knows how far away he is within d10 portals. On a second raise, he knows exactly far away he is. If he fails his roll, he is unsure of how far away he is. On a 1 on the primary die, he thinks that his home platform is in the opposite direction.

Fringe Tech Savant

Requirements: Veteran, Smarts d8, Repair d8

The hero has an uncanny ability to figure out how to use alien technology that is found on the Fringepaths. He gets a +2 to a Smarts roll to figure out how to use or what the purpose is for single alien device.

Mellor Hunter

Requirements: Veteran, Hero has previous Mellor encounter, Vigor d8

The hero has had a previous encounter with a Mellor and either has suffered a lifeforce leech or a memory leech by the Mellor. Fortunately or unfortunately, the Mellor unwittingly left a piece of its genetic matter in the hero, allowing him to detect a Mellor in disguise after spending a day in close contact with

the disguised Mellor. After a day, the hero can make a Notice roll at -2 to detect that the person he's been drinking beers with is in fact a Mellor. On a raise he knows what kind of Mellor he's dealing with.

Improved Mellor Hunter

Requirements: Legendary, Mellor Hunter, Vigor d12

The same as Mellor Hunter, except that the hero does not suffer a -2 to his notice roll.

Psionist

Requirements: Veteran, Arcane Background (Psionics), Smarts d8

The hero has learned how to control their psionic powers and can use them more effectively. They get a +2 to all Psionics skill rolls.

Master of Psionics

Requirements: Legendary, Arcane Background (Psionics), Smarts d12, Psionist

The hero is now a master of psionics and gains a +4 to all Psionic skill rolls.

ARCANE POWERS BACKGROUND

Using Arcane Powers Backgrounds

In Fringeworthy, arcane power backgrounds, such as Psionics or Crystal Key Powers, do not use power points. Instead, they take a penalty equal to half the Power Point cost for the power, rounded down, and then they make the arcane power background roll. For example, using the Charm power, which costs 2 Power Points, is an arcane power background roll at -1.

Once cast, check the results below:

- **Success:** The power activates as usual.
- **Raise:** A raise on the roll grants any additional bonuses to the power stated in its description. Armor, for example, grants a +4 bonus to Toughness with a raise.
- **Failure:** All currently maintained powers are cancelled and the caster is Shaken.

Backlash

Channeling psionic or Crystal Key energy comes with certain risks. If a caster rolls a 1 on the arcane skill die when using one of his powers it automatically fails and he suffers 2d6 of psychic damage, and loses Fatigue.

Maintaining Powers

Heroes can maintain powers for the stated duration, but each power maintained inflicts a -1 to cast any new powers. Each power has a penalty for maintaining it for the stated extra duration. For example, to keep Empathy going after the first three rounds, the Psionist must make their Psionics roll at -1 to have the power last 5 more minutes. This does not count as an action on the part of the caster.

Interrupting Powers

If a character with an activated power is Shaken or suffers a wound or Fatigue level, he must make a Smarts roll to maintain all his currently activated powers, at a -1 for each active power. If the roll is failed, all powers are instantly dropped. Wound and Fatigue penalties apply to this roll. Powers automatically shut down if the caster sleeps or is rendered unconscious.

Arcane Power-Background (Psionics)

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Powers: 3

Until it was discovered that Wei Lei and the maternal line of her family possessed bona fide psionic powers, the claims of psychic powers was the realm of charlatans and con men. But when a real live telepath, in the form of a small Asian woman, Wei Lei's mother, was able to pass multiple double-blind tests, many a skeptic had to admit that psionic powers were real.

With willing subjects to test, it was discovered that the great majority of mankind and primates possessed some form of psi abilities. For the vast majority, empathy was most common psi ability, but not at a conscious level. It only operates at the subconscious level. It was one of the first mutations in chordate evolution that lead to all types of social animals, such as ants, bees, canines, man and other great apes. Humans, chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans, even lemurs, all operate in a form of an unconscious "morphic field" of empathy. This morphic field is what led to social behavior and community among all primates. Sociopaths lack this empathic gene and are not part of the morphic field.

The tests determined that psi powers operate through the electromagnetic spectrum, and that Faraday cages, powerful magnets and tinfoil hats could block the use of telepathy and empathy. This explains why testing mind readers failed in a testing environment: All the ambient electromagnetic fields in a lab pretty much block ordinary telepaths.

However, Wei Lei, her mother, and all her maternal aunts and cousins, were not ordinary telepaths. They had honed and bred their psi abilities to a point such that the weak electromagnetic fields in a lab don't block them. However, a MRI or Faraday cage will block their abilities. Tinfoil hats, not so much. Wrapping your entire body in tinfoil or a flexible Faraday mesh would work, but only if it was grounded.

One of the side discoveries that came from this research was that skeptics, like James Randi, were found to be fairly strong empaths. However, since they were never trained to use their power directly, they were only able to use it subconsciously. Many were expert "cold readers" and never knew that their empathic powers were assisting them in their cold reads of people. It was also discovered that many famous "Psychics", such as Uri Geller, were still frauds and charlatans.

Research is still ongoing into how telekinesis in various forms functions through the electromagnetic field, as well as research into artificial telepathy devices. However, awaking or "inducing" conscious control of latent psionic powers is possible through various methods:

- **Study and practice:** The hero spends time, learning how to call up their latent psionic powers by being taught by Psionist, (A person with the Psionist or Master of Psionics edge). At least once a session, they must have a scene where they spend time being taught a specific psionic power from the Psionist. Then they must spend two advances to fully buy the Arcane Background (Psionics). After the first advance is spent they gain one power of their choice and the skill Psionics at d4. After the second advance is spent, they gain two more powers.
- **The Venkman Method:** Pioneered by a famous parapsychologist, the Venkman Method uses negative feedback to cause a latent psionic power to manifest. The negative feedback is provided through electric shocks. The hero is put through a course several tests, where they try to manifest a specific power.

For example: To manifest *Telekinesis*, the hero would try to move an object using only the power of his mind. Failure to do so, results in an electric shock administered by the tester.

To succeed and manifest a psionic power requires 6 successful Vigor checks. The first raise counts as an additional success. On a critical failure, the person takes d4 electrical damage that ignores armor, and they cannot be tested for the rest of the session.

Once 6 successes are gained, the hero can spend an advance to buy Arcane Background (Psionics) with only one power, the one they were tested on. However, they can gain new powers by using the *New Power* edge, also they will have to buy the Psionics skill to control their newfound powers.

- **Neurochemical Inducement:** In the years of study of psionics, researchers learned the neurochemical processes of known psionics and created a chemical cocktail that can induce the awakening of latent psionic powers in most people: TK-47. However, it is a strong psychotic drug and due to the brain blood barrier, TK-47 must be injected directly into the region of the brain where the psionic neurological structures are. Luckily the dosage is less than a drop, and the location is in the lower portion of the brain. Still minor surgery is required to do this.

If done by a professional Medical NPC, no roll is needed to administer the drug. If done by another hero with the *Healing* skill and at least the *Intern* edge, then it is a -2 *Healing* skill check. On a failure, the drug is injected in a location where it has no effects. On a critical failure, the drug is injected in the absolutely wrong place and the patient goes violently insane for d4 hours.

On a successful administration of TK-47, the hero makes a -2 Vigor check. If he succeeds, he immediately gains the Arcane Background (Psionics) and 3 powers. The GM picks one, and the player picks the other two. On a failure, the hero does not gain any psionic powers.

On a critical failure, the hero goes violently insane for d4 hours, and then gains the Hindrance *Wild Talent*. They have Psionic powers, but they have no control of them.

Arcane *Power-Background* (Fringeworthy)

Arcane Skill: Crystal Key Use

Starting Powers: 2: ~~Locate Portal & Find Fringeworthy~~ *Special*

Your character was born Fringeworthy. He has the rare ability to use the Tehrmelern portals that lead to the Fringepaths. All player characters get this arcane *power-background* for free. It can also be granted to an existing player character or NPC through other means.

This grants you a connection to the crystal keys that the Tehrmelern created to control the portals. Through this connection, you can now call on different crystal key powers and perform various actions. ~~By default, Fringeworthy are granted~~ *can take* the arcane skill, *Crystal Key Use at d4, as well as two crystal key powers: Locate Portal and Find Fringeworthy. You gain more crystal key powers by taking the edge *New Power* when the character gains a raise.*

You can only use a single Tehrmelern crystal and command one crystal power at a time. Crystals are rated from 1-11. Types 8 to 11 have a defensive power. Types 9-11 have an offensive power. All crystals act as key at varying security levels for the portals and other Tehrmelern technology. (See Crystal Keys for more information.)

The first Crystal Key power that was discovered was the Find Fringeworthy power. Captain Oates had written about this ability in his journal:

...and I felt a force or some feeling more akin to “that way” when I invoked the crystal. Schmert had told me to picture the crystal as a compass in my mind, a compass that did not point North, but to those that had the gift that I had. The crystal dimmed and glowed redly in my outstretched hand, I felt compelled to turn towards my furry companion. When I faced Schmert, I felt a distinct kinship with him, beyond that of one who had saved my live and provided me with succor.

*“That my dear friend,
Is how it always ends.
You seek one with the gift,
And the crystal finds one in a jiff.
They are your brother, your kin.
Despite outward appearance or furry skin.”*

New powers besides the two already known, *Find Fringeworthy* and *Locate Portal*, will have to be discovered or revealed by Sayuri. A player character can try to “discover” a new power simply by trying to use it. This attempt is at an additional -2, and they must have the appropriate crystal key for that power. If successful, the player character has “unlocked” that power for the rest of the characters. The ~~unlocker~~ automatically gain~~unlocker automatically gains~~ that power at no cost. Everyone else will have to use an advance to buy the new power.

PSI POWERS

Fringeworthy introduces new Psi powers that can be used by your character with the Psionics Arcane Background. These descriptions only include the casting penalty and not the Power Point cost.

Charm

Rank: Novice

Casting Penalty: -1

Range: Smarts

Duration: 5 minutes (-1/2 minutes)

Trappings: A smoldering gaze, pheromones

This power allows the Psi read the emotions or thoughts of the target and gain the trust of the target. If appropriate, the target may develop a romantic interest in the Psi. On a successful casting of this power, the target attitude is raised one level of the Reaction Table. On a raise, the target’s attitude is raised two levels. For example, a normal success will increase an Uncooperative attitude to Neutral, and on a raise, increase it to Friendly.

Once *Charm* wears off, the target’s reaction depends on the Psi’s actions. If the Psi persuaded the target to do something they would not normally do, or took advantage of them in some way, they are likely to realize that something odd has happened on a successful Smarts roll. If the Psi was subtle and did not take unusual advantage of the target, they may never realize they have been Charmed.

If the Psi rolls a 1 on their Psi die, regardless of the wild die, the target instead reacts negatively towards the Psi, and the Psi takes a -4 penalty on Persuasion rolls to affect that target.

Disguise

Rank: Seasoned

Casting Penalty: -2 to -3

Range: Touch

Duration: 10 minutes (1/10 minutes)

Trappings: Illusionary appearance.

Disguise allows the character to psychically assume the appearance (but none of the abilities) of another person. The base casting penalty -2, plus a -1 penalty per level of Size difference between the character and the person she is impersonating. The character cannot emulate someone more than 2 Size levels different from themselves.

This is a psychic disguise, the character using it does not, in fact, change their shape or size. Instead, she is mentally altering her appearance in the minds of everyone around her. As such, this does not fool cameras, sensors, and, most importantly, Constructs. Robots, golems, and especially the undead, can see the character just as she normally appears.

It requires a Notice roll at -2 to see through disguise if someone is familiar with the specific person being mimicked; the penalty increases to -4 with a raise. If the person is unfamiliar with the mimicked individual, the penalties are -4 and -6 respectively.

Empathy

Rank: Novice

Casting Penalty: -2

Range: Smarts

Duration: 10 minutes (-2/5 minutes)

Trappings: Concentration.

Empathy is the ability to read surface emotions. With a successful Psionics skill roll, the caster learns the emotional state of one person within range. For as long as the Psi keeps this power running, the Psi gains a +2 Charisma when dealing with that person, as she can follow the emotional state of the person's mind. On a raise, the Psi gains a +4 Charisma bonus.

Greater Healing

Rank: Veteran

Casting Penalty: -5 or -10

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Laying on hands, taking on the wounds of the target.

The Greater healing power restores wounds more than one hour old. This use of the power requires Psionic skill roll at -5 and otherwise works exactly like the healing power. It can also be used to neutralize any poison, disease, or sickness. The effects of these maladies will temporarily affect the caster for one round.

Greater healing can also heal Permanent Crippling Injuries. This requires a Psionic skill roll at -10 and 1d6 hours of time. Only one casting is permitted per injury — if it fails, the injury really is permanent. Additionally, the caster will temporarily take on the crippling injury for 1d4 rounds. Limbs will wither, aches and pains from the injuries will propagate to the caster.

Additionally, if a limb is regrown, the target will be incredibly hungry, as their body has consumed enough resources to grow a complete limb back. This is reduced somewhat if the character has the Obese hindrance. Then their body ~~burned-fat~~ **is burned** first before using other resources. They are now visibly thinner, but this will only last until their next couple of meals and they will be back to their normal weight.

Healing

Rank: Novice

Casting Penalty: -2

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Trappings: Laying on hands, taking on the wounds of the target.

Healing repairs recent bodily damage. It must be used within the “Golden Hour,” though, for it has no effect on wounds more than one hour old. Also, since this is empathic healing, the healer takes on the wounds and injuries that the person they are healing possesses. If the healer takes 3 or more wounds, they will pass out for 1d4 rounds before regaining consciousness. They may appear to be dead, but instead they are shunting the wounds that they healed off into the ambient morphic field.

For Wild Cards, each use of the healing spell removes a wound with a success, two with a raise. The roll suffers a penalty equal to the victim’s wounds (in addition to any the caster might be suffering himself).

Healers can heal themselves, but they suffer double the normal wound penalties as they are directly shunting their wounds into the ambient morphic field and healing their body. It also bloody hurts when they do this. So expect screams.

After a successful healing, the target of the healing will be ravenously hungry, as their body has used up its internal stores energy and protein to repair damage in a matter of seconds. The target of the healing will be at -1 Fatigue until they get a good meal.

For Extras, the GM must first determine if the ally is dead (see Aftermath on in the Savage Worlds Deluxe rulebook). If so, no healing may be attempted. If not, a successful arcane skill roll returns the ally to the game Shaken.

Healing can also cure poison and disease if used within 10 minutes of the event. The healer will suffer the effects of these maladies for 1d4 rounds when they successfully cure them.

Psychic Invisibility

Rank: Seasoned

Casting Penalty: -3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (-1/round)

Trappings: Concentration.

Psychic Invisibility does not make the caster invisible. Instead, it makes everyone within a Large Burst Template not want to look at ~~them~~him or her or notice that they are present. When an affected person turns to look in the direction of the caster, they will avoid looking directly at them and ignore his presence. They will try to avoid walking into him and move out of his way if possible. He can talk to them and they can respond back, but they will be unable to locate the source of his voice, even if he was standing next to the person looking for him.

However, because the person is not really invisible; cameras, sensors, constructs, and the undead can see the caster just fine. Also, if the caster interferes, injures, or otherwise physically interacts with a person within the Large Burst Template, that person can make a Spirit test to see if they can shake off the mental aversion of seeing the caster. If they are successful, they are no longer affected by this power and can see him normally. If the person has the Arcane Power-Background (Psionics), they may make a Psionics skill test instead of a Spirit test to resist the effects of this power.

From outside the Large Burst Template, the caster is hard to see and attempts to locate him requires a Notice roll at -4.

Attempts to use the Tracking skill to find the caster will be at -2 when the tracker enters the Large Burst Template. This occurs even when the tracker is following tracks in snow, moist ground or other easy to track surface material.

With a raise on a successful casting of this power, the caster is -6 to be noticed from outside the Large Burst Template, and if he interacts with someone inside the template, the Spirit test or Psionics skill test to notice him are at -2.

Telepathy

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 2

Casting Penalty: -1

Range: Smarts x2

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Brain communicators, psychic connection, Psi conference call.

The caster can communicate with anyone and everyone in line of sight through telepathy. Once the connection is made, the caster can break eye contact and move out of line of sight. [This is only a method of communication, not mind reading.](#)

Specifically known individuals who are not in line of sight, but within the range of one mile, is an additional -2 penalty for casting this power, and it is at -4 if they are further away than a mile. Once connection is established, the connection may be maintained as desired, but requires concentration. This inflicts a -2 penalty to all other actions no matter how many connections are maintained.

CRYSTAL KEY POWERS

All Fringeworthy can learn to tap into the special powers granted by the Tehrmelern Crystal Keys. Starting characters automatically start with two powers: Find Fringeworthy and Locate Portal. As your character gains experience, they can learn to use new powers of the Crystals. All of these powers require that the caster is holding a crystal key in their hand. If the caster does not have a key, they cannot use any of these powers.

[Novice-Low Level Powers:](#)

Cutting Torch

Crystal Types: 4 - 11

Range: Touch

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: 4 minutes (-1/minute)

Trapping: A brilliant, white-hot jet of flame from the crystal key

The *Cutting Torch* power lets the wielder to cut through quarter-inch steel plate at 2 feet a minute. In terms of breaking things, the torch does 2d8 points of damage to **non-living** matter. For purposes of what is living or non-living matter, microorganisms and Mellor are treated as non-living matter. If you try to put living matter into the flame jet, the jet will immediately shutdown. A Mellor that is currently using a stored shape and possesses a crystal key will not be harmed by this power.

Defense

Crystal Types: 4 - 11

Range: Touch

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: 1 hour (-1/10 minutes)

Trapping: A shimmer that surrounds the body of the user.

Protects the wielder from electrical and burn damage by giving them an extra, virtual wound slot, on a raise, the wielder gains 2 virtual wounds slots. If the wielder takes enough damage from an electric or fire source to cause a wound, this power takes the wound instead and then dissipates. You cannot spend a benny to prevent this wound from being taken.

While this power is active, the wielder does not have to make a Vigor roll from low radiation and they only have to make a Vigor roll once an hour for high radiation.

The caster does not have to hold the key to keep this power active. However, to continue the power, the caster has to have the key in their hand.

Find Crystal Key

Crystal Types: All

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: 0

Duration: 30 minutes (-1/15 minutes)

Trapping: The crystal key glows brighter the closer it is to the target.

Finding Crystal Keys is fairly difficult; the only guaranteed way is to look for the glow of a crystal when a Fringeworthy person gets close. Using this power makes finding a crystal key a simple task. When this power is invoked, the wielder can detect a Crystal Key within 1 mile. On a raise, this distance increases to 10 miles.

The wielder doesn't get the exact location of the Crystal Key, just a "getting warmer/getting colder" feeling. The crystal key's brightness increases and decreases in a similar manner with proximity to the Crystal Key. When there are multiple keys, the wielder can focus on the closest and ignore the rest.

Find Fringeworthy

Crystal Types: All

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: 0

Duration: 30 minutes (-1/15 minutes)

Trapping: The crystal key glows brighter the closer it is to the target.

Normally, Crystal Keys can detect Fringeworthy within a radius of 10 feet without invoking this power. When this power is invoked, the wielder can detect Fringeworthy within 100 feet of the crystal. On a raise, this distance increases to approximately 1,000 feet.

The wielder doesn't get the exact location of the other Fringeworthy, just a "getting warmer/getting colder" feeling. The crystal key's brightness increases and decreases in a similar manner with proximity to the other Fringeworthy.

When there are multiple Fringeworthy present, the wielder can focus on one Fringeworthy individual and ignore the rest. This takes a successful Smarts roll to ignore the other Fringeworthy. The

wielder can change "targets" by making another Smarts roll and reacquire the other Fringeworthy she had previously ignored.

Flashlight

Crystal Types: All

Range: N/A

Casting Penalty: 0

Duration: 1 hour (-1/30 minutes)

Trapping: A single facet of the crystal key glows very bright and shines a beam of light in a single direction.

You can use a crystal key as a flashlight and shine a triangular beam of light out to 120". The color of the beam matches the color of the crystal key. Gray, white, clear, and rainbow crystal keys shine with white light and black crystals shine UV light.

Locate Portal

Crystal Types: All

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: 2 hours (-1/1 hour)

Trapping: The crystal key glows brighter and pulses faster the closer it is to the target.

When you activate this power, you can sense the direction and distance to the nearest portal or warp from your current location. The range that you can detect a portal is 150 KM/90 miles or 300 KM/185 miles with a raise.

Seasoned Mid-Level Powers:

Expert Find Fringeworthy

Crystal Types: 4-11

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: 30 minutes (-1/15 minutes)

Trapping: The crystal key glows brighter the closer it is to the target.

This powers works just like the Find Fringeworthy Crystal Power, but the range is increased.

Normally, Crystal Keys can detect Fringeworthy within a radius of 10 feet without invoking this power. When this power is invoked, the wielder can detect Fringeworthy within 2 miles of the crystal. On the first raise, this distance increases to approximately 5 miles. On the second raise the distance is increased to 10 miles.

Improved Defense

Crystal Types: 9 - 11

Range: Touch

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: 2 hour (-1/10 minutes)

Trapping: A shimmer that surrounds the body of the user.

Protects the wielder from electrical and burn damage by giving them two extra, virtual wound slots, on a raise, the wielder gains three virtual wounds slots. If the wielder takes enough damage from

an electric or fire source to cause a wound, this power takes the first two wounds instead and then dissipates. You cannot spend a benny to prevent this wound from being taken.

While this power is active, the wielder does not have to make a Vigor roll from low radiation and they only have to make a Vigor roll once every 2 hours for high radiation.

The caster does not have to hold the key to keep this power active. However, to continue the power, the caster has to have the key in their hand.

Offense

Crystal Types: 9 - 11

Range: 12/24/48

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: Special

Trapping: A beam of light that streaks out from crystal to the target.

The Crystal Key can be used generate a stun force, and shock those within a Medium Burst Template. If the wielder scores a success, targets within the area of effect must make Vigor rolls or be Shaken. With a raise, victims must make Vigor rolls at -2.

Portal Adjustment

Crystal Types: 4 - 11

Range: Smarts

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: Special

Trapping: The crystal key and the warp are surrounded by a slow pulsating glow.

A successful activation allows the wielder to move a warp 10 feet. On a raise, the warp can be moved up to 100 feet. This power can only be used once a day on a portal. Warps may only be moved at a slow walking pace of 3" up to the distance specified. The wielder can perform no other actions other than walking at the same pace while moving a portal, as this requires their complete concentration.

Time Lapse Transfer

Crystal Types: 7 - 11

Range: Portal

Casting Penalty: -1

Duration: Special

Trapping: The crystal key faces light in sequence, counting up.

The wielder can disable the portal or warp to prevent any Fringeworthy from transiting through the portal until a set time has passed. This can be used to prevent untrustworthy companions from sneaking back through a Planetary Portal and deactivating the portal, thus marooning the team on a world.

When activated, the wielder can set the duration the portal is disabled to any desired length of time. A higher-level crystal key can override this setting by invoking this power again at -2, and then setting the duration to zero. The wielder who set the duration can always set the duration to zero by making a Smarts roll while holding the same crystal he used to set the original time duration.

Veteran-High Level Powers:

Improved Offense

Crystal Types: 9 - 11

Range: 12/24/48

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: Special

Trapping: A beam of light that streaks out from crystal to the targets.

The Crystal Key can be used generate a stun force, and shock those within a Large Burst Template. If the wielder scores a success, targets within the area of effect must make Vigor rolls at -2 or be Shaken. With a raise, victims must make Vigor rolls at -4.

Improved Portal Adjustment

Crystal Types: 6 - 11

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: Special

Trapping: The crystal key and the warp are surrounded by a slow pulsating glow.

A successful activation allows the wielder to move a warp 1,000 feet at a 3" pace. On a raise, the warp can be moved at a pace of 6". This power can only be used once a day on a warp. The wielder can perform no other actions other than walking at the same pace while moving a warp, as this requires their complete concentration.

Master Find Fringeworthy

Crystal Types: 7-11

Range: Varies

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: 1 hour (-1/30 minutes)

Trapping: The crystal key glows brighter the closer it is to the target.

This is the pinnacle of finding nascent Fringeworthy on a world, this power works just like the earlier versions of the power, you just receive directional information and how close you are to the Fringeworthy. Normally, Crystal Keys can detect Fringeworthy within a radius of 10 feet without invoking this power. When this power is invoked, the wielder can detect Fringeworthy within 20 miles of the crystal. On a raise, this distance increases to approximately 50 miles.

Hero-Ultimate Powers:

Ghost Transfer

Crystal Types: 74 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -2 plus -1 per two people included in the transfer

Duration: Special

Trapping: The crystal key becomes ghostlike in appearance.

The wielder places the Crystal Key in the control pylon and then activates this power. As long as the key is in the control pylon, any number of people can be affected by this power by stepping through the portal. The wielder has to be the last person through and they must take the key with them. Those

affected by this power are transported to the world in question but only as an immaterial ghost-like being that can pass through people and solid objects. To move or interact with anything solid on that world or to become visible to the inhabitants of that world, the ghost transferred person must make a successful Spirit roll. This effect only lasts d4 actions.

Life Support Dome

Crystal Types: 74 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: 30 minutes

Trapping: A transparent dome flickers around the crystal.

When the hero activates this power, it creates a 15-foot radius wide force sphere centered on the crystal. The dome provides a standard Fringespace atmosphere. This includes the same percentage of gasses, pressure, and temperature as on the platforms and pathways. This dome is very similar to the one that protects the portal at Hatsumi base. The dome only prevents the intrusion of dangerous environmental effects, not hostile natives. This can be used to re-activate portals that have been merely submerged. However, it will not unearth buried ring stations.

Mirror Transfer

Crystal Types: 74 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -5

Duration: Special - See Text

Trapping: Crystal turns to its negative color briefly

When activated, the hero's molecular handedness is reversed upon transit through a portal. Their DNA and other biological molecules that have a left and right-handedness are swapped right for left. This effect will last until they step back through the portal back onto the platform.

While the hero can no longer eat the food of that world, they are almost certainly immune to any disease. This is especially useful when exploring plague worlds. The explorer needs to be sure to bring enough food on their person or vehicle to survive the duration of the visit. There is no problem drinking the water as long as it isn't normally toxic to the explorers.

Solid Transfer

Crystal Types: 74 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: N/A

Trapping: The crystal dips into the hero's hand for a moment.

This power only works on object made of non-living matter, excluding microbes and bacteria. When the object is pushed or tossed through the portal, it becomes embedded in the nearest appropriately sized object to the Planet-side portal. This object must be made of non-living matter. If no such object exists, the transited object is then embedded in the ground and can be dug up at a later time. This is used primarily to hide objects for later retrieval. Sometimes the detection of the enclosing object can be confusing. But for the most part, the enclosing object will always be heavier than an unaffected object. To remove the embedded object from the enclosing object, they must be taken through the portal. This will separate them back into two objects.

If a person steps through the portal when this power is activate will be stripped naked of all clothing, weapons and other gear. If they drive a vehicle through, the vehicle will be embedded along with their clothes and any gear on the vehicle.

Timed Transfer

Crystal Types: 74 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -2

Duration: 4 hours

Trapping: The crystal flickers like a clock beat.

When this power is activated, the hero can set a recall time up to 4 hours without any extra expenditure of power. For every 3 points of Crystal Power Points, the maximum time period is increased by an additional 2 hours. When the time duration expires, the hero begins to glow for a minute before they pop out of the portal back on the platform with any gear they had on their person and anything non-living that they were holding in their hands. Holding on to a support beam will remove it from a building. Holding onto a rock or brick wall, only brings the rocks or bricks that the hero was physically grasping. As with the problem portal, distance from the portal or warp does not matter.

Legendary Powers:

Intermediate Area Transfer

Crystal Types: 4 - 11

Range: Portal

Casting Penalty: -5

Duration: Special

Trapping: The crystal unfolds into a cup, and then closes.

When this power is activated, the hero creates a pocket universe with a Ring station at either end. The exit Ring Station transits the heroes on to the destination world. This temporary pocket stop is typically a mile in length and a hundred yards wide in a natural setting. It has standard Fringespace atmosphere and gravity, but none of the restrictions on electricity and nuclear material. Time spent in this pocket stop allows the heroes equipment and vehicles to regain normal function and can be activated before finishing the transit onto a world. This power only works when there is a functional Ring Station on the destination world. It does not work with Warps.

Mind Transfer

Crystal Types: 4 - 11

Range: Self

Casting Penalty: -42

Duration: N/A

Trapping: The crystal disappears into the hero's hand only reappears when the hero returns.

When activated, the hero's consciousness displaces the mind of a sentient being or animal on the Planetary side. The hero's body is held in a non-physical space until they return to the platform. The individual that they take over suffers nothing but a memory loss and the minor consequences of whatever the explorer did with the body while in possession of it. Passing through any Portal or the death of the host body forces the ~~exit of the unharmed~~ Fringeworthy to exit unharmed from the other side of the Platform-side ring. If the return was caused by the death of the host body, the hero must make a Vigor roll with a +2 bonus otherwise they take a wound. They must also take ~~1d10 Mental~~ 1 Fatigue damage

| from "dying" ~~to their Stability score~~. Mind transfer is extremely difficult to master, so any attempts at using this power are made at -4 to the *Crystal Use* skill roll.

EQUIPMENT

This job is funded by the UN and therefore, money is tight during the early years of UNIDA. Missions are assigned a budget for procurement of military grade weapons and gear that cannot be acquired through civilian channels. It is also for items that are not readily available or that require highly specialized skills to create and build.

Eventually, UNIDA will have access to the resources of a million, million worlds to draw upon to pay for any reasonable request. Prices for the latest in military gear will be in the thousands, if not tens of thousands of dollars. These have a cost of "Military" assigned to them, and can only be assigned to a team if they have the budget. Your happy procurement officer will let you know if the item you requested is available. Equipment is listed by campaign eras, from the early years to the eventual establishment of the New Commonwealth.

STANDARD IDET EQUIPMENT LOADS: THE EARLY YEARS CAMPAIGN

This equipment is available for the first five years of exploration and surveying of other worlds. This is also when the IDE teams find out what works and doesn't work.

Standard Load (~2lbs)

Cost: \$1,000

This is kept on you at all times -- even when sleeping

Fatigue uniform (worn): Microfiber baggy shirt and trousers covered in pockets, underwear, socks, boots, gloves, poncho, webbing. Additionally, IDET members are issued a field jacket made from a cotton/polyester blend with more pockets and an optional quilted liner for cold weather wear. The uniform uses the MultiCam camouflage pattern. A black beret worn when in the field, and a powder blue beret worn during training and in the Alice Springs IDET Headquarters.

Personal basics (weight negligible): Shaving kit, toothbrush, soap, toilet paper, chewing gum, writing implements and notebook, small radio with Bluetooth, and either a large tablet (+1lbs) or a small ~~tablet-~~ [laptop](#) computer.

~~**Survival Knife** (1 lbs): Large knife that holds assorted miniaturized survival gear, such as matches, fishing hooks and line, snare wire, etc., in the hilt.~~

Canteen with one quart of water

Light Duty Load (~5lbs)

Cost: \$400

Fatigue Uniform (worn): Standard issue fatigues.

Black Beret (worn): Standard issue beret, work in the field.

Pistol (2.5 lbs.): Glock 27 9mm, 2 magazines

Combat Load (~25lbs)

Cost: \$7,800

Amour vest (4 lbs.) +4/+8 Armor, MultiCam camouflage pattern

Helmet (1lb) +4 Armor, MultiCam camouflage pattern

Assault Rifle (~~76~~ lbs.): ~~XM8-F90~~ Assault Rifle with six magazines

Pistol (2.5 lbs): Glock 27 9mm with three magazines

L83A1 Smoke Grenades (2 lbs): 2 smoke grenades. The L83A1 smoke grenade, when used outdoors, covers an area equal to a medium burst template when there is no wind. If there is a wind, use the cone template for coverage, with the cone pointing in the direction the wind is blowing. Lasts 10 rounds and provides a +2 concealment bonus.

AN/PRC-154 Rifleman radios (2 lbs): Range 2 miles and provides Bluetooth connectivity to wireless devices.

Survival Knife (1 lbs): Large knife that holds assorted miniaturized survival gear, such as matches, fishing hooks and line, snare wire, etc., in the hilt.

Subsistence Load

Can be dropped or left in camp for maximum mobility, this is a 49 gallon container full of gear and equipment.

Size 33" x 24" x 24", ~~49-gallon container~~, **Weight** 110 lbs.

- 1 domed, 10-person tent
- 10 sleeping bags
- 1 rope, 164 feet
- 10 vinyl insulated sleeping mats and lightweight thermal blankets
- 1 pack of 180 water purification tablets and one 5 gallon flat-pack water container
- 1 tool kit in a canvas bag: Hatchet, jackknife, screwdriver, hammer, hoe head, etc. +1 to Craft skills.
- 1 collapsible trenching shovel
- 1 multi-fueled cook stove
- 10 enameled plates and cups
- 2 repellent-treated mosquito netting packs
- 10 gas masks
- 1 medical kit (provides basic supplies for healing attempts)

Additional Gear

Thermal fatigues (13.5 lbs), **Cost:** \$250. Cold weather clothing.

Light Protective Suit (10lbs), **Cost:** \$150. Thin, sealed HAZMAT suit with respirator and full-face mask. NOT pressurized.

Heavy Protective Suit (25lbs), **Cost:** ~~\$250.~~ \$2,000. Thick, sealed HAZMAT suit with respirator and full-face mask. Can be pressurized.

IDET Mess Dress (negligible), **Cost:** \$15,000. An all white uniform, each one a bespoke, tailor made dress uniform. The ~~pants-trousers~~ have a powder blue stripe on the outer seam of both legs. All piping on the jacket is powder blue, with powder blue epaulets with the person's rank woven in. On the right shoulder is the UN patch and on the left shoulder is the UNIDA patch. Any awards are worn over the left breast pocket. Only worn during formal occasions. Comes with black, patent leather dress shoes or knee-high, black, patent leather boots. When outdoors, a powder blue beret with the IDET insignia is

worn. UNIDA will only provide one of these to IDET personnel. If the hero loses it or destroys it, it will cost the hero \$15,000 and one month (four visits to the tailor for fittings) to get a new one.

IDET Service Uniform (negligible), **Cost:** \$130. This is a light gray uniform that is worn by personnel in situations in which non-formal dress business dress is called for. It is worn in most workday situations in which business dress would be called for. It comes with a dark grey version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively. It can be worn at most public and official functions. It can be worn with either black, patent leather shoes or with knee-high, black, patent leather boots. Headgear is a black beret with IDET insignia.

IDET Service Jacket (2lbs), **Cost:** \$400. This is a dark gray jacket in the style of a standard business suit. It can be worn over the IDET Service Uniform. Has a black version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively.

IDET Service Jacket, Summer weight (1.5lbs), **Cost:** \$300. This is a lightweight version of the IDET Service Jacket for use in warm weather. Light gray in color, it has a white version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively.

RANGED WEAPONS IDET

Assault Rifle Types	Range	am	D	OF	R	ost	C	ght	W	hots	S	Notes
<u>XM8— PDWF90 Carbine</u>	<u>12/24/48 24/48/96</u>	<u>d86</u>	2		3	<u>500</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6.5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	3	AP 2, Auto, 3RB, Bullpup design
<u>XM8— Carbine</u>	<u>20/40/80</u>	<u>d8</u>	2		3	<u>00</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>.5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	3	<u>AP 2, Auto, 3RB, Grenade launcher</u>
<u>XM8— Sniper</u>	<u>30/60/120</u>	<u>d8+1</u>	2		3	<u>00</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	3	<u>AP 2, Auto, 3RB, integrated scope +2 aim</u>
<u>XM8—Auto-Rifle</u>	<u>24/48/96</u>	<u>d8</u>	2		3	<u>00</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>.13</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0/100</u>	3	<u>AP 2, Auto, 3RB</u>
Pistol Types	Range	am	D	OF	R	ost	C	ght	W	hots	S	Notes
Glock 27 (10mm)	12/24/48	d6+1	2		1	00	2		3		9	AP 1, Semi-auto
Makarov Type 59	12/24/48	d8	2		1	00	3		4		9	AP 1, Semi-auto
Special	Range	am	D	OF	R	ost	C	ght	W	hots	S	Notes
L83A1 Smoke Grenade	5/10/20	/a	n	/a	n	ilitary	M		1	/a	n	MBT/Cone See notes.
<u>M320- M203PI 40 mm GLM Grenade Launcher</u>	<u>4024/48 80/16096</u>	<u>d64d8</u>	3		1	ilitary	M		3		1	Med burst template, Snapfire, see notes
40mm Baton	4/8/16		1		1		M		-		1	See notes for

Round		d4-1		ilitary			M3203PI-GLM.	
40mm Star Parachute	20/40/80	d4*	1	ilitary	M	5	1	Illuminates a LBT for 7 rounds, see notes
40mm CS Grenade	20/40/80	d6*	1	ilitary	M	5	1	Covers a MBT for 4 rounds, see notes
M72F1 LAW	24/48/96	d8+2	4	ilitary	M	6	1	Med burst template, AP 30, Snapfire, HW, see notes

* Impact from the grenade round if it hits a person.

XM8 Modular Rifle system



After the discovery of the Fringepaths, Heckler & Koch resurrected the XM8 rifle project and offered to produce the groundbreaking weapon-system for the United Nations. The XM8 is a modular system, allowing the user to reconfigure the weapon for different purposes and missions. It can be configured into the following:

- A compact PDW (personal defense weapon) with a 9.5-inch (241mm) barrel.
- A carbine with a 12.5-inch (318mm) barrel and the M320 40mm Grenade Launcher Module (GLM).
- A sniper rifle with a 20-inch (508mm) barrel and integrated scope.
- A automatic rifle with a 20-inch (508mm) barrel and a 100-round drum magazine.

The rifle can be reconfigured from one configuration to another in half an hour without a skill roll if you have the instructions on how to do it. Otherwise it requires either a Knowledge (Military weapons/arms) or a Craft (Gunsmith) skill test to make the change in configuration.

The main issue with the XM8 weapon system is that it's a prototype. None of the weapons provided by Heckler & Koch were production line weapons. The weapons provided to the UN were in fact taken from the second round of testing by the US Army. Only 200 were produced, and several were "upgraded" during the testing program. The XM8 is a modular system, however model numbers 120 and above are not compatible with model numbers 031-119, so you cannot use parts from one model run in the other. In addition, all replacement parts for the XM8 are individually made by H&K at a premium cost.

Because of this, if the player rolls critical failure (double 1s), the weapon is broken and has to be repaired by H&K or an expert gunsmith. This will take a week. Additionally, the GM can give a player with an XM8 a benny and declare the weapon jammed. Clearing the jam takes 2 actions and a Shooting skill test.

M3203PI 40mm Grenade Launcher Module

A detachable, 40mm grenade launcher, and can be used either attached to the XM8 F90 in Carbine configuration, or hand-held with the optional, but necessary, butt stock. It can chamber high explosive, smoke, CS, and illuminating grenades, plus it can chamber 40mm less-than-lethal baton rounds.

40mm Grenade Types

Baton rounds: The baton will do 1d4-1 damage to the target and shake the target unless he makes a successful Vigor roll. On a raise, the target must make a Vigor roll at -2. Baton rounds do not get an extra die of damage on a raise.

Star Parachute: A special round that fires a parachute star flare that will illuminate an area the size of large blast template for 42 seconds or 7 rounds. The flare is hot enough to start fires, so if it lands or is shot at a flammable object, the object will catch fire.

CS Grenade: The CS grenade covers a medium burst template with tear gas. In light wind conditions, use the Cone template in the direction of the wind for the area affected. In medium to heavy winds, CS gas is ineffective. Anyone within the template must make a Vigor roll or become shaken. Even if the person succeeds, the effects of CS gas will impose a -2 to all actions while they are inside the CS cloud. After exiting the cloud, a successful Vigor roll will shake off the effects of the CS gas, otherwise the person will still continue to suffer the effects of the gas. Effects go away with immediate treatment or after 3 rounds outside the CS cloud. A gas mask with eye protection will negate the effects of the CS gas. Just a filter mask without eye protection will impose a -1 to all actions while in the cloud.

M72F1 LAW

This is a specially modified version of the M72 LAW for use on the Fringepaths. A standard M72 can be fired on the pathways but it will not detonate, because it uses an electrically fired detonator. The M72F1 replaces the detonator with a percussion cap initiator and a detcord "fuse" to fire the warhead.

Additionally, the AP value of warhead is only applied to the target that the rocket round has hit. Items in the burst template take normal damage.

Each M72F1 LAW is hand made by taking an existing M72A7 and rebuilding the warhead with the new detonation system.

IDET ISSUED EQUIPMENT

Crystal Key Personal Carrier

Also known as the "Football" and "Schmert's Purse", the CKPC is the specially designed container for a Team Leader to carry an assigned Crystal Key on their person. It's a small purse like pouch, lined with felt. Between the double layer of Aramid cloth and the felt is a chain mail pouch made of welded links. The pouch hangs around the neck by a wire cable that has a thick coating of flexible plastic.

The CKPC lock has a toughness of 16, and the pouch itself has a toughness of 12. The wire cable's breaking point exceeds the toughness of the average human's neck: That is, you'll behead the person wearing the CKPC before the cable breaks.

VEHICLES

Moskovi Reconnaissance Vehicle MRM-30 and MRM-30A



Acc/Top Speed: 5/36 (3/20 Amphibious) **Toughness:** 18(7) **Crew:** 1+9 **Cost:** \$200,000
Length: 4.25" **Width:** 1.75" **Height:** 1.25" **Range:** 300 miles **Year of Manufacture:** 1972-75

The MRM-30 (*Moskovi Razvedyvatel'naya Mashina-30*) is the only diesel powered version of the MRM line. Due to its poor performance in most of the Soviet territories, the MRM-30 line was scrapped or sold to Soviet clients. Several MRM-30s are still being used in Cuba and Vietnam. UNIDA was able to secure several working models from both countries.

The MRM-30A is an amphibious version of the MRM-30 from Vietnam. The MRM-30A can be sealed airtight with an internal air supply for 4 hours for a crew of 8. However, as this is a modification of the MRM-30 frame, it is prone to overheating and fogging of the windshield when in use.

The Alice Springs staff modified the vehicle by-with the addition of an air turbine to the starter motor. This modification lets the IDE team to turn off the engine when on the platform and then they can restart the engine without the use of electricity.

Austin FG K100



Acc/Top Speed: 5/40 **Toughness:** 10(3) **Crew:** 2 **Cost:** \$20,000
Length: 2.6" **Width:** 1.3" **Height:** 1.25" **Range:** 400 miles **Year of Manufacture:** 1955 - 65

The workhorse truck of the British Empire, UNIDA was able to procure several models of the FG K100 from various trucking companies in Australia. All were diesel powered and used mechanical fuel injection, perfect for use on the Fringepaths. After some major refurbishing at the Alice Springs facilities, they were retrofitted with compressed air turbines attached to the starter motor. The only downside was that despite the boffins best attempts, the FG K100's air tanks would lose pressure slowly. The best advice was to turn over the engines once every 12 hours to refill the air tanks. An external air hose can be attached to run the turbine.

The FG K100 becomes the go to vehicle as it was designed to take loads up to 5 tons and just about anything could be put on it's bed for carrying. This includes a ~~2,000-gallon~~ 000-gallon fuel tank, a camper shell, flatbed platform, and even a small crane. The Alice Springs motor pool personnel included ds several FG K100 fansaficionados, so modification of the FG K100 can be done in a day with the requested payload.

The FG K100 comes with curved curbside-view windows, allowing the driver to see the edge of the Fringepaths with ease. One requested modification to the FG K100 is the addition of a trailer hitch, so that it can haul additional trailers.

Touring Bicycle



Acc/Top Speed: $\frac{1}{2}$ Pace/3x Pace **Toughness:** 8 **Crew:** 1 **Cost:** \$2,000
Length: 1" **Width:** 1" **Height:** 0.5"

The staple of the early Fringeworthy explorers, touring bicycles carried all their gear. The average touring bicycle can carry up to 125lbs of gear in panniers (travel bags) mounted in pairs over the front and back wheels, and in cases that fit over top of both wheels. An optional trailer can carry an additional 125lbs of gear. Cruising speed on a touring bike is about 2x Pace, and this speed can be maintained for long periods of time.

Fully loaded, acceleration is $\frac{1}{3}$ Pace, and if the trailer is used, top speed is only 2 times Pace. At cruising speed, it takes about 4 hours to cross a Fringepath, and 6 hours with a trailer attached. You can try crossing a pathway at top speed, at half the time, but for each 30 minutes of pedaling, you must make a Vigor roll or suffer a point of Fatigue.

STANDARD IDET EQUIPMENT LOADS: EXPLORATION YEARS CAMPAIGN

This equipment is available after the first five years of exploration and surveying of other worlds. This is also when the IDE teams find out what works and doesn't work.

Standard Load (~2lbs)

This is kept on you at all times -- even when sleeping

Fatigue uniform (worn): Microfiber odor absorbing baggy shirt and trousers covered in pockets, underwear, socks, boots, gloves, poncho, webbing. Additionally, IDET members are issued a field jacket made from a cotton/polyester blend with more pockets and an optional quilted liner for cold weather wear. The uniform uses the OptiCam smart camouflage system. On the platforms and Fringepaths, the uniform is gray in color. After electrical capabilities return, the uniform adapts to the terrain around the wearer. This grants a **+1** to **Stealth** tests. The uniform has the following presets: Olive Drab, UN paie blue, Dark gray jacket, light gray shirt and pants. The beret also uses the OptiCam smart camouflage system and has the presets of Field black and UN powder blue.

Personal basics (weight negligible): Toothbrush, soap, toilet paper, chewing gum, writing implements and notebook, either a large tablet (+.5 lbs) or a small [tablet-laptop](#) computer.

Survival Knife (2 lbs): Large knife that holds assorted miniaturized survival gear, such as matches, fishing hooks and line, snare wire, etc., in the hilt.

Filter Canteen with one quart of water. Can filter out most contaminants and when used with water purification tablets, can create a quart of potable water. Filter has to be changed out ever 80 quarts of water.

Combat Load (~25lbs)

Amour vest (3 lbs.) +4/+8 Armor, uses OptiCam camouflage system

Helmet (1lb) +4 Armor, with face veil. Uses the OptiCam camouflage system

Assault Rifle (7 lbs.): FN SCAR-L Assault Rifle with six magazines. Optional Opticam camo cover.

Pistol (2.5 lbs): Glock 27 9mm with three magazines

RDG-2 Smoke Grenades (2 lbs): 2 smoke grenades. The RDG-2 smoke grenade, when used outdoors, covers an area equal to a medium burst template when there is no wind. If there is a wind, use the cone template for coverage, with the cone pointing in the direction the wind is blowing. Lasts 10 rounds and provides a +2 concealment bonus.

NavCom C4I-FW (1 lbs): Integrated inertial navigation system, communication system, and ROV controller. Has radio range of 10 miles, and allows the user to communicate with teammates by voice, text, or icons on the NaviCom display.

Survival Knife (1 lbs): Large knife that holds assorted miniaturized survival gear, such as matches, fishing hooks and line, snare wire, etc., in the hilt.

Subsistence Load

Can be dropped or left in camp for maximum mobility

Size 33" x 24" x 24", 49 gallon container, **Weight** 120 lbs.

- 1 domed, 10-person tent
- 10 sleeping bags
- 1 rope, 164 feet
- 10 vinyl insulated sleeping mats and lightweight thermal blankets
- 2 osmosis water purification systems and two 5 gallon flat-pack water container
- 1 tool kit in a canvas bag: Hatchet, jackknife, screwdriver, hammer, hoe head, etc. +1 to Craft skills.
- 1 collapsible trenching shovel
- 1 multi-fueled cook stove
- 10 enameled plates and cups
- 2 repellent-treated mosquito netting packs and patches
- 10 gas masks
- 1 medical kit (provides basic supplies for healing attempts)

Additional Gear

Thermal fatigues (10lbs). Cold weather clothing.

Light Protective Suit (9lbs) Thin, sealed HAZMAT suit with respirator and full-face mask. NOT pressurized.

Heavy Protective Suit (25lbs) Thick, sealed HAZMAT suit with respirator and full-face mask. Can be pressurized.

IDET Mess Dress (negligible) An all white uniform, each one a bespoke, tailor made dress uniform. The pants-trousers have a powder blue stripe on the outer seam of both legs. All piping on the jacket is powder blue, with powder blue epaulets with the person's rank woven in. On the right shoulder is the UN patch and on the left shoulder is the UNIDA patch. Any awards are worn over the left breast pocket. Only worn during formal occasions. Comes with black, patent leather dress shoes or knee-high, black, patent leather boots. When outdoors, a powder blue beret with the IDET insignia is worn. UNIDA will only provide one of these to IDET personnel. If the hero loses it or destroys it, it will cost the hero \$22,000 and month's worth of fittings to get a new one.

~~**IDET Service Uniform** (negligible) A light gray uniform that is worn by personnel in situations in which non-formal dress is called for. It is worn in most workday situations in which business dress would be called for. It can be worn at most public and official functions. It can be worn with either black, patent leather shoes or with knee-high, black, patent leather boots. Headgear is a black beret with IDET insignia.~~
IDET Service Uniform (negligible), **Cost:** \$130. This is a gray uniform worn by personnel in situations in which business dress is called for. It is worn in most workday situations. It comes with a dark grey version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively. It can be worn at most public and official functions. It can be worn with either black, patent leather shoes or with knee-high, black, patent leather boots. Headgear is a black beret with IDET insignia.

IDET Service Jacket (2lbs), **Cost:** \$400. This is a dark gray jacket in the style of a standard business suit. Can be worn over the IDET Service Uniform. Has a black version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively.

IDET Service Jacket, Summer weight (1.5lbs), **Cost:** \$300. This is a lightweight version of the IDET Service Jacket for use in warm weather. Light gray in color, it has a white version of the UN and UNIDA patches on the right and left shoulders respectively.

RANGED WEAPONS IDET

Assault Rifle Types	R ange	D am	OF	R ost	C gt	W hots	S	Notes
FN SCAR – L (CQC)	12 /24/48	d6	2	3	5 00	6 .5	3 0	AP 2, Auto, Grenade launcher
FN SCAR – L (LB)	20 /40/80	d8	2	3	5 00	7 .5	3 0	AP 2, Auto, Grenade launcher
Pistol Types	R ange	D am	OF	R ost	C gt	W hots	S	Notes
Glock 27 (10mm)	12 /24/48	d6+1	2	1	2 00	3	9 ,13, 15,17, & 22	AP 1, Semi-auto
Makarov Type 59	12 /24/48	d8	2	1	3 00	4	9	AP 1, Semi-auto
Special	R ange	D am	OF	R ost	C gt	W hots	S	Notes
RDG-2 Smoke Grenade	5/ 10/20	n /a	n /a	n il	M	1 /a	n	MBT/Cone See notes.
FN40GL	40 /80/160	d6	3	1	il	M 3	1	Med burst template, Snapfire, see notes
40mm Baton Round	4/ 8/16	d4-1	1	1	il	M -	1	See notes above for M320 GLM.
40mm Star Parachute	20 /40/80	d4*	1	1	il	M 5	1	Illuminates a LBT for 7 rounds, see notes above
40mm CS Grenade	20 /40/80	d6*	1	1	il	M 5	1	Covers a MBT for 4 rounds, see notes above
M72F1 LAW	24 /48/96	d8+2	4	1	il	M 6	1	Med burst template, AP 30, Snapfire, HW, see notes above

* Impact from the grenade round if it hits a person.

FN SCAR-L



The MK 16 Mod 0 SCAR-L is the [SOCOM-United States military](#) choice of a 5.56mm x 45mm carbine/assault rifle to replace a number of existing weapons such as the M4A1 and the CQBR.

The MK 16 can be configured with a 14 inch barrel (standard), with a 10 inch barrel (CQC) or with a 18 inch barrel (LB). The weapon features an adjustable stock that can be extended, collapsed or folded over. The MK16 features a number of Picatinny rails for the mounting of accessories, including the FN40GL 40mm grenade launcher.

FN40GL Grenade Launcher

A detachable, 40mm grenade launcher, and can be used either attached to the FN SCAR-L in either configuration, or hand-held with the optional, but necessary, butt stock. It can chamber high explosive, smoke, and illuminating grenades, plus it can chamber 40mm less-than-lethal baton rounds. When using baton rounds, the range is 4/8/16.

When using baton rounds, the baton will do 1d4-1 damage to the target and shake the target unless he makes a successful Vigor roll. On a raise, the target must make a Vigor roll at -2. Baton rounds do not get an extra die of damage on a raise.



FRINGEPATH SYSTEM

CRYSTAL KEYS

Originally discovered in the Antarctic and explained in the journal of Captain Oates, the lost member of the Scott Expedition to the South Pole, the Crystal Keys gave the explorers a head start on exploration. While not a necessity for Fringe travel, their usefulness has paid off many times. The four-sided crystal is a simple key adjusting the pylon settings of the smaller portals. One simply inserts the crystal, makes the changes necessary, and removes it.

Each crystal has a rating that can be used to Change the current settings of any portal locks equal to or under its rating. Further functions are suspected, but it's up the Game Master to decide that for his own campaign world.

Two things that are known about Crystal Keys are:

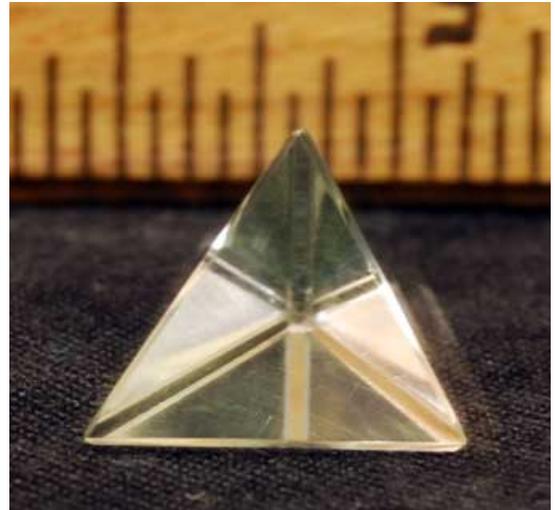
- All crystal keys glow when a Fringeworthy individual is within 10 feet of the crystal.
- If the crystal is in physical contact with a Fringeworthy, they receive a mental cue that a Fringeworthy is within 10 feet, but no directional information other than a hot/cold feeling when they are pointed in the right direction. If the Crystal Key is on their person, but not touching their skin, they will get the impression of familiarity when they are near the Fringeworthy individual. They will feel that they know the person, even when that is impossible. To get more information, the Fringeworthy would have to invoke the Find Fringeworthy crystal key power.

Crystal Key Types

This foolproof systemThe crystal key type -cannot be altered nor can the crystal key's rating be changed. Thirteen crystal keys were described in Captain Oates journal. Whether or not there are others, is left open to speculation.

There are 3 types of crystals: **Black**, **Orange**, and **Security-Rated (11 different colors of differing authority)**.

#	Cry	Description
1	Gra	Limited General Use
2	Whi	General Use
3	Pal e Green	Privileged General Use
4	Bro	Limited Access Maintenance
5	Re	Maintenance
6	Cle	Privileged Maintenance
7	Blu	Limited Security



8	ow	Yell	General Security
9	k	Dar	Green High Risk
10	ple	Pur	Quarantine
11	nbow	Rai	Top Security

Security crystals (type 1 to 11) have additional abilities based on their authority level, but all have the ability to control transit to and from the Fringe Platform. Placing the crystal in the control pylon allows a portal to be activated or deactivated if the rating of the crystal was equal or higher than the one last used to deactivate the portal. Portals can be deactivated from either world-side or platform-side as long as a full ring station is present. Once deactivated, the pylon displays no indicator lights world side or platform-side. If only a Warp is present on a world, the Fringeworthy there can be locked, forever trapped until the portal is activated again from the Platform.

In addition, every security crystal has a number of tools that can be accessed by the user through the Crystal Key Use skill. Most people call them "powers" but in fact they are a collection of functions and tools that can enhance the user's actions or control how the portals operate or function.

Crystal Activation

Crystals must be held in the hand or appropriate grasping appendage or in direct contact with the skin/hide/carapace for the race-user to activate any function, except when they are required to be placed in a control pylon.

PLATFORMS

The entire Fringepath system is a collection of linked sets of platforms, ~~which because their creation became automated, that~~ are uniform in appearance. They differ primarily in the necessary number of connections-Pathway Portals needed that link the platform to the other platforms in each node or other nodes. Each portal node is a **Prime to Alternate to System to Stellar_Hub to Star_System** string of platforms.

- A **Prime Platform** has a 50' high pathway portal at the 6 o'clock position that leads a pathway that takes you to the Alternate Platform and eight 25' high portals that lead to different locations on that (Prime) world at positions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11 o'clock.
- An **Alternate Platform** has eight planetary portals (25' high) and four pathway portals (50' high). Each planetary portal links to an alternate of the Prime world or to a pocket world. The pathway portals link to the **Prime platform**, the **System Platform** and laterally to two other nodes.
- A **System Platform** has eight planetary portals plus two pathway portals. Each planetary portal links to some location in the Prime world's star system. Normally this is on the surface of some astronomical body. The two pathway portals lead to the **Alternate Platform** and the **Star-Hub Platform** respectively.
- A **Stellar Hub Platform** has eight Pathway portals (50') plus a Pathway portal (50') that links it to the **System Platform**. Each of these eight portals leads to a **Star_System platform** around a different nearby star within 40 light years of the Prime.
- A **Star_System Platform** differs from a **System Platform** in that it has only one Pathway portal connecting it to the **Stellar_Hub Platform**. This is the end of the tree as the Tehrmelern see it. The eight planetary portals each connect to some location in the local star's system. As with **System Platforms** this is normally on the surface of some astronomical body.

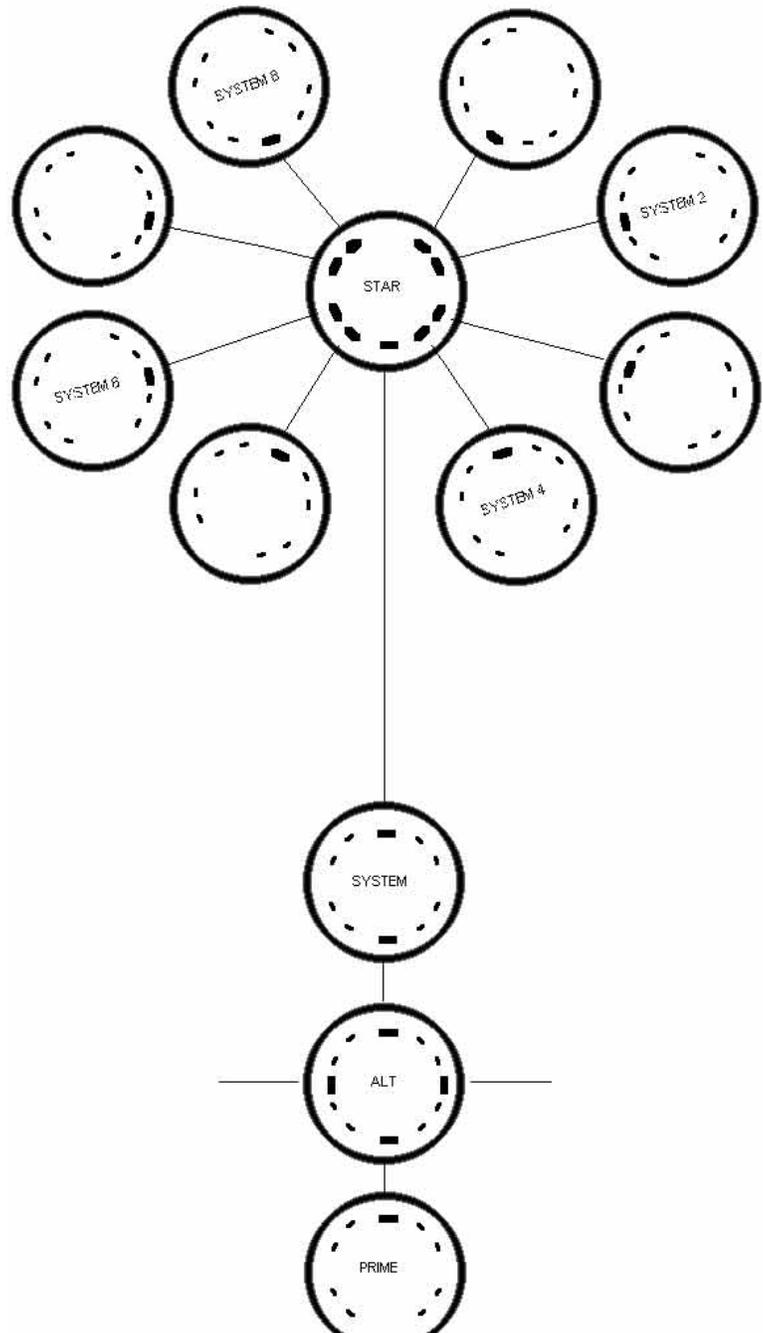
The sole purpose of any platform appears to be support for the transit portals. All portals are named after the hour it would correspond to on a clock face - 3, 6, 9, 12 for Pathway Portals and 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 for Planetary Portals. This pattern is repeated millions of times. Each node is connected laterally, creating the appearance of an infinitely long string of nodes.

Each disk-shaped platform is 613 feet in diameter and 4.37 feet thick. It is anchored in a column of space. Atmosphere extends 97 feet from the edge of the platform where it shears to a vacuum. Another 47 feet of safety extends to a point where any object will disappear in a blaze of light as the matter re-enters "real" space. It is hypothesized that this transfer is a complete matter to energy conversion. The blaze of light is what we expect to see at the event horizon of a black hole.

The upper and lower surface of the platform has 91% of Earth Prime normal gravity (.91G). There is only microgravity along the side causing a gravity shear at the platform edge. All portals are on the upper side of the platform. Atmosphere is sucked into the lower surface and oozes from the upper surface of the platform, creating what is believed to be an air filtration system. The surface of the platform ~~has microscopic irregularities~~ surface is covered in a nonrepeating pattern of nested triangular ridges that not only provide excellent traction, but also prevent the formation of a vacuum seal on the underside ~~bottom~~ surface unless some kind of sealant is added. A filled water glass placed lip down will soon fill with bubbles on the upper platform surface. However there is very little pressure and it is impossible to perceive the flow normally due to the downward draft on the platform. Since the platform is in a column of air, some of which is outside of the gravity of the platform, there is a constant breeze falling on the upper and under surfaces of the platform. This breeze blows down and then out, off the platform, where it rises vertically until it flows back into the gravity well. It is very easy to float an object vertically, but eventually that object will come crashing down on the edge of the platform as the air currents swirl inside the gravity well. If you manage to travel far enough up from the surface the atmosphere will thin to vacuum. Eventually you will find yourself falling to the other side of the platform. ~~So~~ Therefore, the column of space is actually a ring. The length of this column has never been determined but it is estimate to be over 150 miles long. This fact has only been ~~discovered~~ determined by experimentation, never by observation..

The platform is illuminated to the equivalent of twilight. This light is the full human visible spectrum plus a little ultraviolet. There is no infrared or high-energy radiation or particles. You can see clearly but reading for humans is difficult without an additional light source. Some light is emitted by the platform itself. The rest comes from what appears to be a dense star field that surrounds the column of space that holds the platform. Movement in that space causes some stars to exhibit changes in color and position. Some theorize that Fringspace is compressed space where minor movements translate to huge distances relative to the positions of the stars in the star field, resulting in Doppler shifts in the star's color. In reality these stars are stress points in the boundaries between universes. In any case, viewing this star movement induces vertigo in a significant number of Fringeworthy.

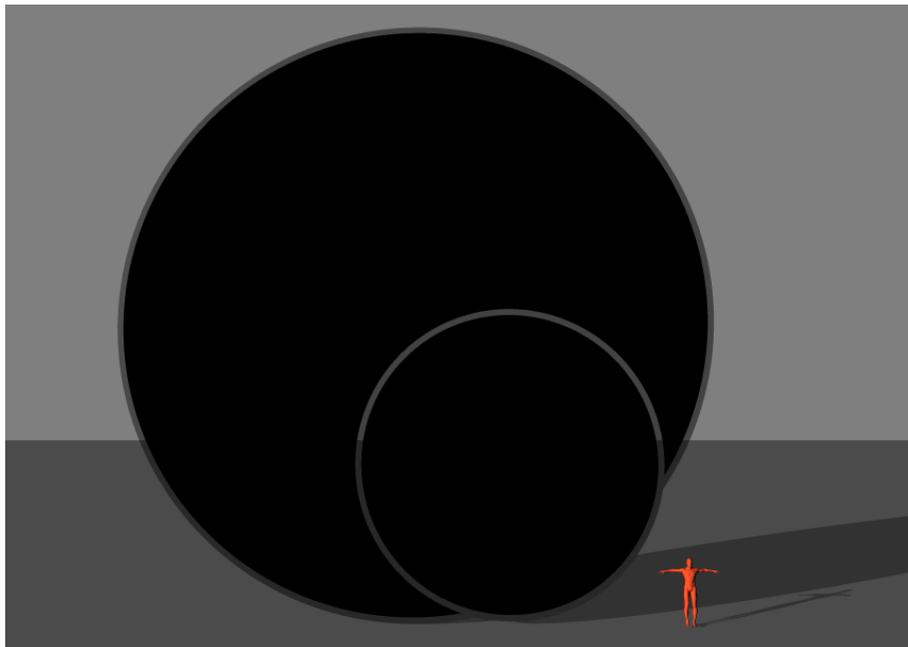
The Fringepath atmosphere is a constant 67 degrees Fahrenheit and 35% humidity. The air is easily breathable but has a strange taste due to its composition (oxygen 21%, nitrogen 78.1%, argon 0.9%). The surface of the platform is dull silver in color and from its hardness appears to be metallic. It is almost impervious. The surface feels like extra-fine grit sandpaper. It affords little rolling resistance, but footing is sure. The platform and pathway does not resound if struck and the interface between the atmosphere and vacuum doesn't reflect sound, so the Fringepath is quiet. However, the atmosphere transmits sound as normal otherwise.



PORTALS

Any nuclear or radioactive material passing through a portal or warp decays immediately into a harmless nonradioactive isotope. Shielding cannot stop this process. Any electrical storage device is also drained as it passes through a warp or portal. On the Platforms or Fringepaths, all electricity is neutralized, with the exception of biologically generated electricity. Again, shielding cannot prevent this loss. The loss of energy does not harm the equipment. If power is restored outside the Fringepath system, the equipment will function properly. Magnetic properties cease to exist while in the Fringepath system. This will completely erase magnetic tapes and disks. Magnetic properties will return in 1-10 minutes but batteries must be recharged.

Touching the black of a portal or warp is a commitment toward transition by the Fringeworthy. A person or object will be pulled through at a rate of 1.1 inches per second (1/16th mph) with a pull of one megaton against resistance. After that the surface of the ramp becomes slipperier to ease resistance. If that still isn't enough, it shears the object. This is the minimum speed. No maximum speed is known. Velocity is always conserved during transit. Only the Fringeworthy can make the transition to the platforms. Any material carried or thrown through a portal by a Fringeworthy will make the transition.



Materials thrown through by a non-Fringeworthy will fall to the floor on the other side of the Portal without making the transition. A non-Fringeworthy walking through a ring or warp will only step through to the other side of the ring. Other than occulting vision, a warp or portal has no effect on non-Fringeworthy. There is no limit to the length an object can be once the Fringeworthy initiates transit. It will remain Fringeworthy throughout its transit not matter how long that takes.

Note: If transit failure or intentional severing separates any part of an object making transit, it remains Fringeworthy for up to 10 minutes unless a non-Fringeworthy creature touches it; at which point it becomes normal.

Objects can rotate in any direction when transiting as long as an ever-increasing amount of mass is on the other side of the warp. An explorer can stick her head through a portal, lean back, and say a few words of warning as the rest of her body is pulled through. This has provided the opportunity for the creation of a number of complex devices for taking pictures and measurements of the other side of a

portal without the danger of the explorer making the transit herself. However something has to be left behind on the other side, announcing the presence of the Fringeworthy.

Animals are a special case of objects. A Fringeworthy person can bring all non-sapient animals through a portal. However, very few are Fringeworthy on their own. Crows are an exception. They seem to be universally Fringeworthy regardless of their world of origin. Intelligent animal species are rarely Fringeworthy. Non-Fringeworthy intelligent members of any race cannot transit into Fringe space.

Reaction to Fringe travel varies by species. Cats hate Fringe space and should only be transported restrained and preferably sedated.

Planetary Portals – World Side

The Antarctic Fringe Portal is the standard design used on planetary surfaces and on the platforms that lead to other worlds and alternate Earths. These portals are, in appearance, a rotating silver ring filled with an opaque dull black energy. All portals of this design possess a ramp leading to and from the ring as well as a control pylon on the right side. The exact composition of the ring metal and the energy that powers its movement has not been determined because the ring metal is indestructible and unstoppable. No samples can be taken for analysis. The Planetary Portals are 25.37 feet in diameter and rotate between 113 to 229 seconds per revolution, floating slightly above their “supporting” surface. Unlike platform material, rings are warm to the touch. They are entirely frictionless. They have ramps leading up to the warp (but not through) on both sides of the portal. Regardless of which side you enter a planetary portal from a world; you always exit inward on the platform.

Planetary Portals – Platform Side

These portals are, in appearance, exactly the same as the world side portals. However, entering opposing sides of a Planetary Portal from a platform results in exiting from different sides of the portal on the destination world.

Pathway Portals – Platform Side

The Pathway Portal ring follows the same design as a Planetary Portal but does not possess a control pylon. These rings are exclusive to the platforms and lead only to the Fringepaths that link to other Platforms. Pathway Portals are 53.37 feet in diameter. Like other rings, they are freely rotating at an average rate of 1 rotation per 171 sec. As with the world rings, the metal is frictionless, warm to the touch and indestructible by any known means. The height of the ramp where it intersects the warp is eight feet. Regardless of which side you enter a Pathway portal; you always exit on the upper surface of the roadway. It took a triplet of black holes and a dying star to create the energies that bridge the universes. Anything with that kind of energy density will disrupt the portal. Otherwise the transition will take place.

When you enter the Pathway Portal from the Platform side of the ring, you exit on to the pathway that connects to that side of the platform. If you enter the Pathway Portal from the side facing away from the center of the platform, you exit onto the pathway connected to the opposite side of the platform.

Pathway Portals – Pathway Side

On this side, the Pathway ring is suspended in space with the pathway seemingly emerging from the base of the event horizon approximately 8 feet above the base of the ring. These main transit rings measure 53.37 feet in diameter. Like other rings, they are freely rotating at an average rate of 1 rotation per 171 sec. As with all rings, the metal is frictionless, warm to the touch and indestructible by any known means.

Warps

A warp is the second type of portal available to the Fringeworthy on a world. It has no visible components (ring, ramp, control pylon) and may be the subspace extension of a buried or inaccessible ring. **If it is created when** an object blocks a ring, **then** it creates a warp in the closest open space. Warps are rainbows of energy that are only visible to the Fringeworthy and **have the same size and** function exactly like rings. They are the most common type of portal to populated worlds and alternate Earths. It has been theorized that the warp function was used for undercover work with cultures too fragile or primitive to have contact with alien beings.

At 50 feet away, the Rainbow Effect begins to fade from the direct line of sight of the Fringeworthy. At 100 feet, there is no visible sign that a warp exists. This rainbow effect can be seen in **pitch-blacknesspitch-blackness**. From the platform side of the portal, the "Rainbow Effect" can be turned ON or OFF with the use of the correct crystal key and the control pylon.

The only indication that a Planetary Portal exits to a ring station or a warp from the platform is whether control pylon light #4 is lit or can be lit. That indicates that the rainbow effect of a warp is turned on. This is good proof that only a warp exists world-side.

All normally operating warps require a "safe landing area" of less than 41 inches of water and no encroaching trees or drop off within 37 inches. If this environment does not exist, the warp will "back off" until these conditions can be met. It is theorized that on a world that experienced planet-wide flooding the warp might be orbiting continuously just above the whitecaps.

Pylons

Control Pylons are the only known access points for making minor adjustments to the portal's operation. They are mounted on right side of a Planetary Portal, before the ring and to the right of the ramp – facing toward the center of the Fringe Platform or on only one side of the world side portal. Control Pylons are cylinders 30 inches high and 4 inches in diameter with a 45% bias on the faceplate. Inside the circular faceplate is an equilateral triangle 3.5 inches on a side composed of 9 smaller equilateral triangles. Each is 1 inch on a side. The top-most triangle is a depression where a crystal key will fit. The other triangles are either indicator lights or switches.

The planet side pylon only has the depression for the key, the activation button and the activation light centered on the face of the pylon.

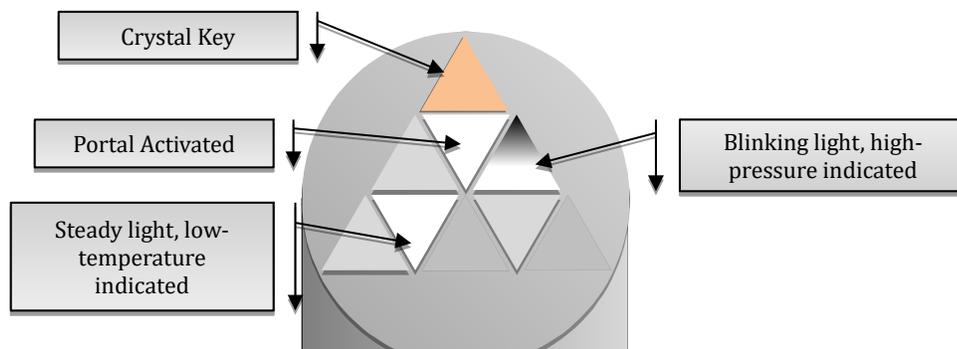
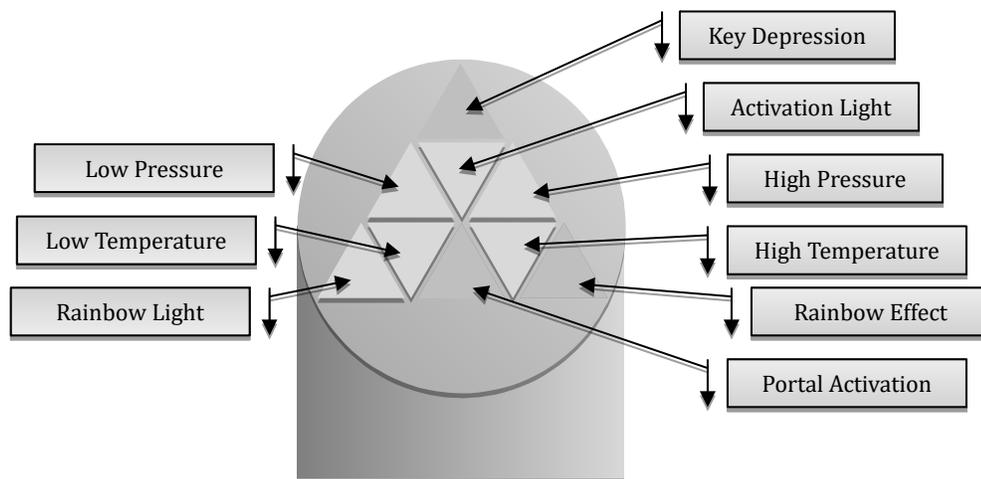
Key Depression	This is the slot in position 1 where a crystal key is inserted to make changes to the ring or warp in question. The pylon will only respond to a crystal of security rating greater than or equal to that of the last crystal used to make any adjustments. A pylon can be set to a lower security rating by pressing on the crystal before removing it. It will flash once for each level it is reduced and double flash if it cycles back to its starting setting. A pylon can be set to unlocked so no crystal is needed to change settings.
Portal Indicator	This position is an indicator of whether the portal is ON or OFF. If the indicator is lit, the portal is ON.
Portal Activation Button	This position is a button that, if a crystal key of the correct rank is inserted, activates the pylon, allows the operator to turn the portal ON or OFF.

Rainbow Effect Indicator	This position is an indicator of whether or not a Rainbow Effect is turned ON. If the indicator is lit the Rainbow Effect is turned ON.
Rainbow Effect Button	This position is a button that, if the pylon is active, can turn the Rainbow Effect ON or OFF.

These last 4 Positions are indicators of Dangerous or Deadly conditions on the other side of the Portal. The risk is dependent on whether the indicator is STEADY or BLINKING.

NS	CONDITIO	STEADY	BLINKING
	Low Pressure	Low Pressure	Vacuum
	Low Temperature	Low Temperature	Sub-Atmospheric (cryogenic)
	High Pressure	High Pressure	Crushingly High Pressure
	Hight Temperature	High Temperature	Incinerating Temperatures

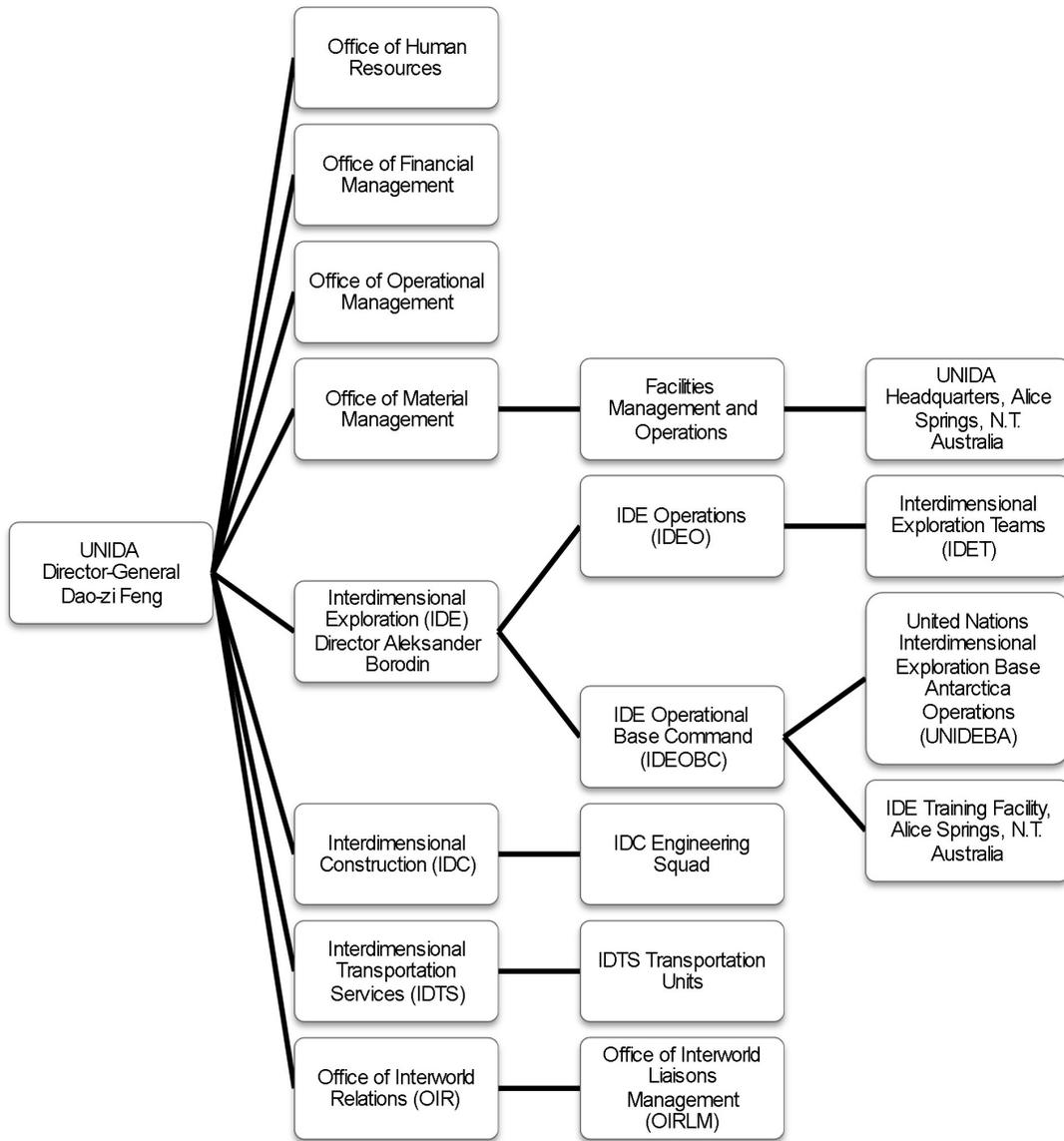
As with all Tehrmelern technology associated with the Fringepaths, the pylon's composition, power source and construction are completely indeterminate. It has been speculated that the pylons have other functions but none have been discovered to date.



UNITED NATIONS INTERDIMENSIONAL AGENCY

United Nations Interdimensional Agency

Organizational Chart



The United Nations Security Council founded the United Nations Interdimensional Agency (UNIDA) within hours of Dr. Hatsumi’s announcement of the discovery of a portal that lead to other worlds. The first head of UNIDA was Aleksander Borodin, a retired Russian General with plenty of experience in Arctic operations and conditions. Within a year, primarily at the prompting of the Peoples Republic of China, a new Director-General was appointed: Dao-Zi Feng. Director-General Feng is a billionaire

Chinese entrepreneur who formerly served as an IDE team member until he was attacked by a raptor on Alt 0,11. Through his government contacts, he was able to finagle the position of Director-General, and was instrumental in reorganizing UNIDA. Borodin became the director of Interdimensional Exploration and overall commander of all portals on Earth Prime as they were opened.

UNIDA is a semiautonomous agency; it operates independently and manages its personnel without UN oversight. The only exception is for the position of Director-General. The UN Security Council has the authority to fill that position as they see fit. Since the first Director-General was Fringeworthy, the policy for future appoints was to appoint from the ranks of Fringeworthy. When Borodin became Fringeworthy due to crystal attuning, he was later appointed Director-General of UNIDA. This was after he spent a couple of years traveling the Fringepaths with IDET 1.

Because the initial Fringeworthy were all given military rank by their respective nations, only the non-Fringeworthy staff and employees directly report to UNIDA. The Fringeworthy members are semi-independent, they answer to both their home nation as well as to the Director of IDE and the Director-General of UNIDA. This can cause some friction when the Fringeworthy receive orders or “suggestions” from their governments that go against UNIDA policy.

Additionally, because the Fringeworthy are semi-independent, they do not fall under the purview of the Office of Human Relations. That office is only concerned with non-Fringeworthy staff and employees. And due to their independence from UNIDA, all signing bonuses and pay that the Fringeworthy accrue, comes from their respective governments’ military branches.

WORLD AEROSPACE EXPLORATION AGENCY

After Gordon Conrad rode a bicycle to Mars and then became the first person to set foot on Mars, (in a used Russian spacesuit), there was a scramble by the various major space agencies, NASA, ROSCOSMOS, ESA, CNSA, JAXA, ISRO, and KARI, to wrest Fringe enabled space travel from UNIDA. They met and formed the World Aerospace Exploration Agency, WAXA. An affiliated agency, it is not under the direct command of the United Nations, and operates independently.

When new Fringeworthy are found that have various technical skills or piloting experience, WAXA will approach the individual with counter offers to those made by UNIDA. After WAXA procured its own Crystal Key, from the Tehrmelern ruins on Cydonia, Mars, they conducted their own searches for Fringeworthy.

Their primary mission on the Earth Prime node is to provide support for non-Fringeworthy WAXA astronauts. Travel to other worlds in the solar system became that much easier when you were assured of a prebuilt base and regular supplies from Earth of food, water, and other sundries.

WAXA Explorers were the first to visit other worlds around distant stars and bring back signs of life, alien life, from other planets.

UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPERS, FRINGE DIVISION

After the first encounter with the dinosaurs and less than friendly locals on other worlds, the UN Security Council created the Fringe Division, an arm of the UN Peacekeepers that directly reports to the Under-Secretary General of the UN. Its charter is to protect UN interests and its agents on the Fringepaths and on other worlds. Its initial membership was taken from the original ranks of UNIDA Fringeworthy, all volunteers who decided exploration wasn’t their cup of tea. The first Fringe Peacekeeper unit was also the first truly independent military body that was only beholden to the UN Security Council. Theoretically, it could operate on Earth Prime protecting UNIDA and UN interests without approval from the nation or region the operation took place in.

The first unit consisted of 6 individuals from as many countries. Under Major Indumal Tandon, an experienced soldier from India, the first Fringe Peacekeeper Squad did its best to show how things were done. As time went on, the Fringe Division, under the command of now General Tandon, became a force to be reckoned with.

The Fringe Division maintains its fighting readiness with constant trips to the Hunting Lodge portal and other locations, including training with the Golden Hordes Divine Heaven Warriors and the Roman Vel Mundi Legionnaires.

When needed, a squad will accompany an IDE team to a potentially dangerous world on the Fringepaths. Typically, the leader of the IDE team has authority to command the squad, though the squad leader has the discretion to override those commands if they would put both the team and the squad in peril.

FRINGECORP

Placeholder: FringeCorp: A corporation formed to license the likenesses of Fringeworthy, UNIDA equipment, marketing. Portal 1 stores.

Game Masters Guide

UNIDIA

In the Early Years campaign, two individuals really defined how UNIDA was shaped and formed: Aleksander Borodin and Dao-zi Feng.

In Year Zero, having a retired Soviet era/Russian Federation era [retired](#) general in charge, meant that Borodin had the scavenger skills to acquire equipment, hire whoever he needed, and find funding wherever and from whomever he could get a hold of. Even he would admit, that he didn't get the best deal and was forced to accept less than state of the art equipment, and that in many cases he left the UN responsible for several large IOUs. But he had an operational base in less than three months, land granted to him by the Australian government at Alice Springs for the headquarters of UNIDA, and he had established the standard operating procedures that were used for many years by UNIDA.

After Dao-zi Feng was appointed Director General of UNIDA, and Borodin Director of Interdimensional Exploration (IDE), the genius that had made Feng a billionaire in Shanghai, China, was used to run and fund operations across both the UNIDA Headquarters in Alice Springs and UNIDEBA. He had connections to corporations and used them to acquire state of the art equipment and gear for the Fringeworthy teams. There was some speculation that he privately profited from some of these deals, but no one has ever been able to prove that.

In addition to being a billionaire, Director General Feng is also Fringeworthy. He can inspect operations both on and off the Fringepaths and use this knowledge to better run UNIDA as a lean, mean exploration machine. In fact, having a Fringeworthy Director General was so important, that after Feng retired, the next Director General was appointed from the ranks of UNIDA Fringeworthy. When Borodin became Fringeworthy due to crystal attuning, he was later appointed Director-General of UNIDA. This was after he spent a couple of years traveling the Fringepaths with IDET 1.

Between a former Soviet era officer and a self-made Chinese billionaire, UNIDA couldn't have had a better start. While the two men didn't see eye to eye on every topic, they did agree on how things should work within UNIDA and that they had to [have](#) minimize interference from the UN, especially the General Assembly, and operate UNIDA as a semi-independent organization. This did mean cutting funding ties with the UN, but by the time this had happened, other sources of funding had been put into place.

UNIDA MISSIONS

Director Borodin set standard operating procedures for how missions would be handled.

- **No Cowboys:** No hopping in a vehicle and going out there just to see what's there. Every time an IDE team stepped through the portal on to the Fringes, they had a mission and goal.
- **Scouting:** Scouting missions were soon established after IDET 4 was formed. Every team had to do a scouting mission once an exploration season. They were to provide basic information about a world, so that when the next team went through, they would have some foreknowledge of what was on that world.
- **Training:** If you weren't doing a mission, recovering from a mission, you were training for the next mission. Each team would go through vigorous physical training and depending on the information that had been gathered, classes in history and diplomacy for the suspected society on that world.

- Mission Planning: Based on the information gathered by a scouting mission, each team and whatever experts they needed, would plan their next mission and what the goals would be for that mission. Director Borodin was initially involved in all of these planning sessions until there were just too many of them. After that, he would have representatives from his office involved for all but the most important or dangerous missions. Those he attended the meetings personally.
- Crystal Keys: Only the team leader and Director Borodin had access to the Crystal Keys that controlled access to the Fringes.
- The Mission Toast: Just before a team left on a mission, he would hand over the key to the team leader and lament on not being able to go with them. Then, in a tradition that hasn't changed in many years, he'd opens a drawer, take and places shot glasses on to the table for each team member and one for himself. Then he produces a mason jar filled with a clear liquid that had garlic cloves floating in it. It was his homemade vodka. He then pours a shot into every glass and then makes a toast: "May each of you be the best that you can be. May your endeavors be fruitful and may you all return to us. Tvoje zdorovye!" Drinking is not mandatory, he has been known to provide water for those who didn't drink alcohol.

With this basis, Director Borodin established a means for many successful missions, despite having teams made up of misfits and malcontents. It still didn't help when a team was made guests of the Khan, or when a team was forced to take shelter in a cave far from the portal after being attacked by dinosaurs. But it worked for the other 90% of the time.

FINDING FRINGEWORTHY

The other mission that only the most skilled in Crystal Key use had to perform was searching for more Fringeworthy. During the Antarctic winters, the most skilled in using the Crystal Keys would be sent out on trips to different countries to search for more Fringeworthy candidates. Wei Lei is one of these, and very probably one of the Heroes as well.

The basic mission that they would go on is fairly straightforward. You only need to run this mission once or twice for your players, just so they know what it takes to find new Fringeworthy. You can make it interesting by making the hero's teammates her security detail as she roams the streets and back alleys looking for Fringeworthy. Throw in some encounters with street people, misunderstandings, and at least one chase scene to make this a fine adventure.

To start, the Hero and her security team arrive a major city. The Hero fires up the Crystal Key power Find Fringeworthy, Expert Find Fringeworthy, or Master Find Fringeworthy. Depending on which security level of of these crystal key the Hero has in her possession, will increase his-her chances of finding a Fringeworthy.

Since Fringeworthiness only occurs in 1 in 100,000 people, only cities with sufficient population will initially be scouted for new candidates. As time goes on, the net will be cast wider. The biggest bottleneck to these searches is that the more advanced powers can't be discovered or used until a Crystal Key of the right level is found.

How-Each of the different level powers affects the chance-of-success-are chance of success is as follows:

- Find Fringeworthy: Time spent: 1 week
 1. The hero activates her power. If she gets a raise, she gets a +2 bonus to her Smarts check.

2. She makes an initial -4 Smarts check. A success just confirms that a Fringeworthy person is nearby. On a raise, the hero can narrow down the target's location to a small region of the city.
 3. Once in that region, she can make a normal Crystal Key invocation of the power if ~~neccessary~~necessary. If she gets a raise, she gains a +2 to their Smarts check.
 4. She then makes a -2 Smarts check to locate the Fringeworthy person.
- Expert Find Fringeworthy and Master Find Fringeworthy: Time spent 1 day
 1. The hero activates her power. If she gets a raise on her Expert Find Fringeworthy power, she gets a +2 bonus to her Smarts check. If she gets a second raise on the Find Fringeworthy power or a raise on the Master Fringeworthy power, she gets a +4 Smarts bonus.
 2. She makes her initial scan for Fringeworthy and makes a -2 Smarts check. A success confirms one Fringeworthy is within her scan range and where they are located. A raise indicates that there are two Fringeworthy individuals within range. A Smarts check is needed to focus on only one of them. Otherwise she only knows the vague directions they are in.
 3. When she is in the area that she believes the target is in, she activates her Crystal Key power if necessary. In this case a raise only gets her a +2 bonus to her Smarts check as it won't get the benefit of the extended range.
 4. She makes a Smarts check to locate the Fringeworthy person.

To confirm that the right person was found, the hero just needs to place the Crystal Key into the palm of the ~~Fringeworthy~~candidate. If they are such, the key will glow and a thrill will run up the arm of the individual. Once found, the individual will be actively recruited to join UNIDA.

From these steps, one can see that the rate of finding Fringeworthy individuals will be hampered mostly by the lack of higher level Crystal Keys. The rate of finding new Fringeworthy will be the following:

- 1 Fringeworthy per month, per NPC or Hero searching, and using the Find Fringeworthy power.
- 1 Fringeworthy per week, per NPC or Hero searching, and using the Expert Find Fringeworthy power.
- 1 Fringeworthy per 2 days, per NPC or Hero searching, and using the Master Find Fringeworthy power.

TEAM BUDGETS

In the Early Years campaign, neither UNIDA nor TÆSS have much money to spend. The UN is cash strapped in the early years and is totally dependent on member nations dues payments and grants of cash to operate. Because UNIDA is semi-independent of the UN, it gets just enough to administer day-to-day operations.

In Year Zero, having a retired Soviet era/Russian Federation era general in charge, meant that Borodin had free reign to acquire equipment, hire ~~whoever~~whomever he needed, and to find funding wherever and from whomever he could get a hold of. Even he would admit, that he didn't get the best deal and was forced to accept less than state of the art equipment. It does mean, however, that every mission on the Fringepaths has to be planned out and budgeted for.

This does not say that the IDE team members didn't get some of the latest gear. In many cases sponsorship deals would be made, and in exchange for a team member selling some item or device for a corporation, they would get the latest gear from that manufacturer. Apple was the first to sign a deal with Gordon Conrad, so that every IDE team member gets the latest Mac desktop computer for use at home and at Alice Springs in his or her offices. Wei Lei signed a deal with Pipo Technology, and now all UNIDA

personnel get the latest in Android tablets and phones at cost. These deals mean that the heroes do have access to some sophisticated equipment, but it probably will not work on the Fringepaths and platforms.

Additionally, untested technology, such as small fuel cell units and compact solar power systems will be available, but these are prototypes and they may breakdown, malfunction, or even explode. This also means that all the vehicles that UNIDA procures will most likely be used vehicles in the Early Years campaign. The Moskovi is a venerable armor personnel carrier that's forty years old, so finding spare parts for it will be hard. The initial vehicle finds will be made mostly in Australia, diesel vehicles of all sorts. If one is lucky, a still working steam vehicle, either a tractor or a lorry, can be found and either leased or purchased outright. But all these will be antiques until sufficient funds and reasons for better vehicles will allow the construction of brand-new Fringe-capable vehicles.

This all concerns a mission's budget. To keep this simple, each mission that the heroes go on will have a base budget of \$10,000 plus \$1,000 for each team member. Vehicles do not count towards this budget as most would exceed it. They will be issued and any repairs will have to come out of any remaining funds in the team's budget.

From this budget, they will have to requisition everything: Their basic loadout, weapons, ammunition, food, water, camping gear, and medical kits. Returning this gear will net them a credit equal to one half the value of the requisitioned gear. Uniforms are the exception. They will be issued one each of a field uniform, service uniform, and a mess dress uniform. They will have to purchase their own replacements if their issued uniforms are damaged or lost.

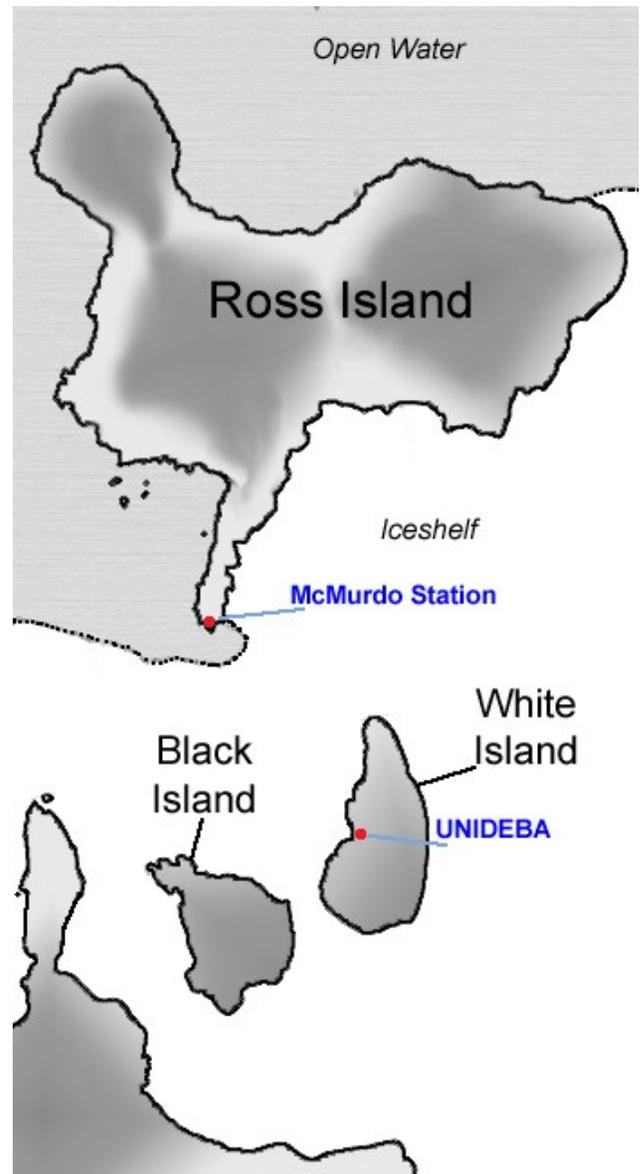
UNITED NATIONS INTERDIMENSIONAL EXPLORATION BASE ANTARCTICA OPERATIONS (UNIDEBA)

WHITE ISLAND

The complex on White Island will grow over the years in complexity and size. Initially, it is nothing more than huts borrowed from McMurdo Station. Then every year it grew in size with new facilities and construction, culminating in a series of large geodesic domes dotting the shore of White Island.

Before the other Earth Prime ring stations were opened, UNIDEBA, AKA "Hatsumi Base", was the focal point for IDE Teams.

Situated on the shore of a small bay where the ice moves the slowest, Hatsumi Base began life as a collection of 4 huts "borrowed" from McMurdo Station. Base Commander Borodin then commandeered three more huts that were on the tarmac in New Zealand.



Guidelines were placed out to the crevasse and a team of contractors was tasked to cut a shaft straight down to the dome. This was done using explosives and drilling equipment commandeered from a Russian Science expedition.

By the end of the summer season the shaft had been cut to the mysterious “dome” and rappelling lines put in place so that the UN Peacekeeping Forces could descend into the dome and ascend back up. In the dome itself, a generator and other gear were lowered down.

During the first winter, a dedicated team chiseled out a vertical shaft to the surface that was large enough for a mine elevator that had been procured from South Africa. The mine elevator was large enough to hold vehicles such as trucks and armored fighting vehicles. A special building was constructed to hold the elevator and its associated equipment. All of this was shipped by boat to McMurdo Station in the spring.

The first overwinter at the dome and Hatsumi Base was miserable for the personnel stationed there. They had to commute to the dome shaft on a regular basis and the UN Peacekeepers needed constant resupply as they guarded the portal. The conditions inside the dome were far more pleasant than on the surface such that the Peacekeepers never went topside until the Antarctic spring.

During the first winter, Borodin used his authority to take ownership of several Antarctic huts, including several used ones. After quick refurbishing and a coat of bright orange paint, a dozen more huts were ready for transport by ship to McMurdo Station and then transported over the ice to Hatsumi.

In addition, he assembled a team of support professionals, experienced in Arctic and Antarctic operations. This caused some consternation in the UN Security Council, and the UN General Assembly. He testified many times before both bodies in New York, explaining that for the mission to succeed, he needed experienced professionals to live and work at UNIDEBA, (he never called it Hatsumi base), and that political appointees would either die or be less than useless. He did mollify the Security Council some, by hiring experienced professionals from every permanent member of the council.

When IDET 1 arrived in the spring, the mine elevator was in place in a special hut that straddled the shaft cut in the ice. A covered walkway with plenty of guidelines was in place and the new huts were in place and up and running. In the dome new construction was underway, including a quarantine facility. The entrance to the ring station building was being sealed and an “air lock” of sorts was being built.

IDET 1 had been tasked to travel to the portal where Sayuri Tenuma had met Schmert, so beyond the UN presence, a veritable forest of tents and portable huts were set up by most of the world’s news services. This collection of tents and huts became, over the years, a permanent collection of structures and hotels for the world’s press and other visitors to Hatsumi Base.

Life at UNIDEBA

Until the first “warm water” portal on Earth Prime was opened, Hatsumi Base [was](#) the focal point of UNIDA and the world. Several facilities are built in the domed area under the ice: A hospital, quarantine facilities, barracks, guest facilities, fortifications around the portal building, and small motor pool for staging vehicles.

On the surface, a host of huts and habs dot the surface of White Island. A covered walkway leads from the main cluster of buildings to the elevator building and access shaft leading down to the dome. During the summer months, the base is a hive of activity. New facilities being built, visitors, press flights, and the ever-important mission prep for one of the IDE teams about to venture onto the pathways. On the ice, a landing strip is kept cleared for flights to and from the base from either New Zealand or Australia.

Initially, a line of communication balloons was put in place between the Ross Ice Shelf and Wellington, New Zealand. ~~These were~~ ~~They carried~~ ~~broadband communication systems~~ ~~broadband communication systems~~ that provided high-speed data connections between Hatsumi base and McMurdo Station. Two years later a communications cable ~~was~~ laid from McMurdo Station to Wellington. Then a remotely controlled ~~underwater~~ ROV carried another cable from McMurdo to ~~the~~ dome, connecting Hatsumi Base to securely to the rest of the world.

Because of climate change, the ice began to recede farther into the Ross Ice Sheet until seven years later the northern tip of White Island finally touched open water once more. Under the ice, this was much more apparent, as a ring of water would form in the spring and rise up as the summer progressed. After seven years the ring of water was 20 feet tall. The local seals took advantage of this, driving small schools of fish right through the dome's electrostatic force field onto the surface of the seamount. There they had a feast and some took up permanent residence within the dome. To accommodate the new residents, secure barriers were set up to keep humans from bothering the seals.

On occasion, visitors from the other Fringe worlds will arrive, typically unannounced. Some just need resupply, which UNIDA will gladly do, keeping an account of what was taken and used. Others are official delegations from these other Earths to the UN. These representatives are put in the guest quarters until a flight to New Zealand can be arranged.

Mysteries of UNIDEBA

The biggest mystery of UNIDEBA is the electrostatic force field dome that keeps the ice and water out of the old base under the ice. The Ross Ice Sheet breaks over this dome, and what water there is that's visible during the summer months cannot pass through the electrostatic field of the dome. But seals routinely pop through with the catch of the day, and leave with ease. Water can be carried through the dome, but falling ice in the elevator shaft stops when it hits the force field.

An experiment was tried where a paper cup of water was dropped onto the force field. The cup passed through, but the water didn't. However when the cup of water was placed on the floor of the elevator, the water remained in the cup.

Excavations were made at the center of the dome in hopes to find what was causing the effect. ~~What they~~ found ~~was~~ a flat expanse of metal 2 meters under the surface. Subsequent investigations using ground-penetrating radar revealed that the metal is completely under the surface of the seamount the base is situated on. Seismic readings find that the seamount contains a cylinder 303 meters in diameter (994 feet) and 1,524 meters tall (5,000 feet). It is the largest structure on Earth. No opening could be found and any attempt to cut through the metal fails, as it is a form of Tehrmelern metal with self-healing capabilities.

It took 5 years of patient exploration and research before and triangular indentation was found in the top of the cylinder. It took several years before a combination of keys was able to open a door into the great machine. The cylinder houses a massive device, whose exact purpose is unknown. However, a control center was found that would operate for any Fringeworthy using both an orange engineering key and a type 7 key or higher. The controls give access to the following features of the electrostatic force field:

- The size of the dome. The dome can be expanded to over a mile in radius. The dome is actually a globe, and as the dome is expanded, it will push aside the water and ice surrounding it. If pushed too fast, it could overwhelm the UNIDEBA surface base and crush it.
- The climate inside of the globe. The climate can be adjusted to near tropical conditions, with separate controls for temperature, humidity, even wind speed.

- **Illumination.** During the cold winter months, a false sun will shine in a typical 24-hour cycle: 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night. This artificial sun can be positioned anywhere in the sky overhead. The visible sun is just an image on the inside of the top of the globe relative to the viewer.

There are other controls that remain dark. They were probably for devices and machines that existed on the original base, but were lost when the dome was reduced to the smaller size it was discovered at. They were most likely flooded and then grounded off by the Ross Ice Sheet.

When it was first expanded a little bit, no more than 10% larger than its original size, dome shoved the thick ice out of the way. This partially collapsed the vertical shaft to the dome and temporarily trapped the personnel in the dome until the elevator was repaired.

After much discussion by various authorities and a long arduous debate in the UN General Assembly, it was decided to “restore” the dome to full functionality and size. However, due to the fact that the ancient facilities are now on a sea mount, 300 feet below sea level, that plans be put into place to construct an elevated road with a spiral ramp down to the top of the seamount. This included plans to install stairs and elevators in the spiral ramp.

PORTALS EXPANDED

PORTAL DEFENSIVE ABILITIES

Defensive Energy Burst

Portals, Pathways, Rings and Control Pylons are virtually idiot-proof and cannot be damaged by any known means. Weapons fire directed against a person or object in transit results in a 5d10 energy burst fired at the origin of the weapons fire. This only occurs if the attack hits the transiting target. Misses are ignored.

The portal never misses, but it will not fire if it cannot get a clear shot at the origin of the attack. Also, the attack must do physical damage to the target, so only directed energy (Lasers, particle beams, etc.) and kinetic energy attacks (Punches, bullets, swords, etc.) are responded to. Chemical weapon attacks do not provoke a response, nor do Psi attacks, including various forms of Telekinesis (Blast, Bolt, Burst, Entangle, Pummel, and Telekinesis).

Additionally, mines and grenades do not prompt an energy blast because they self-destruct.

Fringe Pirates take advantage of this this function, by attaching a cable on a spooling frame to themselves or their vehicles, and leaving it behind on the pathway or platform they are transiting from. The spools contain about a thousand feet of cable, and will take 83 days to completely unspool, so severing the cable is the only option to prevent the portal from firing the energy burst.

Severing the cable with weapons fire is a -6 to the shot. Most cables have a toughness of 8-12 depending on their thickness. If the attacker successfully severs the cable, except for the attack on the cable, the portal will stop returning fire.

In summary:

- Attacks on an object or person that is transiting through a portal, cause the portal to return fire on the origin of the attack.
- The portal only uses its attack if there is a clear line of sight back to the attacker from the portal.

- Portals have 360° line of sight.
- The portal attack never misses, and does 5d10 of energy damage.
- The portal only fires if the attack hits the object of person transiting through the portal.
- The energy blast is immediately fired after a successful hit.
- The hit does not have to do any damage, even when the target successfully makes a soak roll and takes no damage.
- This attack only occurs as long as the target is still in transition through the portal. This includes any object that is securely attached to the target.

Mellor Defense

In the final days, the Tehrmelern were able to reprogram the Fringepaths to distinguish between normal and mutant Mellor. When any mutant Mellor appears on the Fringepaths or approaches a portal in its natural form the Tehrmelern Mellor defensive function is triggered. The portal will fire a 5d10 energy blast at every Mellor within line of line of site of the portal every round. This attack always goes first at the beginning of the round, before any other actions, and will continue to fire until the Mellor is destroyed. This attack ignores all Mellor immunities or resistances. This attack also doesn't care if something or someone is in the way, unlike the standard defensive fire.

By the way, the portal never misses.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Portal transition tends to kill harmful bacteria and viruses and cleanse the traveler's system of any odd organisms that they didn't have at the last portal use. The largest organisms that will be removed are simple single-celled animals or flora. Larger parasites, such as tapeworms, flukes, and fleas, will not be removed, and must be dealt with in a more traditional manner. However, if they are any harmful bacteria or viruses in the parasite, then these are cleansed from the parasite. Additionally, the hero's immune system is strengthened and allows them fight parasitical infection better and be-gets rid of the parasite sooner than normal. They also can make a Vigor roll for airborne infections, which normally do not allow for a Vigor roll.

In game terms, the hero is cured of any diseases they may have contracted on a world. However, the physical effects of the disease will have to heal normally. A hero covered in buboes from the black plague will be cured of the plague, but the buboes must heal normally. If the disease causes a Fatigue loss, the hero will still suffer the Fatigue loss for a few days until her body recovers from the ravages of the disease.

In addition, the immune system is boosted for those who travel the Fringepaths, making them better able to fight off diseases that the Fringe system does not cleanse from the body. Cancer, radiation damage, poisoning, and other similar afflictions can be put into remission after a year of travel on the Fringepaths. The immune system is repaired, and retuned. This retuning will, cureing various autoimmune diseases, such as leprosy.

Finally, the boosting effect will increase the lifespan of the hero by a factor of 20. For older explorers, this boost can cause a "rejuvenation" effect: Arterial plaque is removed, late onset diabetes is reduced or cured, and hair loss reversal has been reported. The hero isn't actually younger, but their biological systems are so energized that their bodies are able to resist stress, repair damage, flush fatigue, and environmental poisons, and restore function to marginal cells. In the end they look and feel like non-Fringeworthy humans who are years younger. However, it doesn't keep them from getting a hangover.

Because their body is better at repairing itself, they can regenerate lost limbs and heal lame ones over time. They can overcome the effects of debilitating diseases, and resist poisons. They can do the following:

During a game session:

- They get a +2 to resist infection from Touch or Induction caused diseases.
- They can make a Vigor roll to resist Airborne diseases.
- Once per session they can make a Vigor test reduce a Long-Term Chronic, Majorly Debilitating Disease to a Long-Term Chronic, Minorly Debilitating Disease.
- Once per session, they can make a Vigor test to reduce a Long-Term Chronic, Minorly Debilitating Disease to a Short-Term Debilitating Disease.
- They can recover from a Short-Term Debilitating Disease 2d6-2 days, minimum of one day being sick from the disease.
- Normal recovery time for the Fringeworthy 2d6-2 days minus half the Hero's Vigor.

Once per rank a hero can make a Vigor test vs. a body-related Major hindrance and a Vigor+2 test for a body-related Minor hindrance, and on a success then spend an advance to either reduce the Major to a Minor hindrance, or remove a minor hindrance all together. Additionally, the following Hindrances can be cured:

- The One Arm hindrance can be reduced by -2 after a successful Vigor test once per session and spending an advance. A second advance would have to be spent to completely remove this hindrance, but not in the same session it was reduced to a Minor hindrance.
- The One Eye hindrance can be reduced to a Minor Bbad Eeye hindrance on a successful Vigor roll and spending an advance.
- The Major Bad Eyes hindrance can be reduced to a Minor hindrance on a successful Vigor roll and spending an advance.
- The Minor Bade Eyes hindrance can be completely removed on a successful Vigor roll and spending an advance.
- The One Leg hindrance can be reduced to a Lame hindrance on a successful Vigor test and spending an advance.
- The Lame hindrance can be completely removed with successful Vigor test and spending an advance.

The exception is if the hero has the Elderly Hindrance and then they have to buy it off with one of their Advances after they have been using the Fringepaths and portals for 5 game years. At that point, the effects of the Elderly Hindrance are removed from the Hero. Over the 5 game years, their appearance changes, and they appear more youthful, eventually appearing to be in their mid-40s to early 50s.

PROBLEM PORTALS

"We also know of this Murphy!"

--Schmert

They cut across as wide a path as possible, without disrupting or mixing universes. But like all feats of engineering, there were a few problems in the otherwise perfect system. There was a point where even the Tehrmelern rounded the hundred billionth decimal point without realizing time would show the errors in new and creative ways.

Maintenance would have been simple if the Tehrmelern had survived the living tidal wave of hell called Mellor.

The theoreticians who worked for the UN's IDA suspected that damaged Planetary Portals and transference oddities might exist early on. These bugs in the Tehrmelern portals would prove to be an extreme danger to Earth's first Fringeworthy Explorers. As time went on, it was surmised that the majority of "problems" were in fact features that the Fringeworthy could invoke using the appropriate Crystal Key.

Problem Portal Table

Use problem portals sparingly, as they can cause major problems for the heroes. If you want to randomly generate a problem portal then for each planetary portal on a platform do the following:

- Roll a d100.
- On a result of 100, roll on the following table:

Problem Portals

D100	Minor Problem	D100	Serious Problems
01-14	Misaligned Warp	01-15	Misaligned Warp Height
11-15	Misaligned Warp Height	16-25	Fast Warp Drift
16-20	Timed Transfer	26-35	Hard Transfer
21-25	Time Lapse Transfer	36-50	Hard Splash Down Warp
26-30	Weird Down	51-60	Bad Transition
31-35	Splash Down Warp	61-70	Hot Sauce Transfer
36-40	Warp Drift	71-80	Ice Pack Transfer
41-45	Stellar Transfer Warp	81-95	Geronimo Transfer Warp
46-50	Ghost Transfer	96-100	Solid Transfer
51-60	Ghost Warps		
61-65	Pusher Transfer		
66-70	Rainbow Flux Warp		
71-75	Hot Transfer		
76-80	Cold Transfer		
86-90	Mirror Transfer		
91-95	Intermediate Area Transfer		
96-99	Mind Transfer		
100	Roll on Serious Problems		

Minor Problem Portals

The following are the minor problems that afflict portals, both Warps and Ring Stations, unless specified in the problem description.

Misaligned Warp

Exiting these problem rings or warps will create unusual light images or "flicker" for 10d10 minutes or until the explorer returns through the portal. While relatively harmless, the image is disconcerting to those who view it. Flickering has a 4 in 10 chance to cause headaches and nausea for the explorer.

Misaligned Warp Height

A Warp with Misaligned Height is 1-4 feet off the ground.

Timed Transfer

A Timed Transfer is a normal transfer with a random or set time where the explorer is automatically pulled from the world and dumped backwards from the portal to the platform. This recall happens regardless of the victim's distance from the portal. The victim begins to glow a minute before he or she dematerializes. There is a 1 in 10 chance that a Timed Transfer Portal also suffers from a Time Lapse Transfer error.

Time Lapse Transfer

These are the portals that transfer explorers to a world and then refuse to allow their return to the Platforms until a specific amount of time has passed. This can be up to 100 days though the average is 3d10 hours. After the initial "Waiting Period", an explorer can come and go through the portal as usual without the time restriction. There is a 1 in 10 chance that a Time Lapse Transfer Portal also suffers from a Timed Transfer error.

Weird Down

Weird Downs are random problems associated with transit through a warp or ring with slight stability problems. These manifest themselves as horrific booming noises, wind, light or other disturbing effects that scare the willies out of the local natives. In the rarest of instances (1 in 20), the explorer will transfer to the alternate or prime while leaving all possessions, equipment and clothing behind. Exiting such portals had a 50% chance of creating the same effects as an occasional cloudburst. (And possibly a messiah complex)

Splash Down Warp

These Warps exit over water at a height of 1-10 feet. They function as normal warps in all other respects.

Warp Drift

Some Warps have been known to constantly move at a very slow pace. These Warps may travel up to 10 feet per hour.

Stellar Transit Warp

These warps appear on a planet's surface once in a specific or random time for d100 hours before accelerating to an orbital location for up to d100 days. The surfaces of these worlds are only accessible for a very short time when the platform's pylon changes from dangerous to safe.

Ghost Transfer

Many Fringe-path explorers find the Ghost Transfers to be the most disconcerting. The explorer is transported to the world in question but only as an immaterial ghost-like being that can pass through people and solid objects and only possesses a 1 in 10 chance to move or interact with anything solid on that world. In fact they are only visible to the inhabitants of that world for d4 actions at a time. They are the ghosts and poltergeists of legend.

Ghost Warps

Ghost Warps are stationary or drifting “False” rainbow warps. While confusing to the Fringeworthy, they can hide small Pocket Universes or Hells. They form in clusters of d10+1 and there is a 1 in 10 chance that they will drift in the vicinity of a true functional warp, (seriously confusing the issue if a fast escape is required).

Pusher Transfer

Normal in all other respects, the Pusher Transfer shoves the victim through the portal at 2-5 times the velocity at which they entered. (Baseballs to bullets, Oww!) This effect occurs in both directions through the portal.

Rainbow Flux Warp

Flux is the energy picked up through a Rainbow Warp. These rare occurrences make an explorer stand out like a neon light to other Fringeworthy for d100 hours. This effect is also visible to animals and small children and can have a very unnerving effect upon them. It can also be detected as a halo-like effect by camera, though not by normal vision.

Hot Transfer

Hot Transfers cause the Hero and all his equipment to radiate heat from the surface of his skin, clothes, any surface, for d10 minutes. However, the hero is unaware of this until something catches fire. This heat is hot enough to ignite paper, wood, fuel, or other material. Ammunition exposed to this heat can cook off if heated for more than a minute. Additionally, a small burst of fire may appear in a random spot on the Hero or his equipment. Treat this as a “Spot fire” and it does 1d10 damage. Exceptionally dangerous are Hot Transfers that heat the external surfaces of the traveler and any equipment he or she carries to 110° F. Most often a hot transfer will kindle a small burst of flame at a random spot on the victim. This effect has been known to last up to d10 minutes. The Hero must make an immediate Vigor roll or become shaken. This effect occurs in both directions through the portal.

Cold Transfer

Essentially this is the opposite of a Hot Transfer with the surfaces and equipment being chilled down by -100° F. This can cause frostbite to any exposed skin if care is not taken to immediately warm the affected area. In extreme cases, liquids have frozen and containers have been deformed or even burst by the rapid crystallization of their contents. This effect has been known to last up to d10 minutes. This effect occurs in both directions through the portal.

Mirror Transfer

In a Mirror Transfer, the hapless explorer has everything about him reversed, right down to the molecular level. This includes his DNA and proteins. This has the nasty effect of making almost all the food he is likely to encounter on this alternate useless to him. Technically, the explorer could eat to bursting and still starve to death due to the inability to absorb any useful nutrients. The only food of any value would be what the explorer brought with him at the time of transfer unless some naturally occurring “Left-handed” food could be located. This is very unlikely. Luckily, returning through the portal reverses this effect.

The beneficial side effect of the Mirror Transfer is that the Hero is immune to all pathogens and most biological based poisons.

Intermediate Transfer

An unusual occurrence where an Access Ring to an Alternate or Prime has a small closed universe set before the actual gate. A delay area like this is often a mile in diameter and in a natural setting. They are thought to be staging areas or created because of engineering difficulties encountered during the initial attempt to access the Alternate. This is the same as the Crystal Key Power *Intermediate Area Transfer*.

Mind Transfer

These are the rarest of all Tehrmelern research portals where the explorer's body is held between worlds and his or her conscious displaces the mind of a sentient being or animal on the other side. While very disconcerting to the Fringeworthy, the victim suffers nothing but a memory loss and the minor consequences of whatever the explorer did with the body while in possession of it.

Passing through any Portal or Warp, or, in some cases, the death of the host body returns the Hero's mind back into his body and he then exits from the ring on to the platform. If the return cause is the death of the host body, there is a 2 in 10 chance that some counseling will be required for the explorer if they survive a -2 Spirit check. Failure indicates that the character takes 3 wounds, must make an Incapacitation Vigor roll. If he fails, a Hero with the Healing skill can try to stabilize him using the normal Healing rules. Note, the Hero can soak this damage.

Serious Problem Portals

The following are the major problems that afflict portals, both Warps and Ring Stations, unless specified in the problem description.

Misaligned Height Warp

A critically Misaligned Warp that is 5-15 feet off the ground and drops the traveler like a sack of sand.

Fast Warp Drift

Fast drift is an alignment problem that can move a warp 20d10 feet per day. This is often in a random direction.

Hard Transfer

A Hard Transfer is a dangerous condition where the victim making the transition is shocked unconscious for 1-10 minutes and thrown through the portal exit. Other effects include vomiting (30%), nausea (85%) violent sickness (75%), memory lapse (35%), and half physical stats (65%) for up to 10 hours. Metal carried can be fused, weakened or crystallized into uselessness (45%)

A memory lapse can be minimal, creating a state of confusion or a temporary loss of a few hours of memory. There is a 10% chance the victim will suffer a full identity loss for up to 10 weeks

Hard Splash Down

These warps exit over water at a height of 11-20 feet. This guarantees an adventure just getting back home through the warp. In all other aspects this warp functions normally.

Bad Transition

Bad Transitions resemble the results of a harsh brawl. Victims, upon transit, are spun, thrown and ejected from the portal as they exit. In extreme cases they are launched from the system and

thrown backwards onto the platform or shot out of the warp. Vehicles are generally damaged as if in a harsh frontal collision of up to 100 miles per hour without any additional injury to passengers.

Hot Sauce Transfer

This is a more severe form of Hot Transfer that can be picked up from a malfunctioning portal. In this Hot Transfer the excessive heat energy (~~100+ degrees~~) generated by the portal stays with the explorer as long as he or she is on that world. Most dangerous is that the explorer doesn't feel this heat on their person or equipment as everything (including the explorer) has been heated evenly. The level of threat depends on what the explorer is carrying, ~~for example, (matches, flares, certain flammable or explosive chemicals or containers)~~ and how long he or she remains on that world. There is a ~~5%1 in 20~~ cumulative chance per day, that some object on the explorer will burst into flame and require extinguishing. ~~(The chance is greater if the object is naturally flammable, of the dangerous variety—see above).~~ Objects from that world that come into contact with the explorer have a 50% chance of bursting into flame at a rate of ~~1d-4~~ objects per day. The heat energy dissipates upon reentry to the portal.

Ice Pack Transfer

This is a more severe form of Cold Transfer that can be picked up from a malfunctioning portal. In this Cold Transfer the rapid decrease in temperature (~~-100° Fdegrees~~) generated by the portal stays with the explorer as long as he or she is on that world. Most dangerous is that the explorer doesn't feel this chill on their person or equipment as everything (including the explorer) has been cooled evenly. There is a ~~5%1 in 20~~ cumulative chance that a spot on the explorer will spontaneously freeze and require warming to thaw or it will spread at a rate of ~~1d4-4~~ square inches per minute. Objects from that world that come into contact with the explorer have a 50% chance of freezing solid at a rate of ~~1d-4~~ objects per day (talk about giving someone the cold shoulder) The chilling effect dissipates upon reentry to the portal.

Geronimo Transfer Warp

A dangerously misaligned warp that is not vertical but horizontal to the ground. The Hero literally falls out of the portal. The height they fall is $1d4 \times 10$ feet. It is recommended that you use trees, water, whatever to cushion the falls of the Heroes. There is a 1 in 20 chance that the height of the fall is +20 feet higher.

Solid Transfer

The most horrifying of all transfers is the Solid Transfer where Heroes or equipment become fused into the atomic structure of a solid object. They are literally yanked through the portal and fused into the nearest solid object or into the ground.

To determine who this happens to, shuffle and draw a card for each Hero, vehicle, and important piece of equipment passing through the portal. On a Spade, that person or item is fused into another object. The higher the suit of the card, the more of the person is fused. A 2 of Spades, just a hand or foot is fused. A 7 of Spades, half the person is fused. Ace of Spades, and the person is completely fused into a solid object. (Within reason. If the nearest object is a tree, then the Hero center of mass is inside the tree, with his arms and legs sticking out.)

While never immediately fatal, it is an agonizing way to die unless the object and the Hero fused to it are transported back through the portal. The second portal transition automatically separates the victim from the objects without ill effects (except possibly nightmares).

While in the fused state, the Hero takes damage, ignoring armor, every round. From 2 to 4 of Spades, 1d6 damage. 5 to 9 of Spades, 2d6 damage. 10 and Jack of Spades, 3d6 damage. Queen to Ace, the Hero is suffocating. If the head or upper body is fused into an object, the Hero will suffocate.

JELLY FIRE

These clouds of boiling pinpoint lights are magnificent to behold. Swirling like a snowstorm, the minute fluorescing globules build up on exposed surfaces until brushed away. Jelly-like in nature, they smell like rotten eggs and are useless. The sticky residue evaporates in 10 minutes leaving no trace.

SNOW STORMS

This storm resembles a white boiling mass of clouds. The temperature instantly drops to freezing and a small blizzard covers everything with snow and ice. Often an inch of snow is dumped in just a minute or two.

NOISE STORMS

These sparking clouds carry a booming cacophony of sound with them. While most is just noise, on occasion, voices can be discerned along with other near familiar sounds.

RAINBOW STORMS

Colorful and annoying, these storms build up static electricity and create a halo effect around those it contacts. With nowhere to go, be careful how (or on whom) you discharge the built-up shock once you leave the Fringepaths as it can persist for several hours. Otherwise it is harmless.

ELECTRICAL STORMS

Appearing first as Rain Clouds, these monstrous little thunderstorms discharge electrically. Any vehicle in such a storm has a 1 in 4 chance of being hit. Results of a hit in a random area do up to 2d20 points of damage. Individuals have a 1 in 10 chance of being hit with 3d6 points of damage.

PSI STORMS

These oddities resemble Rainbow Storms, but charge the contacted individuals with PSI Energy. Any PSI user gains a temporary +2 bonus to use Psychic powers for 24 hours. Non-Psionics become temporarily psionic for 1d4 days. Randomly choose their power. Anti-PSIs exposed to this cloud suffer headaches and severe nosebleeds.

GHOST TRAIN

This is the “ghost train” out of legend and haunted house lore. On very rare occasions a Fringepaths explorer has admitted, (usually after getting very drunk), to having encountered such a thing. They are usually the butt of their comrades’ jokes for months and others have tended to wonder about them after such a telling. To date, no one has been found dead on the Fringepaths or Platforms flattened by an imaginary locomotive.

PYLONS EXPANDED

“It’s nothing but idiot lights!”

--Gordon Conrad

The standard pylon control interface is somewhat lacking in verbose information on the conditions on the other side of the warp. Many a Fringeworthy has commented on this issue, not knowing what the exact parameters are for the blinking lights and a lack of other indicators for radiation, bio-compatibility, and other information about the world on the other side.

And they are right. There is an expanded interface for the pylon that can be accessed. However, it may not be what the hero was looking for. To open the expanded interface requires two crystal keys: A yellow type 8 general security or higher crystal key, and an orange engineering key.

You use the security key to activate the pylon and then you touch this key with the orange key and then invoke the power "Open Interface". This requires a successful *Crystal Key Use* skill test at -4. If successful, the expanded interface opens up and displays the enhanced information about the world on the other side of the warp.

What the hero sees probably won't make any sense to them. Humans use dials, indicators, scales, and even words to deliver information about a system. Not the Tehrmelern. They use colors to indicate different forms of information.

The four basic colors of the Tehrmelern readout are:

- Green: Indicates a good condition the deeper the color. Associated with organic systems.
- Red: Indicates a good condition the deeper the color. Associated with nonorganic systems.
- White: Indicates a dangerous condition when completely white, tinted green or red, not as dangerous. White is the color of mold and decay.
- Black: Indicates a deadly condition when fully black. In different shades of grey, indicates that the conditions are getting worse. If tinted green or red, indicates that the associated system is decaying.

The existing environmental indicators are replaced with updated versions and new indicators are added to the interface:

Temperature	Green indicates normal temperatures above 68°F, Red normal temperatures under that. As more white is added to both colors, the temperatures go up or down respectively. 100° F is a green-light white color, 32° F is red-light white in color. As they get whiter and lighter, the more extreme the temperatures. Absolute white, you die if you step on the other side unless you have some very tough environmental suits.
Pressure	Green indicates normal pressure within a few millibars. Low pressure the color darkens until it reaches black for vacuum. High, but survivable pressure is indicated by the color getting whiter and when completely white, the pressure is at Tehrmelern maximum survivable pressure. This also happens to be human max as well. Beyond that it gets darker until it goes black, at around 8 atmospheres, when the normal mixture of oxygen and nitrogen in the atmosphere becomes toxic.
Radiation levels	Bright Red indicates normal radiation levels, as they go up, the color gets darker and darker.
Humidity	Green indicates humidity between 50% to 60% humidity. As the humidity goes up, the color gets lighter and lighter, until it reaches 100% humidity, the color will be a very light green. As humidity goes down, the color gets darker until it hits 0% humidity, and the color will be a very dark green, almost black.
Atmospheric Content	This globe display is multicolored, each color representing a different atmospheric gas. Breathable atmosphere would be mostly violet, blue-white with a hint of pink. The amount of each color indicates the percentage of the corresponding

	gas in the atmosphere.
Biocompatibility	Green is fully compatible to the person operating the pylon. Green to white means that you can eat the food, but you'll get sick or suffer a minor nutritional deficiency, and that most diseases are fully compatible. Green to black, the food is poisonous, and when completely black, death will occur if you ingest anything from that world. It also means that, with the exception of a few parasites, you are more or less completely immune to any disease on that world.

CRYSTAL KEYS EXPANDED

Black Crystals allow portal-to-portal transfer of a Fringeworthy without transiting to the Fringepath first. The crystal is carried in the hand of the Fringeworthy as she enters the portal, causing a transit to the next portal on the Prime (clockwise as viewed from the platform). If a full ring station exists, this occurs regardless of the lockdown setting of the portal. However, a transit to or from a warp only occurs if the portal is unlocked. A Black Crystal can be carried onto the Fringepath as long as it is not in contact with the Fringeworthy's skin or grasping appendage at the time of transit. However, throwing it through the portal would actually send it to the next planetary portal (ring station or active warp).

Orange Crystals, also known as an engineering key, act as simple keys for heavy Tehmelern machinery and other devices. Usually the crystal is placed in a receptacle like the one on a control pylon and an activating panel is pressed. However in some cases the activation occurs simply by the presence of the crystal in the depression or even within 10 feet of the vicinity of the equipment. Equipment dangerous to those nearby always requires the first method, confirming-activation. Orange Crystals only activate equipment or special functions of control devices. By themselves, they have no effect on control pylons.

Additionally, these keys were used to access the platform maintenance pylons and other features of the pathway system. One of those features is the additional Platform Portals.

CRYSTAL KEY ATTUNING

Initially unknown to IDET and TÆSS, when a non-Fringeworthy person handles a crystal key at least once a year, they gain a cumulative 1% chance, per year, of becoming Fringeworthy. This test is made once a year, even if the person has not handled a key in the current year.

It must be noted, that for several years, Director Borodin handled every crystal key UNIDA had. At some point, you as the GM can make ~~that~~ him very happy, and decide that Aleksandar Borodin becomes the first attuned Fringeworthy. Don't roll for this, just decide that it's time to reveal this new power and have him discover it as he hands out the team's Crystal Key.

Because crystal keys can make non-Fringeworthy person Fringeworthy, the crystal key user can invoke this power. It's available to all crystal key types, but the higher-level keys make it easier to use. Discovering this power can only happen after the crystal keys attune the first person naturally, or a knowledgeable user demonstrates it. This power is entirely up to you, the GM, to allow in your game. This will change who can access the portals and when.

Make Fringeworthy

Crystal Types: 1 - 11

Range: Touch

Casting Penalty: Varies

Duration: Instant

Trapping: Blinding light that matches the color of the key wraps the target of this power.

This power can make a non-Fringeworthy person Fringeworthy. The caster holds the crystal in his hand and invokes the power. The light is very bright when invoked, and is always the color of the crystal used. The target then places their hand on top of the crystal and user finishes the invocation of the power. The target must make a successful Spirit check at the same penalty as the caster. If they make the check, the crystal makes them Fringeworthy. It's a great high when it happens, and the target will be euphoric for 1d6 hours afterwards.

Optional: Crystal Keys have a cooling down period after having this power invoked. It is Crystal key level times 1d4 days long. During this period, the key is completely useless and mutes in color until it recovers enough energy to be used again.

The casting penalty to use this power depends on which level of key you are using:

Crystal Level	Casting Penalty
1 – 3	-8
4 – 6	-6
7 – 9	-4
10	-2
11	0

FINDING CRYSTAL KEYS

Crystal Keys are notoriously hard to find. The first key, a Gray Crystal Key, was found clutched in the dead hand of Captain Oates. The second key, a White Crystal Key, was found on the Junkyard Pokiwol, Alt 0,2, hidden under some junk. It was found using the *Find Crystal Key* power.

The Victorian's first key, a White Key, was passed down from Congolese shaman to Congolese shaman over the generations. Some of the holders of the key became Fringeworthy, but never took advantage of it. TÆSS found their second key in some ruins on their Mars. It was a Gray Key.

These finds were flukes, in many cases, most Crystal Keys will be found in the possession of other Fringeworthy. Some may be found on Tehrmelern and Commonwealth worlds, typically in some secure location, and tend to be higher-level security. All Master Mellor will either have Dark Green, Purple, or Rainbow Crystal Keys inside them. Extracting these keys will be a bit problematic.

Fringe Pirates will have a collection of keys, ranging from multiple Gray and White keys, a couple of Black and Orange keys, and one or two Pale Green, Brown, or Red keys. They know how to use them, and will use them to great effect.

FRINGE TRAIN

The Fringe Train was how the Tehrmelern engineers and the Mellor traveled long distances on the Fringepaths. The Fringe Train is tubular shaped vehicle. However, its exact size and dimensions are dependent on the needs of the person who called the train. This can range from a small train that can hold a team and their gear, to a larger train big enough to hold the team and a Moskovi MRM-30. The largest size train that can be called, is 10 feet shorter than the distance between the 50-foot transit portals, and is 50 feet in diameter.

The train will always have a door large enough to accommodate the largest team member and vehicle. Inside the train will be sufficient seats for the team. The seats conform to the body shape of its user. At one end of the train is a control panel. After a moment looking at it, the writing on the panel becomes readable, but not necessarily understandable. If a hero says anything similar to a request for help, the voice command system will activate and the user assistance system will offer assistance in using the Fringe Train. The assistance system will guide them through all the steps in using the Fringe Train, including setting their home platform. The Fringe Train system will remember this setting until it is changed for each Fringeworthy.

It must be noted that the assistance system does not have any information beyond that of how to use a Fringe Train, and how to use its different functions. The system will chat with the user, but will soon run out of things to say, as it is only a smart system, and not a true AI.

The Fringe Train will take the heroes anywhere they want to go, to any platform they want to go to, in almost no time at all. Want to visit the T-Prime platform? It's a 5-minute jaunt away. However, you need to know its address. Platform addresses are not simple. The address of platform consists of 5 sets of numbers that correspond to the location of the prime world in the multiverse. For example, Earth Prime's address is the following:

9720-297277-360-21238-28500

Luckily, the assistance system will accept relative values, such as "5 nodes in that direction" or "20 nodes past my home node."

To call the train, you have to do the following:

1. The Hero must concentrate on what kind of Fringe Train that he wants to call. The default is enough to carry him, his team, and any vehicles that they have.
2. The Hero must a Black Planetary Crystal Key and Clear Crystal Key Clear or higher color.
3. The Hero must be on a platform, not a pathway.
4. The Hero must hold the two keys together for 30 seconds until they both glow brightly.

Five minutes after a successful call, a Fringe Train will arrive at the platform that the hero called it from. The control panel, once it resets to a readable state, will show the current platform and node the train is on. It is advisable for the hero to make note of this address if they wish to return to this platform or node.

OTHER FRINGEWORTHY

SLARG

It walked through the portal into the ice dome at the UN Antarctic Interdimensional Exploration Base. As the Marines surrounded it, with weapons drawn, it huddled into a ball said in a guttural tone "Feed me please?" It was a large wolf shaped creature, but man sized. It was massive and looked like it was very hungry.

After cooler heads prevailed, the creature was taken to the cafeteria where it was fed a mixtures of food, all of which it ate with aplomb. What was disconcerting about the being was that it had no eyes, just a pair of egg shaped bumps where eyes would normally be, and enormous ears.

When someone was introduced to the creature, it would "look" intensely at the person, leaving that person with the feeling that they had been CAT scanned. More than one person mentioned that their fillings vibrated when the creature gave them the once over.

With a full belly, the creature was talkative. It was the female of its species. A species it said was called "Slarg". This was important, as it was a name from the second verse of the poem that Schmert had placed in Sayuri's mind:

*Mushy Mellor, Slargs and Snellor
Don't hide amongst the trees
They'll clear away and there you'll stay
Until the rise of Prime*

When questioned about the rhyme, she said, "What the f*** do I know about rhymes?" Most questions about who she was or where she had come from were answered similarly.

Her name was Garr'l, though later she amended that and changed it to Garr'l Hatsumi. She was Fringeworthy and was capable of speaking just about any language thrown at her. She submitted to a medical examination as long as "You f***ers don't put me on a f***ing dissection table. You do that, and I'll have your f***ing liver for dinner. Really, I will."

However, when examined, she whimpered and shied away from the instruments and other examination devices. Ultrasound gave Garr'l headaches, and that was when she confirmed that she used a form of passive sonar to navigate. She also demonstrated her own sonar scan that emanated from the two egg shaped lobes in her skull. Her sonar scan was limited to a few meters, and she said that it was her species way of getting to know those that they decided to stay with. She also had large and very sharp canines, similar to those of a jackal or a hyena.

She didn't know how old she was, Slargs didn't have a sense of time other than when they were hungry or needed to sleep. She wouldn't say where she came from, just that she had heard about UNIDA and decided to check out the new kids on the block.

Soon other Slargs showed up, all part of a larger clan and it seemed that Garr'l was the head of that clan. A home was made for them inside the dome, as they hated going topside and out into the cold. A few did venture out, attending dinners and sightseeing Earth Prime. Several attached themselves to an IDET team and would accompany them onto the portals, though it was soon found out that when trouble started, they would run and hide.

Slargs were scavengers, and unless the meat was served cooked and tender, they would drag it back to their quarters and let it rot for a while, till it got nice and gamey. Amongst themselves, they exhibit dominance behavior, and an Alpha Slarg always was in charge. It must be noted, since they were sentient and adverse to physical violence other than a savage looking snarl, they engaged in verbal assaults and insults to determine who was top Slarg.

Slargs are universally Fringeworthy, something that was confirmed when Garr'l gave birth to a pair of pups, sired by Gr'r Anderson. Their upbringing was more or less "Follow the adults and don't get eaten." After giving birth to them, Garr'l could care less about her offspring.

The two pups, Alpha and Beta, (Slargs didn't name their children, the child at a certain age would name itself, if it lived long enough.), were born capable of eating solid food and within days could hold a simple conversation. They grew up fast, maturing in only eight years. The male took the name G'ralf Powers, and the female took the name Gr'r eta Borodin. Both could speak any language and knew many skills, far more than what they could have learned during their childhood. This confirmed the suspicion

that Slargs were biological constructs created by some race, possibly the Tehrmelern. For what reason, nobody knew, including the Slargs.

Slargs, in appearance, resemble man-sized dogs, approximately the size of a Russian Caucasian dog, with the complete absence of eyes. This lack of sight is balanced by a near human intelligence, a keen sense of smell, taste, and excellent hearing coupled with a special echolocation “spatial” sense that emanates from the two egg-shaped nodules on their heads. This spatial sense allows them to “see” an echo image within 200 feet in a 360 degrees sphere, both vertically and horizontally.

Slargs are muddy brown to gray in color and have 64 sharp teeth. They have a sharpness of wit and a highly abrasive, crass and generally temperamental personality. With a sense of humor fit for a scavenger, they can be very disturbing to human types.

Genetically, Slargs are related to Canidae, and Chiroptera, that is, canines and bats. There are also unknown genetic markers and genes in their genetic code that defies analysis. The current speculation is that this is evidence of Tehrmelern genetic engineering.

GM Secret: Slargs were created to cure infected Mellor. One bite from a Slarg will deliver a genetic package and heal a Mellor of the infection. Unfortunately, the Keegak sabotaged the project and caused Slargs to be too terrified to actually bite a Mellor (or anything else).

During the Mellor Wars and before their actions in causing the wars was known, the Keegak sought out the Tehrmelern and offered their services in combatting the Mellor menace. However, it was just a ruse to allow them to sabotage any weapons the Tehrmelern managed to develop. To the Tehrmelern, it was simply a problem of reprogramming the Mellor and returning them to their “factory settings”. To accomplish this, they decided to create multiple delivery systems to pin down and cure any infected Mellor. Thus the Pangolisks and the Slargs were created.

When a Slarg bites a Mellor, special salivary glands in its mouth create a genetic package that is injected into the Mellor. The package contains hundreds of thousands retroviruses that infect the Mellor’s cells and completely bypasses the Mellor’s immune system, as the viruses are keyed to their genetic code.

Within minutes the Mellor starts turning blue as its genetic code is rewritten and it turns back into an uninfected Mellor. In addition, the cured Mellor is now immune to the Keegak retrovirus and cannot be re-infected.

And it would have worked, if it hadn’t been for those meddling Keegak.

The Keegak couldn’t sabotage the work on the cure itself, but they could sabotage the Slarg’s ability to be an effective weapon. To make sure that it wasn’t discovered immediately, they put in a genetic timer. The first and second generations of Slargs would be exactly what was called for: fearsome fighters, willing to mix it up with a Mellor. However in the third generation, the switch would trigger and the Slarg’s “Fight or Flight” reflexes would be switched. In addition, the prior two generations would die off due to artificially shortened lifespans.

In the period of 5 years, they went from a fearsome fighting force to a mewling mass of cowards. Only when they are cornered and have no other options, their fight reflex kicks in and they will fight to save themselves. And they are the most fearsome fighters you will ever meet.

Home World: Unknown

First Contact: Year 1 (sort of)

Technology Level: n/a

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d8.

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d12+2, Knowledge d6 (previous locations or history), Notice d10+2, Persuasion d8+2, Stealth d10+2, Survival d8, Swimming d6, Taunt d8 Tracking d8

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claw:** Str+d6
- **Blind:** They cannot see, but their echolocation ability allows them to function as though they have eyes in close quarters and negates the standard blindness penalties. However, they cannot see any more than 34" away.
- **Echolocation:** They have a sonar-like sense that compensates for their lack of vision. It operates in a 360 degree, 34" sphere, and makes it very hard to sneak up on them. This gives them a +2 to their Notice and Stealth skills. This ability also allows them to "See in the dark" and negates any darkness penalties. They can also see invisible creatures that do not have some form of sonic invisibility cloak.
- **All Thumbs:** Slargs know nothing about technology, and suffer a -2 to any repair rolls.
- **Object Cowards:** Slargs will run from any threat of physical danger to the nearest hiding place or back onto the Fringepaths if possible. Only when cornered and there is no other options other than to fight or die, will a Slarg fight. Heaven help you when that happens. However, like many cowards, if they perceive themselves to be in a position of power over someone, or that a person or other animal cannot harm them, they will taunt and insult that person mercilessly.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Cure Mellor:** When a Slarg bites a Mellor, he will inject a biopackage that will cure an infected Mellor in five minutes.
- **Fringeworthy:** All Slargs are Fringeworthy.

Playing: Slargs are basically cowardly dogs with sapience. They care for and think mostly of themselves and will run at the first sign of violence. Their priorities revolve around eating, sleeping, making puppies, staying warm, nosing around, and staying away from danger. However, they are prone to insults and seemingly aggressive verbal behavior, but only when they are feel that they are in no physical danger.

They love to verbally spar with others, right up to the point that you'd want to punch them. Then they'll back down, fall on their back and assume a submissive position. They can be irritating and obnoxious with constant requests for food.

If they've been around long enough, they hate scientists with a passion.

*"Aw Hell! A scientist? So, you want to stick something in my a***** doncha? 'Get a measurement' isn't it? OK, but only if you feed me bacon first... 20 pounds worth!"*

-- Grrt'l Hatsumi

They roam from node to node looking for food and shelter but mostly for people who will give them what they want because they remind them of dogs and because they have some unique advantages. Their echolocation ability is exceptionally useful for obvious reasons but more importantly, they carry knowledge of the places they have been. Many of them are familiar with Tehrmelern tech and they will generally know what lies behind some portals.

Unfortunately the people they run into are usually adventurers so the relationship is generally cut short. Once the Slarg realizes that these people are bullet magnets, they generally split. However, sometimes a Slarg can bond with a person and will stick around with them, so long as he doesn't actually get hurt. If the bond becomes strong, he may even find a little courage once in a while.

Slargs usually take a human name to impress others, mixed with odd guttural sounds. G'lak Kimsey, or Grr'k Anderson.

KEEGAK

The second race that came in off the Fringepaths was the Keegak. These short and physically odd bipeds claimed to have been from an ecologically destroyed Alternate at Prime +15.

The UNIDA psychologists distrust the Keegak and their motives. While their story of a hellish burned out world has been verified, the 20 Keegak claim there are more of their kind scattered across many worlds and that they had explored a thousand Alternate platforms in the local area before their world was sterilized. Their actions and attitudes do not support what they say they are and, on smell, a Slarg muttered, "Those Things! Nothing but Trouble!"

The more superstitious of the alternate worlds call the short pale creatures Goblins and avidly dislike them. The UNIDA, believing all races should have equal opportunity to the resource and help of the Fringepaths, have designated them as refugees and set aside an Alternate at -3, 8 for their use and new home. Keegak claim that all Keegak are Fringeworthy.

Keegak Colony World: Kengah

Kengah was a colony world of the Keegak, one of many that they founded after being introduced to the Commonwealth. The two open portals lead to areas of complete devastation. The atmosphere contains many containments and some fallout. It's safe for humans on a short-term basis, but long-term stays are not recommended. WHO experts have recommended wearing a P100 or P3 filter on a respirator facemask with faceguard. The Moskovi NBC filters provide 24 hours of clean air at positive pressure. Average temperature of Kengah is 30°C/86°F, with no icecaps at the poles. Based on isotope analysis of the fallout, whatever happened to this world, it occurred 1,000 years ago.

Their devastated ecology and scarce numbers have drawn aid from the UNIDA and made them an exploration partner. This may well not be their home world though they claim they were trapped on it since the beginning of time. Their populations live in squalor and fear of their elders. Their philosophy is simple: who is the strongest makes the rules.

Stone Ruins: This nothing more than a scattering of foundations and partial walls, a once thriving city of a 100,000, now reduced to a population of a couple hundred Keegak. Living conditions are poor, but the Keegak survive, with small farms scattered amidst the ruins.

Some of the ruins show signs of intense heat and partial melting, as though they were exposed to temperatures in excess of 1500° C. The Keegak will tell tales of creatures exiting the portal and raining death on the city. They speak of great tongues of flame vaporizing whole buildings in an instant.

Seacoast City: The remains of a city lie half submerged in a wide circular bay. The portal stands precariously on a bluff that looks like a great wind had weathered away the rock. Behind it are ruined buildings, all showing signs of thermal and overpressure damage. The bay is 5 miles across and later expeditions took core samples of the sediment and found a 2" thick glass layer forming the base of the bay. However, the amount of residual radiation in the area is the same as any place else on Kengah.

The crater size suggests that >100MT Thermonuclear weapon was detonated in the city, but the damage done to the buildings at the edge of the crater suggests a much lower yield, on the order of 2MT. Also, parts of the "bay" were formed by subsidence and not by the explosive effects of a nuclear device.

GM Secret: The Keegak were responsible for the Mellor virus but this is a heavily guarded secret that they will keep from UNIDA. Not all Keegak are privy to this knowledge but those few that do have intimate knowledge of the Mellor and Tehmelern.

After the creation of the Mellor, the Tehrmelern, following their standard pattern, tried to backfill their biotech gap with various experimental projects. One of those projects was the Keegak. The Keegak were an uplifted race based on a reptilian candidate on an alternate version of Earth where the ancestors to mammals and dinosaurs died off in the Permian-Triassic extinction event. The proto-Keegak were allowed to “develop naturally” for over 90,000 years, watched over by a handful of observer Mellor, who did not interfere with their evolution. When the Mellor declared them ready, they were brought into the Commonwealth as the Tehrmelern’s “Special Children”. The Keegak, bitter at having been created at the whim of someone who had just managed to get his research funding, they hardened their hearts and coldly and quietly made their plans to destroy the Tehrmelern.

Their revenge would take the form of the Tehrmelern's other "beloved child": The Mellor.

They were able to gain access to the secrets of Mellor because of the “familial” relationship. The Keegak developed the Mellor virus as both a revenge for their treatment and as a gift to their “older brother”, freeing the Mellor from the yoke of Tehrmelern control.

During the early years of the Mellor Wars, the Keegak coalition spearheaded the anti-Tehrmelern Commonwealth forces, trying to marginalize the Tehrmelern from decision-making in the war effort. Since the Tehrmelern worlds were prime targets in the early part of the war, their numbers were much reduced.

The Commonwealth worlds spread the news about the infected Mellor to the non-Commonwealth worlds, slowing the Mellor dominance as the Mellor now had to deal with a populace aware of their influence.

After ten years, the recovering Commonwealth worlds begin their campaign of cleansing nearby infected worlds. Some natives saw these messengers as emissaries of their deities, calling them to a great cause. Others saw them as monsters themselves bringing discord to their worlds.

20 years into the war the Commonwealth realized the enormity of the task as they faced both infected Mellor and emerging worlds bent on Fringe conquest. They asked the Tehrmelern to implement the Fringeworthy filter. 25 years after the revolt, the Tehrmelern attempted a “final” solution with the Slarg Project. They were designed to inject a genetic capsule into any infected Mellor, reverting them to their original benign state. The remnants of the Commonwealth were stunned to discover that the third generation of Slarg were abject cowards and could not perform their mission.

While many in the Commonwealth chose to accept this as proof that the Tehrmelern were not the “wonder workers” their reputation suggested, for others this was one bit of bad luck too much. Then Tehrmelern discovered that the Keegak once again had sabotaged a project but instead of admitting the error in trust, they tried to cover it up out of familial loyalty. The Tehrmelern stonewalled the Commonwealth investigators, but eventually the investigators uncovered the secret that the Mellor and the Keegak, both “fake sentients” and the Tehrmelern’s favored children, were responsible for this epic bloodbath. Not only did the Commonwealth lash out at the Keegak, but they lashed out at the Tehrmelern as well.

The Commonwealth destroyed the Keegak home world, revoked the Tehrmelern’s membership in the Commonwealth, and turned a blind eye to reprisals made against the remaining Keegak and Tehrmelern alike.

The Keegak wound up scattered throughout the Fringepaths.

The colony world of Kengah, was one of the worlds that the Keegak had settled when they became part of the Commonwealth. During the Mellor Wars, it was found by forces of the Commonwealth and burned to the ground. At this time, the restrictions on nuclear weapons and other devices was in place on the Fringepaths. However devices based on Fringetech and Tehrmelern

technology continued to function just fine. Hideous weapons of destruction were created based on this technology and the Commonwealth forces indiscriminately destroyed everything in their path.

One weapon in particular was the Sun Port. A temporary portal to the core of a sun would be opened, releasing superheated, fusing hydrogen and helium. The material would immediately “explode” vaporizing large areas. This is what happened to the Seacoast City, a thin stream of superheated plasma was streamed on to the city, slowly burning, then melting it under the constant flow of fusing hydrogen. The operators played the stream over the city, forming the crater.

Home World: Currently, Kengah Prime, Node +15

First Contact: Year 2

Technology Level: On Kengah: 1850’s level tech, though there are several Keegak who know how to manipulate and use Tehrmelern technology.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d10.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6

Skills: Fighting d4, Craft (any 2 Crafts), Investigation d8, Knowledge d8 (any 2 Sciences), Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d8, Stealth d8

Special Abilities:

- **Size -1:** Keegak stand between 3’ to 4’ tall.
- **Sneaky:** Keegak have the reputation of being sneaky little gits and therefore receive a Charisma penalty of -2.
- **McGyver:** Almost all Keegak are a whiz with tools and making items. They have the same abilities as the McGyver edge.
- **Quick Reflexes:** Quick and agile, Keegak are -2 to hit range attacks.

Playing: These creatures are resourceful and keen. They are always helpful and subservient whenever it suits their needs. To the casual observer, they seem creepy but eager to please. To the seasoned observer, it’s obvious that they are up to something but it is impossible to tell exactly what. They are shifty and rarely tell any more than they need to. Spending more than a few days with a Keegak will reveal their inherent dishonesty. They are liars, devious, and are quite skilled at keeping their motives secret but they are also subservient and always willing to lend a hand.

Their ultimate goal is acceptance, despite their actions. The majority of Keegak were not involved or even aware of the Mellor Virus program. Most sullenly accepted the fact that they were someone’s laboratory experiment and their history and culture were all a lie.

In actuality, their culture, their beliefs, their very way of life were their own. If the Mellor watching over them interfered, it was just a nudge in the “right” direction. For the most part, the Mellor just watched them develop and report back to their Tehrmelern masters. The Keegak achieved every advanced, discovery, and ultimately a peaceful world government on their own.

BROUPIAN

The UNISS has no real concept of what the Broupians are or where they come from. These tripod intelligences have been seen on the Fringepaths multiple times and are now interacting with human explorers.

Broupians do not communicate with language. Having only a single multi-tone 'broup' noise that they use primarily to create an emotional impression. Using this as their baseline communication, they employ a form of emotional telepathy that requires explorers to narrow categories as if playing twenty questions with them. Telepaths of any standing have a much easier time ferreting out their underlying meanings.

These odd life forms are usually found in clusters of three, each carrying three saddle packs. When forced to defend themselves, they can generate a severe neurological shock that can drop a bull elephant. It is not known whether this is inherent to the species or a technological device.

It is common to find them carrying Tehrmelern artifacts and crystals as well as a random supply of tools, hardware, food and vials of scents. They will always trade for the most odiferous cheese that explorers can produce.

Clusters of Broupians are now coming to Hatsumi Base on a regular basis to trade, exchange information and rest. They seem to enjoy riding with explorers on the Fringepaths. The French appreciate them.

Secret: Three Broupians will bond with a new master, eventually change color when they find a place to settle down, and then grow into a Tehrmelern House Tree. The tree will follow their master's instructions as to how to grow and shape itself.

Home World: Unknown

First Contact: Year 5

Technology Level: Functionally 0, but they can use any technology they encounter.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d12.

Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 2; Toughness 8

Skills: Crafting d8, Fighting d6, Knowledge d8 (Tehrmelern Tech), Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Repair d8

Hindrances: Curious, Language Barrier, Tri-Leg

Edges: Shocking Touch (As the power Blast), Combat Reflexes.

Languages: Broup (100%), Whistle (50%), Thump (20%)

Playing: These creatures are motivated by their curiosity and their love of cheese. They seem to be attracted to humans and have found a fond affinity for UNIDA. They travel in threes and will travel with any party that will take them, provided the party is nice to them. In exchange, they tend to know the locations of where Tehrmelern artifacts can be found.

Unfortunately, they are somewhat unpredictable. The language barrier often results in partial information being received by the party. The Broupians also seem to have their own sense of urgency

and priorities. The party often walks into unpleasant situations because of this but it often leads to good salvage.

These creatures seem benevolent and to-date have only attacked or willfully endangered those that have sought to harm them.

OLD MEN

These Fringe traveling Neanderthal descendants, or “Old Men,” as they call themselves, are at a medieval level of technology in terms of transportation and weaponry, late 19th century levels for medicine (highly advanced holistic, herbal and surgical). Other technology they have adopted from the Pathways.

They have a limited written language adapted from what they have found on the Fringepaths. Their native alternative, which they still prefer, consists of a system of knotted multicolored threads, beads and shells, similar to an Incan quipu, or talking strings.

Most Neanderthals are stocky, shorter than humans by about 6 inches, and are better suited for temperate or cooler weather. Their body structure is ill suited for running and jumping, but they can out walk and out lift any average human.

Home World: Unkonwn

First Contact: N/A

Technology Level: Functionally 1, but they know how to use up to Tech Level 10 equipment.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 6 (+1); Toughness 6 (+1).

Skills: Climbing d6, Crafting d6, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Healing d4, Notice d6, Performance d4, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Swimming d6 Throwing d8, Tracking d8

Hindrances: Anachronistic, Outsider, Superstitious

Edges: Brawny, Block, Woodsmen

Languages: Ancient (95%), English (70%), Pangolisk (60%)

Playing: The Old Men are a nomadic people; always on the move. Their people are spread out amongst the paths. Why they wander the paths is unknown. It has been that way as long as any of them can remember.

They are pacifists by nature and slow to anger. However they will fight to defend themselves and they are formidable foes when pressed. They have a sharp wit and their spoken language is more complex than our own, making full use of all the sounds that their vocal apparatus can create. And they can sing. Song and poetry are important aspects of their communication skills.

Spiritually, they are animists, believing that spirits and souls are in everything, and that appeasing these spirits or souls before hunting, building, sex, and other activities is very important for success. They believe that evil spirits can possess the unwary and control their actions.

Only males are seen on the Fringepaths, often in the company of Pangolisks and Broupians.

PANGOLISKS

Some things that came in off the Fringepaths were unusual, such as the Slargs or Broupians. And then the first Pangolisk showed up with a can opener, three cans of beans, and a cry for “ELP.”

The Pangolisks are best described as six-legged anteaters covered in both fur and scale. Their middle set of legs end in limited manipulative hands, while the front legs sport a formidable set of digging claws.

This marsupial-like species lays eggs, and keeps their young safe in a large belly pouch; along with anything else they deem interesting. Old Men are known to manufacture vest-pouch harnesses for their favorites.

Pangolisks are mighty diggers, and have been instrumental in finding unusual artifacts and bringing them to the attention of Fringeworthy explorers. Pangolisks, like Broupians, tend to appear in clusters.

Secret: Pangolisks become extremely alarmed in the presence of Mellor in any form. Their bodies secrete a natural paralyzing toxin that incapacitates Mellor when they are attacked, and which can be spit 30 feet when they are under duress.

Home World: Unknown

First Contact: n/a

Technology Level: Functionally 0, but they can use any technology they encounter.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8, Charisma +1; Pace 6; Parry; Toughness 6 (-1)

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d4, Guts d4, Investigation d6, Notice d8 (+2), Persuasion d6, Stealth d8, Survival d10, Swimming d6, Taunt d4, Tracking d10

Hindrances: Curious (Major), Loyal (Minor), Pacifist (Minor), Small (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Power: Detect (Mellor Only), Power: Stun (Mellor Only, Vigor -4),

Languages: Pidgen English/Pango (85%), Pango (50%), Korean (7%)

Playing: While “Pangos” are moderately intelligent and can understand simple language, their attempts to vocalize human speech are cryptic at best, and can create massive confusion. They will cluster about IDET explorers like cats, showing them pretty shiny bits while chirping incomprehensibly and tugging at their knees in random directions.

Pangolisks are takes names like: Irl, Oy, Ak, E-by, A-by, It-ty. IDET explorers tend to tag them with number on their harnesses and call them descriptive names such as Buddy, Lassie, Squeak, and First Alert.

TEHRMELERN

Far too smart and peaceful for their own good, the Tehrmelern paved pathways between an astonishing number of Alternate worlds. Living in a golden age, they were little able to cope with the tide of hell they accidentally unleashed on themselves.

With all of their amazing technology and child-like love of life, they vanished.

To guard and repair the pathways and worlds, they left a few trusted technicians like Schmert, whose job was complex. Theoreticians believe there are many Tehrmelern like Schmert set to help on one final great project, a hope for the Tehrmelern race. Schmert's activities seem to prove this. As crazy as his contacts with the IDA have been, he seems pleased for humanity's noble venture to the Pathways.

In structure, the Tehrmelern look like a cross between a bear and a cat-like biped. Their tails are prehensile.

Tehrmelern History

The small creature clung to the upper branches of the mother tree and cried. Its heart was broken. It had done the mating dance as its instincts lead it. As had all the males of the clan, but none of the females selected him.

Morning came again and the time of bonding was now. Shaking the tears from its furry face, it descended to the central branches again where the thick wide limbs afforded room to strut and preen. Other males were already moving in the familiar pattern of the dance, written molecule by molecule in their DNA. The unattached females watched with sharp dark eyes for the one who would match closest the pattern etched in her hindbrain. Not all patterns were identical. Few dances produced even one match per female. But even so, the clan was growing which improved the odds. With numbers came safety for all.

With an aggressive leap he jumped into the middle of the choreography and flung himself into the pattern, but after the initial shock of surprise their eyes drifted away. He knew he was failing. Fear surged through his mind and for the first time he moved differently. Not by much, a mere twitching of his prehensile paws. A tiny change in the arc of his swaying limbs. But different.

A female's eyes snapped to his and a thrill exploded through him like lightning as she imprinted on him. Unconsciously he made another change and another female displayed acceptance. Before the end of the dance fully half of the available females had bonded to him. A day that started so badly now would be filled with joy and exhaustion.

So the creature that was neither bear, nor dog, but its own creature, began its climb to sentience. Not by acts of aggression but by creativity would racial dominance be attained?

Originally arboreal, the Tehrmelern had little to fear from the predominately ground based predators. The trees were rich with symbiotic life so feeding themselves was a simple task. Unlike other races, the Tehrmelern won their mates by distinguishing themselves through artistic means such as sounds, dance and finally crafts. Tool use became a means to create more interesting and thus desirable objects to lavish on potential mates. This stimulated the development of intelligence and individuality. This artistic aspect lent itself to the development of Tree houses. A proper tree house, artistically speaking, required the work of an entire family or clan. Eventually its construction took more than one generation to accomplish since the longer-lived tree itself needed to be molded into the proper shape. They evolved as the Tehrmelern evolved. Their competition for uniqueness was the driving force throughout their history. They embraced the different, but they also built strong bonds to create new objects and art, which could not be created alone. Strong clans arose and continued to extend outward. There was much to discover: art, science, mathematics, and literature. Each Tehrmelern sought a new niche to fill from the mundane to the sublime. However, each super clan eventually grew large enough and existed long enough that every variant of thought and expression seemed to be present. They saw the other clans as identical, superfluous, and repugnant. Unfortunately this occurred when the super clans were the equivalent of the 20th century Earth's super nations. They despised the sameness in the other clans and went to war to eliminate them. Being nearly identical, they simply decimated each other.

After the clans recovered, the second war they fought was over diminished resources. In desperation, the Tehrmelern developed space travel to harvest the abundant resources that were existed in the solar system. Eventually they developed their biotech to the point that physical need no longer existed. They always tried to use biotech to solve their problems and advance their culture. Sometimes they would reach an impasse and be forced to develop something in the physical sciences to bridge the gap – to bring them to the next level. Then they would use the new bio-tool to fill in the gap.

Unlike so many other races, they learned the lesson of history and resolved to wait until uniqueness would blossom in other groups. Their salvation was the pursuit of truly epic goals: justice, universal welfare, immortality, and travel to distant worlds. They formed a true world society. The use of space grew over the next

300 years. When need was eliminated, they had mature interplanetary space tech and the ability to grow.

They never developed Faster-than-Light travel (FTL). That was one universal law they never learned how to bend to their will. But, in the many attempts to bypass that universal law and to visit distant worlds, they instead breached the barrier of interdimensional space. They thought they had succeeded in creating FTL travel. However, when the first expedition to a new world didn't detect any radio transmissions across interstellar space from their home world, they realized that they were in another universe where those transmissions had never been sent.

The Tehrmelern's original intent was to use Fringe travel as a means to achieve efficient inter-system travel. Of course, once you've discovered Fringespace, you soon find that you don't need to go to "alien" systems in your own universe. Alternates and Parallel universes are much more desirable. The discovery of inhabited alternate worlds provided the ultimate Tehrmelern epic goal: To unite all Tehrmelern, whatever form they may take, into a single commonwealth. That required a system of transportation and communication: the Fringesystem.

The original platforms were much larger than the standard 600' wide platform that is the mainstay of the current Fringe System. The Tehrmelern needed a larger staging area as they developed portal creation devices and interdimensional sensor arrays. The original moon-sized platform is still connected to Tehrmelern-Prime.

Ten years passed as they developed technology for navigating the fringes, but that did not stop them from exploring this new multi-verse they had discovered. The Fringe configuration around T-Prime is non-standard with lots of experimental platforms; moving further out, the configuration becomes more standard. Establishing portal connections creates severe inter-dimensional stresses and noise. After eight permanent local connections and/or up to 9 Pathway connections, any more connections require considerably more resources and energy. Therefore, when the Tehrmelern automated the creation of the Fringepaths, they chose this as the best hands-free configuration and let the system automatically add new nodes. Other configurations are possible, but require more engineering involvement and oversight to maintain stability. After a few centuries of development, the automated system was adding about 1000 new nodes a day to the network. The commonwealth grew to be connected to a million, million worlds after only 100,000 years. They soon realized that the standard Fringesystem would not be able to support the levels of commerce that the Commonwealth would generate. So "The Big System" was built on the backbone of the smaller Fringe System, and it was capable of transporting entire worlds from one universe to another or making a delivery of a carton of eggs to a kitchen table. Commonwealth members lived as gods.

After 500 years of exploration and construction, there was a sufficient backlog of undeveloped alternates populated by very un-Tehrmelern looking sentients, that a solution to contacting those worlds

was sought. Showing the true power of the commonwealth, an entire world was turned into a lab, with the first useable Mellor prototypes shambled out of the vats about a year later.

The word Mellor means “Beloved Children” in Tehrmelern. They were created to build benevolent relationships in the worlds to which they were sent, raising the ethical and cultural standards of each. Being masterful shape changers, telepathic by touch, and virtually immortal, the Mellor had plenty of time and more than enough ability to bring their assigned world up to the minimum standards needed before the offer of membership in the Commonwealth would be offered. A full member in the Commonwealth had:

- A world government.
- A period of peace that is sufficient to provide the opportunity to re-arm and re-new conflict – but they don’t.
- A minimum standard of living for all sentients on the planet.

Additionally, they had to show continued societal stability after being introduced to the Tehrmelern and other races of the Commonwealth. Slavery would be allowed but only if those worlds permitted any slave to freely leave, emancipating himself/herself/itself. Achieving one of the goals and actively working toward both of the others earned client status. Such worlds gained some benefits from the Commonwealth, but access to more powerful tech was restricted or overseen.

So while the original Tehrmelern embraced all the other Tehrmelern they had found, per their goal, the original Tehrmelern of T-Prime continued to dominate the Commonwealth due both to their technological superiority and their age as a culture, even though more competitive races had been found. Many races resented the Tehrmelern hegemony, but still enjoyed the benefits. The Tehrmelern never dreamed that they had sown their own downfall almost from the very beginning of the Commonwealth.

After the creation of the Mellor, the Tehrmelern, following their standard pattern, tried to backfill their biotech gap with various experimental projects. One of those projects was the Keegak. The Keegak were an uplifted race, but were allowed to “develop naturally” for over 90,000 years, watched over by a handful of observer Mellor, who did not interfere with their evolution. When the Mellor declared them ready, they were brought into the Commonwealth as the Tehrmelern’s “Special Children”. The Keegak, bitter at having been created at the whim of someone who had just managed to get his research funding, they hardened their hearts and coldly and quietly made their plans to destroy the Tehrmelern.

Their revenge would take the form of the Tehrmelern's other "beloved child".

They were able to gain access to the secrets of Mellor because of the “familial” relationship. The Keegak developed the Mellor virus as both a revenge for their treatment and as a gift to their “older brother”, freeing the Mellor from the yoke of Tehrmelern control.

Less than one year before the Mellor war, 70% of the Commonwealth contained infected Mellor, approximately 274 billion worlds. The plan was to dominate each world with a Master Mellor and subordinate High Mellor, and create a massive standing attack force out of the local populace. But the plan was sidetracked when a Master Mellor who had infiltrated a full Commonwealth world was accidentally struck down. The multiple High Mellor it had controlled fought for control (king of the hill – Mellor style). The resulting violence on a world where such was unheard-of triggered a media firestorm. The Mellor on other worlds figured the jig was up. The war went hot.

The infected Mellor on full Commonwealth worlds used the Big System to launch world-buster attacks against other full Commonwealth worlds – especially the Tehrmelern home worlds. Many full

Commonwealth worlds were almost destroyed. Tehrmelern Prime lost a continent. In desperation, the Tehrmelern shut down the Big System with devastating social and economic effects.

Many worlds simply collapsed while trying to cleanse themselves of the Mellor influence. Other worlds were completely destroyed by the combined forces of the surviving Commonwealth worlds attempting to halt the infection and the Mellor on those worlds, trying to break free.

The newest members of the Commonwealth and client worlds were the least reliant on the largesse of the Commonwealth and the Big System. They were the quickest to regain stability after the shutdown. Still, it took 10-20 years to recover while the infected Mellor were bringing the war to them through the Fringe system.

Meanwhile, the Keegak coalition spearheaded the anti-Tehrmelern Commonwealth forces, trying to marginalize the Tehrmelern from decision-making in the war effort. Since the Tehrmelern worlds were prime targets in the early part of the war, their numbers were much reduced.

The Commonwealth worlds spread the truth about the infected Mellor to the non-Commonwealth worlds, slowing the Mellor dominance as the Mellor now had to deal with a populace aware of their influence.

After ten years, the recovering Commonwealth worlds begin their campaign of cleansing nearby infected worlds. Some natives saw these messengers as emissaries of their deities, calling them to a great cause. Others saw them as monsters themselves bringing discord to their worlds.

20 years into the war the Commonwealth realized the enormity of the task as they faced both infected Mellor and emerging worlds bent on Fringe conquest. They asked the Tehrmelern to implement the Fringeworthy filter. 25 years after the revolt, the Tehrmelern attempted a "final" solution with the Slarg Project. They were designed to inject a genetic capsule into any infected Mellor, reverting them to their original benign state. The remnants of the Commonwealth were stunned to discover that the Slarg are abject cowards and could not perform their mission.

While many in the Commonwealth chose to accept this proof that the Tehrmelern were not the "wonder workers" their reputation suggested, for others this was one bit of bad luck too much. The Tehrmelern discovered that the Keegak once again had sabotaged a project but instead of admitting the error in trust, they tried to cover it up out of familial loyalty. The Tehrmelern stonewalled the Commonwealth investigators, but eventually they uncovered the secret that the Mellor and the Keegak, both "fake sentients" and the Tehrmelern's favored children, were responsible for this epic bloodbath. Not only did the Commonwealth lash out at the Keegak, but they lashed out at the Tehrmelern as well.

The Commonwealth destroyed the Keegak home world, revoked the Tehrmelern's membership in the Commonwealth, and turned a blind eye to reprisals made against the remaining Keegak and Tehrmelern alike. The Keegak wound up scattered throughout the Fringepaths.

The Tehrmelern, when faced with attack from their own Commonwealth, reprogrammed the Fringepaths to prevent transport of functional energy weapons including nuclear weapons, Mellor, and those without the Fringeworthy energy signature. They did not shut down the pathways entirely because some Tehrmelern still wanted to help.

The T-Prime Tehrmelern decided to leave their original Fringepaths to create a new one, from a solar system many light years distant in their own Universe. Once they left, taking their home world with them, the infected Mellor tried to gain control of the Fringe system by sending an enormous power surge and logic bomb through the system. This damaged or locked down most of the portals but failed to free the Mellor.

The system tried to repair itself, but in many cases the lock-down was so secure that it took a Tehrmelern to bring it safely back online to begin repairs. These Tehrmelern are not the T-Prime Tehrmelern who left, but from alternates and parallel universes. They shudder at the thought of releasing the infected Mellor, and weep for the uninfected Mellor who are trapped on worlds the war never reached. They have had difficulty restoring function while leaving the blocks up, so now they repair one portal at a time. Each Tehrmelern is responsible for about 50 thousand portals. Each platform takes about 2 weeks to complete their repairs. In a few hundred years the system should be completely repaired, but that won't eliminate the infected Mellor threat.

The Thousand-Year War was really some of the damaged portals coming online. The trapped, infected Mellor or natives discovered them functional, and ventured out for conquest.

Home World: T-Prime (Unknown)

First Contact:

Technology Level: 26+

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d12+3, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d6, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 4 (+1); Toughness 5

Skills: Climbing d8, Driving d6, Fighting d4, Guts d8, Healing d10, Investigation d10, Knowledge (3 science and history d10), Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Repair d12 (+2), Riding d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d4, Tracking d6

Hindrances: Heroic (Major), Enemy (Minor): Keegak, Delusional (Minor): Optimist, Quirk (Minor): Talk in Rhymes

Edges: Acrobat, Ambidextrous, Gadgeteer, Jack-of-all-Trades, Level Headed, Imp. Level Headed, McGyver, Mr. Fix It, Prehensile Tail

Languages: Tehrmelern types A-L (100%), Slarg (90%), Keegak (90%), English (85%), Broop (80%), Pango (75%), French (60%), any other as needed (50%)

Playing: Tehrmelern are a noble race that is too friendly and curious for their own good. Having solved just about every secret the universe had to offer about the physical world, they seek to unlock the essence of life itself.

When Tehrmelern encounter humans they are always friendly but reserved. They will only give just enough information to set them on their way. There's nothing as noble and fun as a quest for knowledge. This is a core concept of their belief system and the reason they speak in rhymes and riddles.

If a Tehrmelern comes across stranded humans, she will lend a hand. They can fix just about anything and always carry small amounts of food and water, or know of a door nearby where it can be easily gotten.

TEHRMELERN TECHNOLOGY

Qellor

While many have marveled at the wonder of the Mellor as the Tehrmelern's greatest accomplishment in bioengineering, it's the Qellor that has proven to be the most useful product of the

Tehrmelern's ingenious minds. The Tehrmelern needed a servant that could deal with nature just as they would, but one that was versatile and adaptable to different conditions. If anything, the Qellor were the older brothers, in level of advancement, to the Mellor and their shape shifting abilities.

Qellor are biological robots that can be programmed to do different jobs and functions. But more importantly, they can be programmed to grow new limbs and other organs as needed. Unlike the Mellor, this growth process takes time and fuel in the form of foodstuffs, minerals and other items, including metals. The sight of a Qellor with four right limbs, scything through a field is something to behold. Equally impressive are the various Qellor behind it, gathering the grain, weaving baskets from the cut stalks and others threshing the grain into the baskets, while still others gather the baskets onto their backs.

While the specific appearance varies depending on the function, most Qellor conform to a standard group of attributes. Physically, the Qellor look like a seven-foot tall, walking stick figures with a large dot for a head. They have a minimal digestive system and subsist on a special concoction of nutrients that are manufactured by a Provider Qellor. This Qellor is programmed to be a large feeding machine that looks like a giant sow on her side with hoses that the worker Qellor attach to their food intakes. When a new organ or limb is required, they grow a more complete digestive system and a functional mouth in their chest. When the organ or limb is finished growing, the digestive system falls off and is recycled into the Provider Qellor.

The Provider Qellor has an advanced digestive system and needs only to be fed organic matter. It can then take this matter and convert it into the necessary nutrients needed for the Qellor workers.

Qellor are smart tools, and they can communicate and were given a subservient personality and are invariably polite. They are incapable of hurting anything that they are not programmed to harvest or slaughter... or any intelligent creature. This was a safety control that the Tehrmelern built into the Qellor along with a ton of safeguards to prevent the accidental mistaking of an immature member of an intelligent species for a food animal. Most importantly, Qellor are not Fringeworthy and if brought onto the Fringepath they die. Unlike the Tehrmelern purely mechanical robots that can be brought across and go dormant until repaired by a Tehrmelern engineer, these beings are tied to their world and if they are ever forced to leave it, cannot be restored to function.

Anti-Alloy

A non-conducting metallic solid that is steel-hard at temperatures over 20 degrees F. Under 20 degrees F, it becomes plastic and can be shaped like clay. It has a hardness of 10 and 30 hit points/inch at room temperature.

Omni Styling Brush

A hairbrush that combs, cleans, and can be set for a fantastic combination of color dye by pressing a colored triangular spot on the grip. This dye is not water-soluble until removed by the brush's cleaning action.

Memory Crystal

They usually contain a small scene of a pleasant memory from the owner. If shaken, the 4 inch diameter sphere will clear and become reprogrammed with the user's next thoughts. A crystal will often hold the final memories if accident or death produced a strong emotional shock. A crystal can be used in interrogation to capture a subject's remembrance of a conversation, a place visited, a person's face, etc if the subject is induced to hold it. It cannot be used to capture passwords or abstract concepts.

Tehrmelern Translator Beads

Dropped in the ear, the bead painlessly embeds itself in the body's auditory receptors. From that point on, the individual can understand (but not speak) 98% of spoken languages he or she may encounter. Unfortunately, it takes two individuals using these devices for direct communication. They are most commonly found in Tehrmelern corpses and can roll away unseen unless care is taken when examining the bodies. These will be found most often in highly developed worlds, such as destroyed old Commonwealth primes or expo worlds where there was a lot of inter-world commerce with no common language in use. This device provides translation of all forms of communication including pictographs, spoken, and written. They are practically indestructible.

Tehrmelern Universal Translators

While appearing to be a simple thin band, button, or jewelry item, these ultra-high tech devices provide translation for both sides of a conversation in a completely imperceptible fashion.

Unlike the translation beads, all participants are able to converse in the most common and pronounceable language between them. When communicating through electronic media, the translator will not be able to translate for the other side, so it will default to their language as the common tongue. With effort, the wearer can choose which language is to be the common tongue. This is a Smarts test at -2.

These devices are found on worlds where first contact from the Commonwealth was recent (before the Mellor war) and they had not yet been granted client status, so access to the most advanced tech was limited. These devices were used to help prevent misunderstandings between cultures, which has on occasion plunged them into conflict. This device provides translation of all forms of communication including pictographs, spoken, and written. They are practically indestructible.

THE MELLOR

The Tehrmelern Engineer, Schmert gave us our first look at the wonder of the Fringepaths and along with it a rhyme.

Mushy Mellor, Funny Fellor

Running 'midst the trees.

"Who's There?" I said,

As I stood on my head

But no one answered me.

Speculation on the rhyme hinted that a race called the Mellor were loose in the Pathways or "Trees". The last lines gave the impression of shock or confusion. UNIDA researchers began to believe that the designers of the Pathways, the Tehrmelern, were either driven from the Fringe system or were exterminated. This was a frightening realization.

This realization was made flesh when the first encounter with the Mellor was made. The IDE team that first met the Mellor barely survived the encounter. There were reports of at least two team members being shot by the other team members. This was due to the special nature of the Mellor. They were shape shifters.

Mushy Mellor, Hungry Fellor

Hiding 'midst the trees.

"Who's There?" I said.

As it bit off my head

And gurgled gleefully.

-- Ed Powers

THE HISTORY OF THE MELLOR

With the ability to travel to alternate Earths, the Tehrmelern found that exploration was not their strong suit. Unused to conflict and xenophobic fear that they encountered with contacting an alternate culture, they decided that they needed emissaries, teachers, and most importantly, explorers, who could be their proxies to these other cultures.

To create this ambassador, the Tehrmelern turned to that master of camouflage the Cephalopod. Using these animals as the basic stock, they engineered a creature that could visually take on the form, texture and coloration of any creature of comparable size. Sometimes this copying was not perfect, so they added the ability to take a DNA sample and use that to help flesh out the mimicry.

To enable them to blend into a culture, they gave their new creation the ability to do a complete memory dump of a creature and store that memory into a bank of highly adaptable neural tissue. This memory bank could be tapped at any time and used as needed. Finally, they imbued their emissaries with the ability to teach, convince, and preach the Tehrmelern way, so that these cultures could be guided to a point where they could be added to the great Tehrmelern Commonwealth. They called these new creatures "Beloved Child" or *Mellor*.

The Mellor would then travel the Fringepaths, shepherded by a controller Tehrmelern, and then sent to new alternate world to initiate first contact and guidance. They would return to the platforms at regular intervals to report of their progress and receive new orders.

On an alternate world, the Mellor would find an isolated individual and copy their form and memories. Sometimes this would be a domesticated animal, or even a wild one, as long as it allowed them to contact other creatures and eventually any sentients on that world.

After the Mellor made contact, it would use its shape shifting and memory copying abilities to ingratiate itself into the community and through judicious use of these abilities, begin to alter the cultural landscape one person at a time. This process would take centuries, as the Mellor would use its knowledge and basic programming to create a peaceful, creative society, ready for contact with the greater community of the Tehrmelern Commonwealth.

The Mellor never became a leader, guru, or other major figure. If it did copy the memories of such a person, it was to use this intimate knowledge of that person's mind to convince them to follow a more peaceful, ecological, or progressive course of action.

It was inevitable that a Mellor might be found out to be an alien creature. Hopefully, it would have sufficient knowledge of the culture to sidetrack any attempts to find it and or dispose of it. However, a few of them were killed as demonic creatures, witches, or even dissected to find out how they worked. A smaller number were killed through misfortune or accident.

Luckily only a small amount of their accumulated knowledge and experience would be lost. When they returned to the Fringe platform to report, their controller Tehrmelern would do a complete backup of

their memories and DNA samples. At most, the Tehrmelern would lose about 10 years worth of knowledge and experience about a world in the case of a Mellor death.

They would then take the backup and restore it to a newly created Mellor and send him back to that world.

Eventually, under the centuries long guidance of its Mellor, a culture will have matured enough to survive the culture shock of being introduced to the greater Commonwealth of the Tehrmelern, and become part of it.

This was how the Commonwealth grew, and for a thousand millennia, that's how it was. Towards the end, Tehrmelern from alternate earths were put in charge of the Mellor, while the Prime Tehrmelern were able to sit back and take it easy.

Then the Keegak Virus was released.

The Keegak knew how the Tehrmelern Mellor system worked and with their initial corps of infected Mellor, they struck. The Tehrmelern controllers were each attacked and replaced with a Master Mellor duplicate, which, in the form of the controller Tehrmelern, went out and made contact with each of the Mellors in that person's "stable". As each Mellor returned to report, it was infected by the Master Mellor, updated with its new marching orders and returned to its world. But instead of preaching peace and cooperation, it would now spread xenophobia and hatred as its mantra.

As for the Commonwealth worlds, the infected Mellor found likely targets and began the patient process of infiltrating all levels of government, culture, and beliefs, all the while reproducing Great Mellor and lesser Mellor as its army.

Sadly, this was even more the case on Tehrmelern Prime. Millions of Tehrmelern were duplicated and killed, infiltrating every strata of society. It would have been the perfect plan, except for one accident that occurred on a Commonwealth world.

The Master Mellor that controlled an army of a hundred thousand Mellor was killed in a vehicular accident. With its death, the Great Mellor it once controlled, struck out at each other, seeking to become the dominant leader of this army. This resulted in the exposure of this new and terrible version of the Tehrmelern's "Beloved Children" and the start of the Mellor War.

MELLOR ABILITIES

Memory Leech

A Mellor can absorb all the memories and all Smarts and Spirit-based skills of the person that they touched. This copying process includes the creature's DNA pattern. Skills that are based on Agility are one die type lower and no lower than a d4. Strength-based skills are not copied. The Mellor can recall this memory with perfect fidelity and use the DNA pattern to change its shape to match the creature that they copied.

The memory and DNA transference causes a chill to pass through the person, and sometimes they will feel a little disoriented afterwards for a few minutes.

This copying process can be resisted if the person realizes what is happening. The person makes an opposed Spirit roll, and if they succeed, the Mellor does not get a complete copy of the victim's memories and skills. This leaves the Mellor possessing only whatever intelligence it already had to begin with, and the potential for possible flashes of recognition of other people from its victim's memories. In effect it is a killer in the shape of its victim.

Tactics: Infected Mellor will wait until their target is asleep, very tired, drunk, in the throes of lovemaking, or they may even physically assault the person. They'll do anything to hide the effects of a memory leech. When they use this tactic, the target of the Memory Leech must make a -2 Notice roll to realize they've been copied.

Shape shifter

If the Mellor has made a successful Memory Leech attack, they can then use the DNA and what they see of the person to shape shift their external form to match the DNA pattern. A good memory leech will include information on scars, abrasions, tattoos, and other marks on the victim's body.

The preference is shape shift into a naked form of the victim and then put on clothing. But in a pinch, a Mellor can simulate clothing, shoes, and even body piercings as needed. Mellor clothing cannot be taken off.

Shape shifting is a free action and only takes a moment for the Mellor to transform from one stored shape to another.

Mellor shape shifting often involves a great deal of internal re-organization. Not surprisingly, Mellor have no distinct internal organs to target with the exception of their brain, which is *typically* located in the thickest body section. The difference between the brain of a Master Mellor and a Least Mellor is the density of the tissue and the number of creases and folds. They both are about the size of a baseball and weigh from 5 to 25 ounces. Mellor bones are almost an afterthought. They seem to possess flexibility beyond any normal bone but can harden (some say at will) to something greater than shark cartilage. Needless to say, even an isolation cell is not a prison to a Mellor. A Master Mellor once escaped through a food slot.

Mellor Reproduction

The Old Mellor were all born from a Crèche Mellor, a massive blob of tissue and wombs. The Crèche Mellor can produce 100 fully-grown Old Mellor in 1 year. The Crèche Mellor had minimal intelligence and could not move on their own. They required the support of several Quellor to tend it, feed it, remove its waste products, and help with the births of new Mellor. None of the Crèche Mellor survived the Mellor war. At least, that's what everyone believes.

Note: Whether or not there are any surviving Crèche Mellor is up to you, the GM. If there is a fully functional Crèche Mellor, it can be made to produce immune Old Mellor if a Slarg bites it. It can also be infected with the Keegak Virus. If so infected, it will produce fully functional Master Mellor, and these Mellor will be able to breed.

Old Mellor were quite capable of reproducing more Mellor on their own. However, their method of reproduction required the participation of a native female on the alternate world they were living on. The Mellor would then take the DNA of the female and fashion embryos that were implanted within the female. Depending on the species, this could be as few as two embryos, and as many as several dozen. One of the embryos is in fact an embryonic Mellor.

When born, the baby Mellor will resemble a male juvenile of the species and it will grow and develop normally for that species. The other embryos will produce females of the species. Depending on the nature of the species' genetics, they may be perfect clones of the female or fraternal twins.

When the juvenile Mellor reached the age of maturity, the parent Mellor will take it away and introduce it to their controller Tehrmelern. There it will complete its education and receive orders for further operations on that alternate world. It will operate in conjunction with its parent.

Master Mellor birthed from infected Crèche Mellor, can reproduce the same way as the Old Mellor. But, the control system for their reproductive system was rewired by the virus and allows them to reproduce in a different manner. Crèche Mellor produced Master Mellor can reproduce by injecting special genetic capsules into the body of a corpse. The capsule contains nanobiomachines that will convert the body into a Great Mellor. Depending on the size of the corpse, these new Great Mellor may have to feed to increase their size and mass to their standard bulk.

If hard pressed and without any other resources, breeding Master Mellor, and all other Mellor can undergo division like a giant bacteria, and divide itself into two Mellor one step down. This is called **Mellor Mitosis**. For example, a Master Mellor can divide into two Great Mellor.

These new Mellor will retain the memories of the parent Mellor, but none of the stored DNA patterns or stored memories. These are lost during Mellor Mitosis. Both of these new Mellor will be undersized and hungry. Very hungry. One will be dominant over the other, unless there is higher-level Mellor present.

Curing Mellor

If a Slarg somehow manages to bite an infected Mellor, special salivary glands in its mouth create a genetic package that is injected into the Mellor. The package contains hundreds of thousands retroviruses that infect the Mellor's cells and completely bypasses the Mellor's immune system, as the viruses are keyed to their genetic code.

Within minutes the Mellor starts turning blue as its genetic code is rewritten and it turns back into an uninfected Mellor. In addition, the cured Mellor is now immune to the Keegak retrovirus and cannot be re-infected.

Master Mellor become immune Old Mellor, Great and High Mellor also become Old Mellor, though their mental facilities will not be up to par with normal Old Mellor. Medium, Lesser, and Low Mellor will become cured, but then undergo convulsions and can die. They must make a Vigor test at -2. If they survive the cure, they will turn into a juvenile form of an Old Mellor. However, they will never grow as large and they will have limited mental and shapeshifting abilities.

Least Mellor simply die if cured. There is not enough internal components for them to survive as any form of an Old Mellor.

MELLOR TYPES

Old Mellor

Old Mellor are the immortal servants of the Tehrmelern that miraculously escaped the "Mellor Infestation". These extremely rare survivors are found in remote places still tending equipment, guiding a culture, or continuing a final order. They are gentle, impressionable and as trusting as children. Old Mellor are helpful, pleasant and have an outstanding capacity as information carriers. Each Old Mellor has the ability to remember up to 100 individuals. These forms are temporarily or permanently gained either visually or by touch (visual copies do not include memories).

Like any living creature, Old Mellor must eat. Luckily, they are omnivores and can receive sufficient nutrition from eating whatever the locals eat. However, if they cannot find any form of food, they can put themselves into form of hibernation until a source of food is available. They can only survive for 100 years this way, before dying.

Any Old Mellor that comes into direct physical contact with a Mutant Mellor will be infected and become a Master Mellor in 4d10 hours. The infection culminates with a violent psychological battle as the hostile invading retrovirus takes control of its victim.

Old Mellor

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d12, Strength d10, Vigor d6, Charisma +2; Pace 8; Parry 6; Toughness 12; Resilience 10

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d8, Healing d10, Investigation d10, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d12+1, Shooting d8, Stealth d10

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +3:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Loyal:** Loyal to the Tehrmelern and will obey their instructions.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 100 individuals in memory.
- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 100 individuals they have stored in their memory.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch wide, and at least 1 foot wide.

Master Mellor

The Master Mellor are the direct old Mellor stock infected with the Keegak Virus. These all but immortal creatures closely resemble the original stock of Mellor. Like the Old Mellor, the Master Mellor can hold up to 100 forms and minds in indefinite storage and is able to use any and all information from these minds. These Mellor invade worlds to take the form of advisors to great leaders or powers behind the throne, and then plunge the world's societies into bloody wars of genocide.

Ninety-nine percent of the Master Mellor are sterile, as they were infected after the fact by the original Master Mellor produced from rogue Keegak infected Crèche Mellor.

Master Mellor

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d10, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 6; Toughness 11; Resilience 9

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d8, Healing d10, Investigation d10, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d12+1, Shooting d8, Stealth d10

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** Anyone who sees a Master Mellor shape change from one form to their natural form must make a Fear check.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Mental link to all inferior Mellor:** Can control all inferior Mellor from Least to Great Mellor within a hundred miles and know what they are experiencing.
- **Intelligence Leech:** Can leech the target's Smarts score.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 100 individuals in memory.
- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 100 individuals they have stored in their memory in one action.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

Great Mellor

The Great Mellor are the second rarest and most deadly of the Mellor. Simply looking at one of these great beasts can inflict stark terror in a person. Normally, Great Mellor are under the control of a Master Mellor, not necessarily the one that spawned them. If they are without a master, Great Mellor become very territorial and will fight other Great Mellor for control of all lesser Mellor in a region. The Master Mellor need not be present to keep the Great Mellor from fighting each other.

Great Mellor are usually accompanied by any number of inferior Mellor types which they can control from up to 2 miles away. They have extremely keen senses and are almost never ambushed.

They can store the physical forms and memories of 12 previous victims of their choice. Reproduction creates another Great Mellor or two High Mellor through Mellor Mitosis.

Great Mellor

Attributes: Agility d12+1, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 10; Resilience 9

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d12, Healing d10, Investigation d10, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d12, Persuasion d12+1, Shooting d10, Stealth d10

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Very Acute Senses:** A Great Mellor can make a Notice roll at -2 to avoid being caught flatfooted by an ambush due to their very acute senses.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.

- **Fear -2:** Anyone who sees a Great Mellor in their natural form or shape change from one form to their natural form must make a Fear check at -2.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Mental link to Least to High Mellor:** Can control Least to High Mellor and know what they are experiencing.
- **Intelligence Leech:** Can leech the target's Smarts score.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 12 individuals in memory.
- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 12 individuals they have stored in their memory.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

High Mellor

The High Mellor are the second most formidable of the Mellor. They possess the same abilities as other Mellor forms with some improved characteristics and damage per attack. The real threat is their intelligence. They are not mindless carnivores and will avoid obvious traps and even the occasional subtle one. As ferocious as they are, they will not charge blindly unless there is no other way to survive. They are more than willing to escape a deadly encounter alive and come back later to exact revenge upon a current opponent. They have a maximum Smarts of d10 and they can store up to 8 sets of memories and physical forms of their past victims and they can call them up with a few moments effort. While they are still limited by how much mass they can add to their new shape, they can shed up to 50% of their mass if that is what is required to make the duplication accurate and perfect. Adding the mass back is simply one huge meal away. They are able to control other High Mellor of lesser intelligence than themselves as well as all other lower forms of Mellor inside a 4000 ft range.

Reproduction creates another High Mellor or two Medium Mellor.

High Mellor

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+1, Vigor d6, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 9; Resilience 9

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d12, Healing d10, Investigation d8, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Shooting d10, Stealth d10

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** High Mellor can perform a d12 Fright attack.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.

- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Mental link to Least and Medium Mellor:** Can control Least to Medium Mellor and know what they are experiencing.
- **Intelligence Leech:** Can leech the target's Smarts score.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 8 individuals in memory.
- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 8 individuals they have stored in their memory.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

Medium Mellor

The Medium Mellor are like their monstrous predecessors in all respects other than size, strength and dexterity. The Medium Mellor has improved chances of duplication, mind transfer and better Life Force Leech. Medium Mellor can control and see through the eyes of any Lesser, Low or Least Mellor within 3000 ft. Medium Mellor can reproduce the same as Lesser Mellor but now possess the intelligence to avoid the genetic collapse into a lesser form by willingly entering hibernation, available food permitting. This is the lowest form of Mellor that can travel the Fringepaths using a Fringeworthy form and a key crystal since the Tehrmelern activated the Mutant Mellor detection system. Lower level Mellor lack the ability to successfully shape shift to a Fringeworthy form or the Intelligence to hack the system with a key crystal.

Medium Mellor

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 9; Resilience 9

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** Medium Mellor can perform a d10 Fright attack.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Mental link to Least and Lesser Mellor:** Can control Least to Lesser Mellor and know what they are experiencing.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 4 individuals in memory.

- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 4 individuals they have stored in their memory.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

Lesser Mellor

The Lesser Mellor behave similar to Low Mellor in eating habits, hibernation and reproduction but what makes them a serious threat is that they are much better at shape shifting and possess a chance of absorbing their victims mind and memories. A successful Mind Transfer of the victim permanently adds 1 die to the Lesser Mellor's Smarts up to a maximum value of d8. The chance may be slim but it makes them a far more dangerous encounter. The Lesser Mellor also has the ability to Leech Life Force from its victim in the form of CON. Any Lesser Mellor, that has built up its Smarts to d6 or better, can control and see through the eyes of any Least or Low Mellor within 2000 ft. The same limitations of shape shifting, reproduction and genetic collapse apply.

Lesser Mellor

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 7; Resilience 7

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Language (Tehrmelern) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** Lesser Mellor can perform a d10 Fright attack.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **Mental link to Least and Low Mellor:** Can control Least and Low Mellor and know what they are experiencing.
- **Memory Leech:** With a touch, they can absorb all the memories of the person they are touching. This includes the person's DNA pattern. They can recall this memory with perfect fidelity. They can store up to 3 individuals in memory.
- **Shape Shifter:** They can change their shape to any of the 3 individuals they have stored in their memory.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

Low Mellor

The Low Mellor, like the Least Mellor, are vicious carnivores. In addition, it may take the shape of its last victim for camouflage. It can only assume the forms of animals or at best a mindless copy of an intelligent creature but is still limited by mass. It cannot assume a form of greater mass than itself + the mass of its latest victim. Low Mellor can reproduce in one of two ways. A Low Mellor can inject a genetic

capsule into a corpse which provides material sufficient to hatch another Low Mellor in d4 + 4 days. This newborn Low Mellor cannot take the form of the host shell it grew out of. If no victim is available and food is getting scarce the Low Mellor can either hibernate the same as Least Mellor or after d4+4 hours of coma, split into 2 Least Mellor. What makes the decision between hibernate or collapse and divide is uncertain since it has nothing to do with intelligent choice. It may be hormonal, age-driven, environmental or simply blind chance. We just don't know.

Low Mellor

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4-2, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 7; Resilience 7

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Str+d6
- **Ambidextrous:** No off hand penalty.
- **Two-Fisted:** Can attack twice with both sets of claws.
- **Armor +4:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** Low Mellor can perform a d10 Fright attack.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Lifeforce Leech:** A touch attack that drains the lifeforce from the target. On a successful Fighting roll, the target takes a point of Fatigue. Can be resisted by the target by making a Vigor roll.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.

Least Mellor

The Least Mellor are mindless eaters that will devour any life in their path. They often congregate in swarms of up to a thousand if food supplies are plentiful. If a Least Mellor consumes an amount of food equal to its body weight, it will fall into a comatose state for d4+4 hours after which it will divide into 2 Least Mellor. Least Mellor are the only Mellor that cannot shape shift to resemble their victim. Because of its fantastic metabolism, a Least Mellor will quickly begin to starve if food sources are not readily available. Starving Least Mellor will go into a cannibalistic frenzy and after consuming their body weight worth of food, the survivors will again enter a comatose state but instead of reproducing, the Least Mellor will enter into a state of hibernation that has been found to last up to 1,400 years, possibly more. If disturbed, i.e. if food disturbs them, they will awaken in d10 seconds and show no lethargy or lack of ferocity.

Least Mellor

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d4-2, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10, Charisma 0; Pace 6; Parry 8; Toughness 9; Resilience 7

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6

Special Abilities:

- **Bite or Claws:** Least Mellor swarms do 2d8 damage from biting and clawing everyone in a medium burst template. Damage is applied to the least armored portion of the victim.
- **Armor +2:** Thick rubbery skin.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Does not suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fast Regeneration:** Mellor make a Vigor roll every turn to heal damage.
- **Fear:** Low Mellor can perform a d10 Fright attack.
- **Hardy:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken a second time.
- **Low Light Vision:** Can see in the dark.
- **No Skeleton:** Because they have cartilage instead of bones, Mellor can deform their bodies enough to fit through any opening that is at least 1 inch high, and at least 1 foot wide.
- **Swarm:** Parry +2. Because the Least Mellor attack by the scores, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons do normal damage. Characters can try stomping and kicking to inflict damage equal to their Strength die every round. Because Least Mellor do not simply disperse, but fight to the death, the characters must inflict three wounds to defeat them.

FRINGE PIRATES

Fringe pirates come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. They can behave almost benevolently, to near psychotic maliciousness, or any degree in between. Their motivations and methods can vary greatly from one group to another. Rather than trying to and cover every aspect or to detail out each group one might encounter, you will find three examples of what the party is likely to encounter. Each group has been provided with enough information for the GM to flesh out as he sees fit for his campaign and his players.

Let's face the facts. Earth Prime is not the only world to have discovered or rediscovered that its access to the Fringepaths has been restored. There are countless worlds out there that have access and if the numbers hold true for most of them, each world can have anywhere from 20-50 thousand potential Fringeworthy on them.

On Earth prime it is impossible to count how many people possess a moral standard below what is normally deemed acceptable. Add in the reality of multiple worlds and it is impossible to doubt that some of these individuals of low moral beliefs won't also be Fringeworthy.

Even what "Primers" see as a healthy moral standard may be considered odd and bizarre on another world. So the concept of Fringe Pirates, people who use the Fringepaths as a source of easy wealth with no consequences shouldn't be that hard to accept. It's not so far away from what the explorers do right now. A single ugly push down the moral scale is all it would take to make an IDET member into a Fringe Pirate. What is surprising is that the first encounter with Fringe Pirates took as long as it did to happen. The battle at +6 should have been anticipated and planned as a possible encounter by the IDSS. The fact that it did take so long to happen indicates a few possible realities that have yet to be verified.

One possibility is that the Fringe Pirates are from a prime or alternate very far away and they were just expanding their territory. Another suggests that groups of Fringe Pirates are relatively small, working in bands that patrol large areas and that they just hadn't bumped into an IDE team by luck or design. Still another suggestion about the Fringe Pirates is that they are remnants of the old Commonwealth that managed to survive and after escaping their locked world, began doing what is necessary to survive in this new harsh reality.

There are other ideas about how Fringe Pirates came about and what their goals are, but one thing is certain. They are not to be trifled with. They ask for no quarter and give none. Fringe Pirates will do anything to achieve their goals and escape alive, including risking weapons fire and explosive use on the Fringepaths.

As a group they don't have any distinctive markings, flags or colors, so don't assume just because you meet someone on the paths that doesn't wear a uniform that they are Fringe Pirates. Don't let your guard down either.

A Fringe Pirate's greatest fear is to lose his freedom. They will sacrifice anything and anyone to maintain that freedom. Like a snake that is diving down its own lair hole, never chase a Fringe Pirate into territory you don't already know. They often have been out on the Pathways longer than "Primers" and know where and when to spring a trap or lead to an ambush. Let's be careful out there.

CONFESSIONS OF A FRINGE PIRATE

So, you want me to talk about being a, what was that, a "fringe pirate". Whatever that is, I'm a pathway raider, more akin to the Vikings than any pirate. So don't imagine me to be one of those fancy Dans, a wearing frills and a frock coat. I'm a raider and I am very good at what I do. That is until you caught me and my men.

How did I become one? I was born one. Me mam was raider, and carried me in her belly across many a portal raiding worlds. I was born in the middle of a raid, if you believe the stories my dah told, holding a pistol and demanding the doctor's gold teeth! Ha! Good'un.

Base? We never had a permanent base, we just moved along paths, stopping to raid any portal we could open, reading the pylons so's we wouldn't get hurt by what lay on the other side. If we find a good garbage world, er, what you call a pocket world, we'd make camp, use the world as a raid base, divvy up loot, and see about trading it for something good at those worlds we couldn't raid. Like medicine and stuff.

Trade? Hell yeah, we trade when it'd be suicide to raid. We also know where the good trading worlds are, so's we heads on back to them. Where are they? Sorry lad, I won't tell you. I got some loyalty to those I've fought along side with.

We trade because there is no good sitting on most of what we take. Sure some of that would keep our raiding base going while we're out raiding nearby worlds. But most of it would go to the trading worlds for ammo and more weapons.

That's a good question lad. I think the first pirates were poor sods that found the portals by accident. They found others a wandering the paths and banded together for protection. Others I think were worlds like yours, they found the paths and used them for raids of other worlds for goods and wealth. Some of them went rogue and went into the business for themselves.

My band is only ten years old. I split off from my dad's band when his got too big. I recruited a handful of me old wet nurse mates and with me dad's blessing, we headed out and recruited more at a trade world. We knew from the talk that no one's been this far for a while now, so we raided our way out to here. That's when we met you IDETs.

That first bunch we met was all "Peace and Love" and we showed them peace and love.

Peace of the grave, and the love of death. Ha! No, we only killed the most troublesome, the rest we left with plenty of water and those filthy MREs you call food.

We made a haul on that raid. Didja know that what you IDETs carry is worth more than gold at a trade world? All that medicine! We can sell that on a low-tech world for gold and other valuables.

But we let some of them live. That was a mistake. You came for us in force. That steam powered Gatling gun them Brits were using was murder.

Our raids? Yeah, some of them is brutal on chicken stealing worlds... What's that? It's a world that's got nothing better than chickens to steal lad. Other worlds gots gold and gems, others got merchandise that can be turned into wealth.

We've raided worlds where they treated us like gods and gave use our loot. Others, we had to take it from them. By force lad, bloody damn force. We scout them out, see if they are better armed than we are, and if we are, we go at them, hammer and tong. It's a bloody grisly business, one you have to harden your heart to, otherwise you'd end up eat'n your pistol, if you get my meaning.

Oh, on those where they were better armed than us, then we pull out the trade goods and see if we can get what we want through trading. That doesn't work well on most "civilized" worlds and we end up shooting our way out on the ones that want "papers" and "permits". Any place where they has trains is too civilized for trade, but you can raid, if the portal is in the right place.

On one world, with automobiles and such, we were able to raid a fancy street, Rodeo Drive I think it was called, and made off with lots of loot! The law officers just had pistols and shotguns, and we had body armor, assault rifles, RPGs, and heavy machine guns. It was a pigpen shooting!

Of course we seal every world off that we raid. We don't want them following after us. That's just being smart.

So's what's to happen to me and my band? A trial? Prison time? I think not lad. We know more about the paths than you do. I'll buy my freedom with a little bit of what I know. You IDETs will have to watch your backs out there. Because if you don't we'll take you. That's a promise.

RAIDERS

Raiders are more akin to Vikings than traditional pirates. They look for worlds that are easy to raid and have goods that can be traded on other alternate worlds that aren't easy to raid, or on the rare Market world. They are wily and conniving, and they will treat anyone on the pathways as potential prey, unless they know that they are other raiders or that they can kick their butts.

When they approach unknown people on the pathways, they will put on a happy face and try to hide the .50 cal machineguns. Once they determine that they can take them, they will attack. As most of them are always armed even when sleeping, they can attempt a surprise attack. They are not cold-blooded murders, but if you put up too much of a resistance, they will kill you. It's more expedient that way.

Raiders will set up a base of operations on any convenient world or pocket stop. These bases are transient and function more as a storage site than as a true base. They are not manned except for those that were wounded and healers/doctors taking care of the wounded. This does not mean these bases are easy pickings for IDET. Every one of these people will fight because they believe that the only other alternative is death. Trying to convince them otherwise will be hard to do.

There is a loose confederation among the Raiders, one that most pay lip service to. New Raider bands may pull recruits from several different bands, taking the youngest from each and striking out on their own.

Raider Setup

Raiding Band:

- Personnel: 1 Pirate Commander, 1 Pirate Lieutenant, 5-6 Pirates, 1 Heavy Weapons Pirate.
- Vehicles: 2 Diesel or Steam Powered Trucks or Lorries, Armored.
- Weapons: Assault Rifles, Heavy Semi-Automatic Pistols, Knives, Medium Machine Gun

Raider Base:

- Personnel: 1 Pirate Commander, 2 Pirate Lieutenant, 8-10 Pirates, 2 Heavy Weapons Pirate, 1 Mechanic, 1 Healer. There may be 2d6 Conscripts, but they are for base maintenance or "entertainment".
- Vehicles: 4 Diesel or Steam Powered Trucks or Lorries, Armored.
- Weapons: Assault Rifles, Heavy Semi-Automatic Pistols, Knives, Medium Machine Guns

PRIVATEERS

Some worlds have turned their Fringeworthy into a privateer force. These raiders operate with the blessing of their government, raiding alternate worlds for their wealth and technology, and then returning back home with the booty. If their world is the Prime world for the node, there may be as many as 8 different sources for privateer bands operating off of that platform. Depending on the political situation on their world, these bands may ignore each other, assist their allies, or attack each other on sight.

Privateers tend to milk a world for as much as they can get from it before moving on to another or when that world starts mounting a viable defense. Depending on where the portal is on a world, they may set up a base and use locals for manpower and defense.

As they begin to spread out farther and farther from their homeworld, they will set up supply bases on suitable worlds, especially those that can provide supplies, such as fuel, ammo, and weapons. These bases are always manned and defended, but they will treat with strangers first before firing upon them. Some of these bases range from wooden stockades, to medieval fortifications, to full blown modern fire bases and associated gear. And not a few are disguised as warehouses built around a warp.

Privateer worlds tend to turn into Fringe Empires over time, as more and more Fringeworthy are born or recruited.

Privateer Setup

Raiding Teams:

- Personnel: 1 Pirate Commander, 1 Pirate Lieutenant, 4-5 Pirates, 1-2 Heavy Weapons Pirates.
- Vehicles: 2 Fringe Capable Armored Personnel Carriers
- Weapons: Assault Rifles, Heavy Semi-Automatic Pistols, Knives, Anti-Tank Weapons, Medium Machine Guns

Supply Base:

- Personnel: 1 Pirate Commander, 3-4 Pirate Lieutenants, 10-20 Pirates, 5-6 Heavy Weapons Pirates, 3-4 Merchants, 6 Transport Drivers, 4 Mechanics, 20 to 40 Conscripts, 4 Healers.
- Vehicles: 2 Tanks, 5 Armored Personnel Carriers, 6 Cargo Vehicles
- Weapons: Assault Rifles, Heavy Semi-Automatic Pistols, Knives, Anti-Tank Weapons, Heavy Machine Guns, 2 Light Field Cannons

Raiding Base:

- Personnel: 1 Pirate Commander, 3 Pirate Lieutenants, 10 Pirates, 3 Heavy Weapons Pirates, 2 Mechanics, 20 Conscripts, 2 Healers
- Vehicles: 1 Tanks, 3 Armored Personnel Carriers
- Weapons: Assault Rifles, Heavy Semi-Automatic Pistols, Knives, Anti-Tank Weapons, Medium Machine Guns, 1 Light Field Cannon

ROGUE IDE TEAMS

Sometimes, a team will decide that they have had enough dealing with the politics and bureaucracy of Earth Prime and the United Nations and go rogue.

HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL FRINGEWORTHY CAMPAIGN

The kind of campaign you run should be a best fit between the role-playing style of your players, the kind of characters they want to play and your own GM style. If you want to run a campaign of political infighting and they want to shoot monsters, it will not end well. Many GMs and players create an agreement with broad strokes before the campaign starts to uncover expectations on both sides of the screen.

A campaign can change over time. If the team starts as one of the first through the Hatsumi Portal, their first world will be the Fringepath itself. Later, as its secrets are revealed, the team can use the Fringepath as a tactical tool and refuge when world or solar system exploring. Eventually, it can become simply a means to get from point A to B.

The scope of Fringespace is titanic. Worlds thought fully explored can yield new adventures as natives uncover new artifacts. Political and religious alliances can change, turning the Fringeworthy from friends into hated enemies. Over-reaching groups can unleash hellish diseases and world-cracking weapons by design or mistake. That's just one world.

As the campaign winds on, worlds will begin to interact with each other. Power centers will be found on the Fringepaths. As more secrets of the Fringepaths are exposed, safe areas may become deathtraps for attack or defender alike. Your campaign should abound with opportunities to strike out in new directions.

You don't have to be part of UNIDA, TÆSS, or other governmental group. Once you are on the Fringepaths, there is little stopping you from striking out on whatever path suits you. Many teams have found a world that suited them and stayed for the duration (such as the Bureau 13 Prime). Others have found the UNIDA to be too stifling, too compromising, or too slow to grasp an opportunity. As you meet other power centers you might find a better fit, even to the point of being a double agent. Be careful, the Fringepaths only seem safe. Don't forget the **Mellor**.

THE BASIC ADVENTURE AREAS IN FRINGEWORTHY:

Earth Prime

- Characters spend their time enmeshed in the political, social or economic maneuverings of the nations of the world as they attempt to gain advantage from discoveries of the Fringe.
- They are managers in the UNIDA or more directly involved in the development of new technologies.
- They can work with the [Alien-CorpOffice of Interworld Relations](#) to integrate [alien-speciesother Fringe cultures](#) into the UNIDA workforce.
- They guard Hatsumi Base from enemies and opportunists from within and without.

The Fringepaths

Fringespace is a world unto itself and qualifies as an Otherspace, except that it is suited to human life. You must understand that it is an artificial construct, and so its behavior is **default** behavior. IDA will learn how to unlock new features, surmount limitations and prohibitions, and even exploit its nature for unlimited power and eternal life. Fringespace will become a partner. An entire campaign could take place solely in pursuit of discovering its secrets and bending it to the purposes of the IDA.

Space Exploration

Including the system platform for the Prime plus the eight system platforms for the Star Hub Platform, there are 9 solar systems that can be explored for each Fringespace node. Many of these portals will go to micro-gravity environments such as asteroids and small moons.

These are excellent launch platforms for even primitive spacecraft. Satellites for Earth orbit can be launched cheaply, even from great distances, since the main cost is getting the satellite into space.

Since the Star Platform goes to stars within a 40 light year radius of the Prime's solar system, stars that were only blobs of light can be examined closely. Theories of solar development can be proven based on new evidence. Alien civilizations can be discovered, which if space faring, can provide proven technological advances.

World Explorers

A million, million worlds are a lot of territory, but the primes and alternates are all in some way analogs of our Earth. The myriad ways in which they differ provides a rich campaign path. Extinct species can be hunted or captured for resettlement. Expended mines on Earth Prime Zero are untouched elsewhere. Disasters on one world can provide a warning on another similar Earth. Wars can be won or lost with the introduction of new technologies from the explorers. Making short-cut journeys through the prime planetary portals, bringing needed medicines faster than the quickest jets, can cure plagues.

FRINGEWORTHY CAMPAIGN STYLES

In a realistic campaign, teams will find themselves with many opportunities to be more than one of these roles. This is a good thing since a campaign that focuses on only one type of adventure will lose its freshness quickly. Travelogues make for boring adventures. They always need a human context.

Exploration and Survey

It's a big unknown universe out there, but the team only wants to find out what's near the portal before moving on. They seek low hanging fruit and spectacle. While this type of adventure seems

easiest, since the team mostly reacts to the new world, first contact scenarios are always fraught with unexpected peril and setbacks.

Diplomacy

Once the initial contact is made, power centers quickly appear and natives seek to exploit the explorers and be exploited in turn. Drawing on historical examples of Earth Prime Zero, explorers can see the pitfalls and promote mutually beneficial cooperation between groups, including [UNIDA](#). Great dividends later are reaped as stable worlds, friendly to [UNIDA](#), provide havens and re-supply stations. Sometimes past mistakes on our world can be redeemed.

Vigilante

The universe is full of bad people, who take advantage of the weak. They need to be cut down and [the IDE teams](#) are the lawnmower. These teams are the gunslingers of [IDE](#) who gain great pleasure at taking the local warlord down a notch. They love playing knights in shining armor. Extreme groups will start revolutions if they think a regime is evil or if the people suffer oppression without hope of change.

World Conqueror

They seek more primitive worlds and champion a group seeking world dominance. Once achieved, they take their tribute off world to benefit Earth Prime or to underwrite further world conquests. This is a common tactic of extreme political or religious factions in [UNIDA](#). Usually this is in conflict with the UN articles of conduct, but may be unenforceable.

Arms Dealer

Where there is advantage to be had, usually someone is willing to kill to get it. There is a lot of profit or advantage to be gained by helping a rising power center. An arms dealer cares not about the collateral damage as long as the desired outcome is achieved. A few just want to share their love of destruction.

Historian

The winners write history, so an unbiased account of events is impossible to find. Worlds that are temporally offset provide priceless opportunities to discover what really happened. The subtle nuances of the interplay of the personalities and forms of legendary leaders, religious belief, philosophy, and culture all work to create the true history that may have never been known before. Becoming the confidant of a king is a dream come true for this explorer.

Religion builder

Most Fringeworthy have a religious faith due to choice, geography, or tradition. Many feel that their beliefs need to be spread throughout Fringespace for the enlightenment or salvation of the heathen. It is very easy for an explorer to pose as a higher being on a primitive world. Unless the rest of the team takes action, zealots usually succeed to some extent.

Fringe Police

People are flawed no matter what forms they take. Fringe police spend most of their time patrolling, checking for contraband, or chasing Fringe Pirates. They are often the first on the scene of a disastrous Fringe Weather incident. They are usually the first to discover Fringe aware worlds that mount their own exploration teams. Sometimes worlds will war on themselves or each other using the portals.

Fringe Police are masters of using Fringespace for tactical advantage and they have the best weapon tech available. Somebody has to keep the peace.

Big Game hunter

Most of the great beasts of ~~Earth-United Nations Earth Prime~~ are gone, but on alternates they shake the earth, sky, and seas. These explorers may appear as one of the other groups, but show their true colors when opportunity arises.

Mellor Hunter

Once you confront a Mellor, you are scarred forever. You will lose beloved friends and limbs. Some try to exorcise their trauma by seeking the destruction of the malevolent race in all its varied forms. Some form assault teams for personal payback. Others are content to identify their stomping grounds and nuke from orbit. However, they absolutely will not stop until they are sure the Mellor are eradicated.

Artifact Hunter

Elvis is alive on many alternates with new albums for sale. Famous movies star different actors. Destroyed or lost works of art can be found intact. These explorers play the what-if game and harvest whatever they think will find a ready market back on ~~United Nations Earth Prime Zero~~ or its trading partners. If not just in it for the money, these hunters are rabid collectors or glory hounds.

Technology Hunter

~~United Nations Earth Prime~~ is heading for an ecological collapse. Only new and revolutionary tech from advanced worlds or left behind on fallen worlds will save her. They operate with a sense of urgency, knowing that fame and glory await their successes and billions will die if they fail. However, they tend to fall afoul of the guardians of ancient artifacts or knowledge, or they are in turn exploited by high tech cultures. In campaigns where exploration teams are rewarded monetarily for bring back technology; greed can push explorers toward exploitation of the native population. Even combat between teams on the pathways over choice items is not unknown.

Merchant

Such a deal they have for you. This is a common role during extended exploration of a world. Many campaigns expect teams to live off the land and trade is a far more flexible tool than a hoe. Buying low and selling high is usually pretty easy once you find out what a culture values. The best traders love the deal for itself. If both sides think they got the best of the deal, the merchant has done her job.

Agents of Good Intentions

These teams delight in problem solving. They see themselves as agents of good will, nudging a world down a better path, thwarting evil and oppression where possible. This is the ideal that the UN wants ~~UNIDAET~~ to be. Unless they are careful, they can find themselves vigilantes, religion builders, or even world conquerors. Restraint and a light touch usually produces better results. They have to be willing to walk away, leaving others to finish the job.

FRINGEWORTHY CAMPAIGN TYPES

The Early Years: 0 to 5 years after discovery of the Fringes

This is the very beginning; the discovery of the Tehrmelern Portal System by the humans of, what will from now on be designated, "~~United Nations Earth Prime~~". (Though there will be a faction that calls it "Earth Prime".)

The people of United Nations Earth Prime are about to get a huge shock. Not only are we not alone in the universe, but also there are many, many universes and they are all accessible, on foot, by means of an alien technology found in Antarctica.

The world will be full of hysterical points of view. There will be recruitment posters, business ventures, corporate and government espionage at unheard-of levels. The security measures to protect the identified Fringeworthy will be massive since they will usually be detected in public and the detection squads will probably be followed by who knows what interests, in an effort to get an inside track on this new horizon. The story can begin with a PC's discovery of their special nature. This allows the PCs to decide if they are going to take any of these most likely lucrative but probably illegal offers made by who knows. OrAlternatively, it can begin on their first world adventure. What kind of world will they visit first? Will they be sent to an alternate or will they stick to their own universe and map out where their planetary, system and star portals lead. Wherever they go, there is a timeline that does-will involve major characters of the game. Certain discoveries will not be made immediately. There will-should be no Mellor encounters in the first 5 years of exploration. Furthermore, there are no reported incidents with Fringe Pirates or Tehmelern other than rare brief sightings of Schmert.

The discovery and first contact with all the races not indigenous to United Nations Earth Prime are clearly laid out. SoTherefore, if you decide to follow the timeline as it stands and set yourself at the beginning, you may be on hand when the Heavies are first encountered; or the Victorians, or the T'Ziel. You could even be part of the contact team as long as the major players are still present. If you place your campaign after a specific contact date, you can conceivably be one of those races, looking to leave your world for whatever reasons make sense to you.

Campaign in Brief

As a beginning Fringeworthy, the explorers' motives are their own. Like all quickly cobbled together organizations, UNIDA is going to have a period where chaos will rule and paper pushers will flourish. With the desperate drive to find as many Fringeworthy as possible to make up the IDE teamTs, few people are going to be scrutinizing Fringeworthy resumes and people of all sorts of character are going to get in. Who knows what kind of deals will be made before a PC ever sets foot on a platform? The GM should be careful when mapping his campaign not to send his players to a world that has already been identified in the timeline as a major player. All the major race worlds are identified at the top of each race for this reason.

The Role of the Heroes

Essentially, the PCs will be in one of two groups: Explore or Supply. Their job will be to visit new worlds, determine what life is present, record all the information and return to base with that information. Conversely, in the Supply role, they could be-bringing supplies to teams situated on specific worlds where research is being performed. On route to locate these static teams they could have any number of adventures up to and including rescue missions, running battles or reporting all hands lost. The first adventures, excluding those catalogued in the timeline are open to anything the mind can conceive.

Campaign Traits

The technology will be limited to what has been discovered works on the Fringepaths; bicycles, diesel powered jeeps and trucks. All the fancier items the-UNIDA have-will developed should be considered Second Generation tech. Once the PCs have determined how tech works on the Fringepaths and what fails to work, they can then begin seeing new tech that has been developed with the Fringepaths in mind. (They should not be given this info. Let them discover that their laptops are empty after a mission or their digital cameras have no evidence of what they discovered recorded on them.) We are talking about the early missions, I'm sure quite a few discoveries and once in a lifetime images were lost because someone didn't have a simple flash camera on hand.

K.I.S.S. –

Keep It Superbly Simple is a good handle to put on the first few adventures. It may be necessary to teach a few lessons along the way. The IDE ~~personnel~~ didn't know how to interpret the pylon readings the first time they saw them. Every team could conceivably have relevant excerpts from the Antarctic Journal but they don't cover everything.

Background

The PCs are new on the scene. They have no idea what they may encounter on the Fringepaths. They don't know what the rules are. They don't know who else may be out there. Someone had to discover that atmosphere only extended 90' laterally from the path. ~~Hopefully the player doesn't mind creating a new character after learning that lesson. Hopefully it won't be your character.~~

The World

The world begins in an uproar about the new universes out there. There will be everything from political upheaval to religious fanaticism. Then it will die down when it is determined only 1 in 100,000 are Fringeworthy. Still, ~~overnight~~, there will spring up ~~overnight~~, a black market for Fringe tech and artifacts. Fortunes will be made and lost and people will be hurt by it. The discovery that any pregnant Fringeworthy who ~~passes through a portal travels during the pregnancy~~ will have a Fringeworthy offspring ~~has will raised~~ the promise of a great number of explorers in 20 years as well as spawned a number of questionable practices regarding impregnation. The world turns.

Key Concepts

People are people and they will behave that way. Keep your situations real, keep your encounters realistic and keep your PCs motivations always first in their minds.

The Exploration Years: 5 to 20 years from discovery of the Fringes

By and large the world has stayed the same. The new age of brotherhood that the discovery of the Tehrmelern Portal System promises to bring is still in its infancy. Five years is not long enough to bring about such a global change in the beliefs and attitudes of the people of ~~United Nations Earth-Prime~~. There are still minor wars, but they are mostly being fought for different reasons. The Tehrmelern Portal System or the so-called "Fringepaths" as the public has dubbed them, have brought about significant change in our worlds goals and needs. With whole worlds that are automated farms to use for supply, ~~the UNIDA have has been trying to feeding~~ many who previously had nothing. With enough food and shelter, outbreaks of disease that were endemic in overpopulated areas are becoming fewer and fewer. The Power that the UN now wields has been recognized by the world in general ~~and the number of member nations has almost doubled~~. Unfortunately everyone is still functioning on the old belief system ~~as that if the discovery of the Fringepaths was were a new continent to be plundered and exploited. The IDA still has not made peace with its dark twin, the ASA and while open conflicts between them have not broken out, there are still suspicions, dangerous encounters and lots of saber-rattling going on.~~ Economically, the future of ~~United Nations Earth Prime~~ is looking good. With ~~40 new members in the IDA and~~ countless other worlds to discover and bring into the fold, it is a good time to be alive if you are Fringeworthy,

Campaign in Brief

All the major races have been contacted and with the creation of ~~IDAG OIR (Office of Interworld Relations), dimensional Alien Corps~~, PCs can now run characters of any race they wish. The more exotic races will be rarer but present in IDE ~~tTeams-groups~~. According to the Timeline, the PCs are ripe for their first encounter with Mellor, Fringe Pirates, undiscovered Tehrmelern Technology and major characters or new races. Second Generation technology designed specifically for the Fringepaths is now becoming

available. Up until this point, the humans of United Nations Earth Prime have been the most technologically advanced of the races encountered (excluding the Tehrmelern of course). This can now change. Just because United Nations Earth Prime has nuclear power, space travel, advanced medicine and is developing alternative energy sources doesn't mean we-it isare on top. There can-beare races that have been using the Fringepaths for a century or more, out there waiting to make contact with us. It also doesn't mean that our road to technological advancement is the only one that can be taken. GMs should be creative. With an infinite number of universes out there, any conceivable technology that is-conceivable can be found.

The Role of the Heroes

Along with the earlier roles of Explorer and Supplier come the new jobs of Observer, Soldier, Spy and Trader. The Observer is-going-to-be-the IDE teams areT group assigned to a world not yet ready for contact. They will go in "in costume" so as not to draw attention to themselves and learn from this new world what their values are, their system of governing and approximate technology level. They will make notes about when they feel this world will be ready for formal contact and how it should be gone about.

The Soldier is part of the United Nations Peacekeepers, Fringe Division, the IDET group whose primary function is protection of the Explorer, Supplier, Observer and Trader teams from any hostiles they encounter as they travel the paths and platforms. Their other role is the launching of rescue missions and when formal enemies have been encountered, search and destroy missions. The high-ranking officer in a soldier team may even be equipped with a relatively high ranking crystal and the right to use it to change the settings on a given portal he or she deems too dangerous to leave open.

The Spy is the lone or pair of Fringeworthy travelers who visits another worlds with the intention of obtaining secret or advanced intelligence and technology from a worlds that is not an-yet-officially contacted by UNIDA-member.

The Trader is exactly as he sounds. He deals with everyone and anyone. He has to be careful who his clients are and what he decides to trade but as there is little in the way of border guards or tariffs for bringing in Fringepath artifacts, his life can be as dangerous or lucrative as he is willing to risk.

Campaign Traits

This could be considered the "Flash before the Bang" for Earth Prime and the IDA. This is the era where the IDA is still discovering all the good things about the Fringepaths but hasn't yet had any truly horrific encounters. It is the time where the IDA may have grown to believe they are the most advanced technologically, since the Tehrmelern are no longer here. Overconfidence and casual attitude should be part of the everyday life of the Fringe Explorer since nothing has come out to challenge their supremacy as yet. The PCs are at that perfect time to introduce them to a real threat.

Let them encounter a Mellor-devastated world. Maybe they will find a few least Mellor in hibernation and not recognize them for what they are until it is too late. Maybe they will encounter a higher form in disguise that, now released from its prison, will try to find out where they come from and how to infiltrate their society. The time is perfect for the UNIDA to get a serious scare about the fact that the Mellor are still out there waiting for a chance to rise up and wipe out all non-Mellor races. Maybe the first Mellor encounter will go down as a perfectly normal experience without the players ever knowing that they have been identified and targeted for genocide.

Background

Right now the basics have been determined and laid out for all IDET explorers. What is safe and what isn't is part of the standard operating procedures for all Fringeworthy. The paper pushers have had their fun but most likely the untrustworthy Fringeworthy agents have either been discovered or removed

from service; or quite possibly are dead. The Fringepaths can be very unforgiving when it comes to mistakes made and backstabbers tend to find few people willing to stick their necks out for them.

Technologically, the paths are still a million years ahead of Earth Prime, but necessity is the mother of invention and the tech boys at UNIDA will have come up with a few gadgets that manage to get around the Fringepath energy strictures.

The World

The Fringepaths is becoming more of a household word. It has become fashionable to be able to trace your lineage to someone who is Fringeworthy. The Fringeworthy are the new Superstars whose only entrance requirement is to make an alien crystal glow when they hold it. All the status barriers set up over generations have been fully toppled on their ear when Mr. Privileged has to take a back seat in the adventure of the millennium to Mr. Born-on-the-Streets. Interestingly enough, this has produced two contradictory forces on Earth Prime. The first is procreation – have as many kids as possible in the hopes of producing one that is Fringeworthy. The second is severe limitations on procreation because the improved food and living conditions has caused a population explosion and there is only so much space available on Earth Prime. Although the ability to be Fringeworthy has no racial prejudice or privilege; once discovered, such children are spirited off to Exceptional schools to receive the best education and lifestyle possible in the hopes of training future explorers early.

Key Concepts

The Fringepaths are ours for the taking. The Tehmelern are gone and we will reap where they have sown. We are currently the most advance culture using the paths and therefore we shall get the lion's share of the goods. There is no one to truly oppose us in this endeavor and since there is enough for everyone we will share with our friends but only because it makes us look noble. After all, who is out there who could say otherwise?

Adventure Hooks

One of the secrets that has been smuggled out of Hatsumi Base is the Attunement rate for non-Fringeworthy to become Fringeworthy by close proximity to Fringepath Crystal Keys or portals. The portals are too well guarded, but it is suspected that a small number of crystal keys of low rank (black or grey) were smuggled out of the base. They are being used in a clandestine attempt to produce a large number of future Fringeworthy by being placed in a group of nurseries at privately run hospitals. The newborns will be exposed to them daily in an attempt to artificially induce Fringeworthiness in this select group who will be raised with a master race education. What the super-privileged cannot obtain by monetary means they will resort to technology to purchase.

Established Campaign: 20 to 120 years after discovery of the Fringes

“Good Evening, Bill Bounds reporting here at Hatsumi Base in Antarctica. It is the 20th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Fringepaths and to date the Unified Worlds have accomplished ‘a good start’ as described in Time Magazine. During these 20 years the laws governing trade, travel and aid using the Fringepaths have been tested and hammered out. All parties in the IDA have agreed to the Fringetech Accord which will see that all cultures receive equal shares in all discoveries and advances made directly related to the Fringepath discovery. [Cue the smile]

“It was here, 20 years ago today, that the first-ever Fringepath exploration from Earth Prime took place. In 10 minutes, as the clock counts down to the second, the original Fringepath Explorer, Dr. Sayuri Tanuma will walk through the ring behind me and recreate that historic journey to the Earth Prime platform...and here she is, Dr Tanuma...”

“...The majority of our viewers are not ‘Fringeworthy’ and so will never know what it feels like to stand on a Fringe Platform or even another world; but that may be changing in the foreseeable future. Thanks to Fringetech and the pathways leading to other worlds in our solar system, we will soon realize the colonization of Mars at a tenth the expected cost. When the biosphere is fully constructed and tested via Fringepath, it will then be possible to send spaceships to Mars full of colonists who will simply move in to their new homes. This is Bill Bounds, Good Night.”

Campaign in Brief

A lot of the novelty of the Fringepaths has worn off. They have become the means of supporting the incredible demands of an overpopulated planet. The people of Earth Prime have had their lifestyles raised to a level that cannot be sustained without the constant supplies brought in from the Alternate World Farms. As with all changes in lifestyle, those who have want more and will not accept losing what they have. The increased food and resources available from the Fringepaths have raised the quality of life all around the globe. Punitive laws have been put in place to reduce birth rates where they were out of control but they are proving to be too little, too late. At this point in history, Earth Prime has a huge population of educated people who will not stand idly by if the level of their day-to-day lifestyle is radically changed or begins to drop. This will put tremendous pressure on the IDA to keep the flow of food and raw materials flowing in. It has been calculated that thousands would die in the first day if the Fringepaths were blocked or delayed even as little as 36 hours. The IDA is aware of this problem and is attempting to compensate with increased flow through the Fringepaths and more efficient paperwork. The same is happening on the other IDA worlds. This makes attacks by Fringe pirates very worrisome. Convoys hijacked or even delayed as little as 12 hours can have terrible repercussions. The real threat is the possibility of the Mellor realizing the precarious nature of the situation and taking advantage of it. Simply attacking enough convoys or using suspicion of piracy by another IDA member could throw whole worlds thrown into chaos and war.

The Role of the Heroes

Exploration is still one of the key roles of the IDETs but many times in this era, they will be called upon to guard Platforms or protect shipments of supplies. From the free elite, the Fringeworthy have been reduced to the pack mules that keep the bread coming into the house. The state is precarious and the Fringeworthy know that right now, the world cannot survive without their help. Until a balance is achieved where the member worlds of the IDA have enough control over their natural drives and enough supplies to maintain themselves through a temporary blockade, the life of the Fringeworthy is going to be more guard duty and less explorer.

Campaign Traits

The IDA is well aware of how dangerous the situation is. They also are the only ones who know about the threat of the Mellor. This information has not been passed on to the general population for fear that it would cause mass hysteria. The last thing a world full of people just beginning to trust each other needs is a reason to start suspecting their neighbor is a xenocidal, shape-shifting beast bent on wiping out all races but its own. All IDETs will be given rotating shifts so that they can still do some exploration but will be required to do guard duty at least

50% of the time they are on the Fringepaths. To this end they will be well armed and requests for weapons will not be delayed by red tape or counseled against as possibly making a bad first impression. In an effort to prevent any misunderstandings between races that could also be guarding convoys of needed supplies, the IDETs will try to incorporate as many mixed race teams as possible. The standing order is “only fire when fired upon”.

Background

Up until now, being Fringeworthy has been exciting, sometimes dangerous and often really cool. At this point in history however, it has been explained to the teams just how important the flow of supplies to the IDA worlds is. They have been made aware of the consequences of any disruption in that flow. All the teams are feeling a little put upon but they all realize how important they have become. Until a good buffer is achieved between the have and the need, the Fringeworthy may be all that stands between peace and global war. To this end all Fringeworthy are now considered even more valuable. No one is expendable and no one is to be lost on a mission if there is any way to avoid it. All teams are on maximum alert and severe penalties will be applied to any member, regardless of rank, if they are found to not be following the new safety regulations. The word is "if your armor chafes, pad it. Just don't get caught not wearing it."

The World

It is a very dangerous time; a lot like the Cold War. Every group of Fringeworthy met on the paths may be viewed with suspicion unless they are recognized as members or friends. The IDA will be mixing teams from many worlds to keep the possibility of misunderstandings to a minimum. On the outside of every mission is the possibility of an attack by the newly discovered Fringe Pirates and the slowly encroaching Mellor Menace. The teams are more likely to shoot and ask questions later and that has to be kept to a minimum.

Key Concepts

With the increasing flow of supplies from the Farm Alternates and the increased security on these missions, the Fringe Pirates may attempt to move in on worlds that the IDA cannot properly protect with their numbers spread so thin. The Mellor may be watching and waiting for the opportunity to interrupt a convoy or gain passage on one and then infiltrate the world the convoy is supplying.

The New Commonwealth: 120+ years in the future

The Fringepaths were discovered on Earth Prime more than 120 years ago. In that time, the world has moved on. It has grown into what it should be; a member of an expanding community of worlds where want and need and hate and envy are words that have been shed from the common people's experience. The newly formed community of universes suffered bumps and bruises along the way, but that is all behind them now. The Mellor regrettably, have been destroyed. The Keegak are no more. The new Commonwealth numbers nearly a hundred member worlds and all are being brought up to an equal level of technology. Contact has been made with several worlds that were members of the original Tehrmelern Commonwealth and they are eager to share in the prosperity such an arrangement provided.

Campaign in Brief

This is a foreseeable future for the people of the IDA. The Mellor War is over. The Third Keegak betrayal was exposed and this time, there were no gentle Tehrmelern to prevent the genocide that followed. But that was decades ago. The new commonwealth is slowly contacting more worlds and gaining more understanding of the Tehrmelern Technology. Thanks to the hard work of Schmert and his clan of faithful engineers, the Fringepaths are nearly repaired. Tehrmelern are rarely seen anymore and it is suspected that Schmert's people, their work nearing completion, may be moving on to a private location where they can take a well earned rest. The new commonwealth is still centuries away from understanding or duplicating the technology of the Tehrmelern and even further away from discovering the true purpose of the Fringepaths; but that is not to say they haven't made advances on their own. While nowhere near the advancement of the Tehrmelern, the commonwealth has developed some simple organic technology that functions while on the Fringepaths. They will have access to nanotechnology that will extend lives and repair cellular damage due to age or disease. While humans

still don't know what makes a person Fringeworthy or not and research is still being done in this area, the actual mechanism is no longer needed. It has become common practice to give all children born, low rank Crystal Keys as birthing gifts. These are "Fostered" until the crystal glows in the child's presence. At which time, it is given to a new parent's child for "Fostering". This has had the effect of increasing the number of Fringeworthy in the population to almost 30%. The work is promising and now quite practical. In less than a century, the trait may be present in all living humans.

The Role of the Heroes

New worlds are still being contacted. The Traditional roles are still present since no one knows what they will encounter out there but some new roles have arrived. Contact Specialist, Diplomat and Fringe Technician have been added to the list. The Contact Specialist has the job of studying the information gathered by the many Observers and deciding what would be the best way to bring the new world into the fold or if such an action is even possible. The Commonwealth council would have approved all this in advance but they still have to send someone out, eminently trained in all the arts of knowing who to contact and when to make such an approach. Such skills were deemed necessary when several truly disastrous meetings were attempted and whole IDET teams were summarily executed or lost for years. While contact with the first members of the IDA was successful, looking back on the methods used and the results obtained, it has been suggested that the first IDET explorers were born under very fortunate stars.

The Diplomat is that role who visits other worlds that are aware of the Fringepaths and the New Commonwealth but have chosen not to join. Relations have to be kept with such worlds and boundaries set for expansion since they have as much right to use the Fringepaths as any other sentient. They would maintain embassies on such planets and provide legal advice and council to commonwealth explorers, traders, tourists, immigrants and emigrants.

The Fringe Technician is the person who has devoted his life to knowing all that is currently known about the Fringepaths and the Tehrmelern's Technology. While they actually only know a fraction of what is really out there to discover, they have been invaluable in developing new technology to work on the paths and are usually the ones an IDET teams calls when they have a problem with a portal or a new piece to Tehrmelern tech they need to understand and use. If there are 100 levels to Fringe Tech, they have obtained 10, which is respectable, since the average Fringeworthy has 1.

Campaign Traits

A new "Golden Age" is upon the IDA and this can make people believe that nothing can go wrong. History has shown humanity again and again that "those who fail to learn from it are doomed to repeat it forever". While PCs will have access to a very high level of technology, they will also have to deal with more issues than who has the biggest gun. BFG9000 notwithstanding, there is always someone out there with a bigger gun and less qualms about using it. There is also the possibility of a confrontation with another "New Commonwealth". It has been less than 150 years since the Fringepaths were discovered and yet there were already Fringepirates within a decade of that date. They had to come from somewhere. Who is out there and what have they been building all this time? There is also to consider the Original Tehrmelern who left the current Fringepaths to create another one of their own. They could have arrived at their new Promised Land 40 years ago. Let us not forget that they once went to war against their own people just because of competition within their own sphere of expertise. Will they truly ignore all that is being done with their former creation or will they look in on us from time to time, hopefully not resenting what they see; that we have made it work where they could not.

Background

The New Commonwealth is upon us all. Everyday the Fringepaths become more integral to the continued existence of the worlds making up the IDA. From the few surviving members of the Old

Commonwealth a very harsh lesson has been learned; “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket!” While Fringetech has enabled all the member worlds to achieve the level of technology and comfort they wish, it has not halted the exploration into other sciences. The Fringepaths made it simple to build bases on or in orbit of several planets in the solar systems of the primes but from there, colonies were established that have become safety valves for overpopulation and isolationists. The Non-Fringeworthy had to take the old “across-normal-space” method to get there but they are now self-sufficient and trade goods with their parent worlds. Every colony does it’s best to rely on the Fringepaths as little as possible lest they suffer the death the Old Commonwealth did when the Fringepaths were unexpectedly cut off.

The World

Life is good. More people are born or become Fringeworthy every year. The IDA has all the components of a newly birthed empire. Will it stay benevolent or will it begin to exploit nearer, less developed, worlds because the need for materials outweighs the cost of transporting from further alternates? How long this golden age will last is anyone’s guess, but Schmert will be watching to see what happens.

Key Concepts

Soon all the Fringepaths will be restored and the New Commonwealth can truly begin to function as the old did. The real question is will Schmert and his brethren allow it to get that far? Will he truly share technology that is so far ahead of the human race; with them on an equal footing? Because that is what is necessary to bring the higher levels of the Fringetech online. Schmert is immortal and has had a long time to think about what he would do when the Fringepaths are fully repaired. Has he learned from the mistakes of his people?

Whenever anyone visits a historical alternate they expect to find huge changes, but what if the changes were minor? Could you conceivably meet yourself with only a few differences in personality or personal history?

Adventure Hooks

A group of IDET explorers visit an unexplored world only to be either warmly welcomed as old friends or hostilely driven off as worst enemies and discover that while they themselves have never been here, someone masquerading as them has. This is not just a group who is falsely representing IDET but a group of actual doppelgangers who have had interaction with the people of this world (positive or negative). Somewhere off the beaten path is a universe of Earth Prime alternates that are so close to the original that they could and have been mistaken for the other. What are their motivations and goals? They obviously have some variation of IDET on their world but what are its goals and how long has it been in operation?

TECHNOLOGY

Be very careful how fast you release new technology into the campaign. Many teams enjoy the challenge of working with limited resources and applying ingenuity. It will take time to assimilate any technology. A technologically advanced trading partner who is aware of Fringespace may quickly become Earth’s worst competitor.

One technique is to provide artifacts that are so highly advanced that they cannot be reproduced until the IDA progresses a few tech levels. If the majority of high tech is introduced in this fashion, the players will be frustrated when the IDA removes these items from the team so scientists on Earth Prime can investigate. This is a common complaint when crystals are found.

Map out a timetable for useful tech and the consequences of its introduction so it can be a known aspect of adventure planning. If you run a technology or artifact hunting campaign, advance the campaign timeline more quickly so the basic tech and spin-off possibilities have time to express themselves in the campaign history and in social and political changes as well.

PORTAL AVAILABILITY

While the ability to lock portals has been in all prior editions of the game, the extensive degree of lockdown is new. This was done for three reasons:

- Hatsumi Base is the least desirable of all the surface portals due to the hostile environment of the Antarctic. Most of the military bases nearby are evacuated during the winter months. Building a large base requires that there be no other alternative. Even so, the best plan would be to supply it from friendly Fringe worlds. Once the other portals become available, operations will be shifted operations to those bases and Hatsumi base will be marginalized. Therefore, in the standard campaign, only one Prime portal is not locked down: Hatsumi base.

Besides the tradition of Hatsumi Base being the first and main IDE team embarkation point, it is a very cool place to start an adventure. It is in a bleak, yet beautiful, inhospitable land. The base is surrounded by masses of moving, cracking, crushing sheets of ice that hides a technological marvel: the electrostatic force dome that houses the portal in a building that reeks of antiquity. Explorers travel down an vertical shaft descending into the dome, hearing the ice sighing, rumbling, and crackling like a living thing. As cool as all this is, it would not be realistic or practical if another portal was available to UNIDA.

- The Rabina Sand Sea Portal is a problem portal that can easily kill a number of explorers before they abandon attempts to transit safely. Locking it down until Hatsumi base boasts a fully equipped hospital and burn ward is a kindness those players will appreciate.

Likewise, other problem portals on other platforms can be quarantined until the team is able to handle them. This is no insult. Early teams will be poorly equipped and hampered by a lack of basic understanding of Fringespace.

- If only one or two portals are available per platform, teams will be more spread out and self-reliant. The GM will not have to constantly track the actions of teams the next portal over on a platform, effectively running two or more adventures at the same time – unless she so desires. Later, as higher-level security crystals are found, portals can be opened near Earth Prime instead of an ever-widening frontier as teams seek new portals to explore. Without this lockdown, the GM will have to prepare 8 or more adventures for each session, just in case the team decides they want to give the portal next door a try. There are a number of “portal map” products available from Tri Tac Games. If you decide to use them, you can make available only the ones you find interesting instead of having to slavishly follow the published layout.

Keeping the majority of portals locked down will let you, the GM, control where and when the players travel to and what worlds they get to explore. You must be very careful to not release high level crystals too early in the campaign or the pathways will be wide open.

OLD COMMONWEALTH

Since the collapse of the Commonwealth, many worlds have rebuilt, collapsed, and rebuilt again. The Mellor destroyed most full-member worlds. The second tier members with client status had the best chance of hanging on to a remnant of civilization and recovering.

Some have turned isolationist and will treat any offer of inter-world cooperation with suspicion and hostility. If they even remember the Commonwealth, they will remember it as that which betrayed them, brought suffering, despair, even genocide.

Others have ventured out on the Fringepaths – for conquest. Entire worlds may be consumed of resources and tribute in an empire of a few dozen nodes. IDET should be very careful. The empire may know the nature of Fringspace far better than they do.

There will be those worlds that pine for the old days of comfort and wonders. IDET will find valuable allies if they can offer aid and generous trading terms. Many secrets lay waiting in long forgotten relics of the old age.

Worlds of the Fringe

There are many worlds on the Fringepaths. Most are variations of Earth, though there are the other worlds, such as the Pokiwols and Otherplaces. Consider this a guide to all the different worlds that you and your players can encounter.

ALTERNATE WORLDS

Alternate worlds are different versions of Earth, many of which were empty of any sentient life, but others have sentient life of all types. The Differences range from worlds where intelligent dinosaurs rule the Earth to worlds where man is still a nomadic hunter-gatherer. Some are former Tehrmelern utility worlds. Even fewer are former Tehrmelern Prime worlds. With the exception of Otherplaces, all Alternates in a node share the same physical laws as the Prime.

OTHER EARTHS

Technically, every Prime or Alternate world you will visit will be an alternate version of Earth Prime, but when we refer to Other Earths, we are specifically mean worlds that the Tehrmelern never manipulated or radically changed. There may be an old original Mellor in residence on this alternate, or perhaps there never was one at all. An important distinction needs to be made between **Alternate Earths** and **Parallel Earths**.

Alternate Earths

The definition of Alternate Earths defines how each are an alternative version of Earth Prime. An Alternative Earth is a branch of Earth Prime's timeline, and every Alternate Earth in that timeline is related to each other or shares a common point of divergence somewhere in the past.

Parallel Earths

A Parallel Earth is a self-contained universe that coexists [in parallel](#) with Earth Prime. It has its own alternate versions diverging off of an entirely separate timeline. While a Parallel world might look like an alternate version of Earth Prime, there are clues to it being a parallel version of Earth Prime:

- Changes in geography, such as no American continents or Central America, which should lead to radical changes in climate and history, instead do not change the course of history of Europe, Asia, and Africa up until an expedition ventures out into the ocean.
- What looks like a normal point of divergence far enough back in time that there should be no chance of anyone from the present time existing, has in fact many individuals who should never have been born. For example: New Amsterdam and the New Netherlands are not turned over to the British 1674. However people like Richard Nixon, Abraham Lincoln, and Teddy Roosevelt exists or existed when they should never have been born.
- Magic works on this world, with or without Earth Prime culture. The Bureau 13 world is a Parallel world because of this. But so is the *Lord of the Rings*, the tales of King Arthur, and other fantasy stories.
- Physics operates differently on this world. Things that shouldn't be able to function as they do, typify this version of Parallel Earths. Britannia Earth Prime is an example of this.
- Many of the Toon worlds fall into this category as well.
- Then there are those worlds where Narrative is a force of nature. That is to say, the world is a fictional place made real, but the needs of the plot and story drive what happens.

These worlds can be quite dangerous for the Fringeworthy, especially when they become the focus of a story.

Parallel Earths are from different Multiverses than Earth Prime's. The exact number of Parallel Earths is unknown, as some hide their inconsistency quite well, so as a GM, it is really up to you to decide if a world is an Alternate Earth or Parallel Earth.

Alternate/Parallel World Types

The following are the general types of alternate worlds that you might encounter. Due to the nature of Parallel Earths, they can also resemble these types of worlds as well. For brevity, we refer to the types as an "Alternate".

Alternate Historical:

The majority of the worlds that IDET teams encounter are variations on [Humanity's Earth's](#) history. Present day Earth, but with different people as Secretary General of the UN, dead rock stars who are still alive, or worlds where China had colonized the New World, the Inca empire beat back the Spanish, or where Rome was nothing more than a minor city state in the Persian Empire. Cultures, mindsets, even technology can be different on these worlds.

Some of these worlds are temporally retarded or temporally advanced. One of Earth Prime's alternate worlds, Rebellion America, is temporally retarded by 140 years. Temporally advanced worlds are very rare, and typically are very advanced by hundreds if not thousands of years, but may only be a few years in the future. –Scientist are reasonably certain the pathways cannot connect to the past or future of Earth Prime, as this will cause all sorts of paradoxes and time-like loops that could damage the Fringe system; fairly certain, anyway.

Alternate Evolutional:

Almost as prevalent as Alternate Historical worlds, on these worlds, nature has taken a side step and Neanderthals rule the Earth or maybe intelligent Rats. The creatures in the Precambrian era that lead to vertebrates die out and invertebrates, such as the Dimixi, rule the world. These worlds can even be uninhabitable by any oxygen-breathing creature, as plants never evolve and pond scum rules the oceans of the world or creatures who breathe methane inhabit it.

Alternate Geological/Climatic:

These worlds are where some geologic or climatic change alters the very face of the Earth. These two kinds of changes are forever linked together. An ice age in the 15th century, will not only change [ing](#) history, it would also change the shape of mountains, rivers, and continents. –If the Indian subcontinent never crashes into the Asian continent, then [the](#) Himalayas are never formed, which in turn keeps North Africa green. India stays an island continent and history is completely different.

Alternate Astrophysical:

These are the worlds that Earth might have been. Everything from Earth in orbit about a binary star system, to the very rare "No Earths", where portals are mounted on an asteroid that happens to be floating about where Earth should have been. Typically these [are Earths that Earths](#) formed within plus or minus a million miles of Earth Prime's orbit about the Sun. The Sun doesn't change, but the solar system will be radically altered. Differences can range from a smaller Earth with no moon, to a Mars Earth, to a super Jovian inside of Venus's orbit.

Tehrmelern Commercial and Utility Worlds

These are the worlds that the Tehrmelern used to help run their commonwealth. **W**hole worlds that were used for farming, for food storage, or for mineral exploitation. -Other races of the commonwealth used these worlds for industrial uses, both light and heavy industry. -Finally there are the Tehrmelern distribution centers, places where the Tehrmelern and other highly advanced commonwealth cultures traded with the younger commonwealth cultures.

Gathering World

These worlds vary from places where the highest form of life is a jellyfish, to pastoral worlds that are used as giant grazing ranges for many kinds of animals. These are the worlds that the Tehrmelern and other commonwealth cultures exploited for their easy to get resources. Some of these worlds were rendered uninhabitable by the extraction of these resources, while others are still habitable and in operation.

Gathering worlds run by the Tehrmelern are almost always habitable, except for a few that were already lifeless to begin with. The Tehrmelern husbanded their worlds carefully, and many of their worlds are still in operation today. On some, mega fauna like mammoths, mastodons, and giant sloths still roam the countryside, tended by that other Tehrmelern creation: the Qellor. Qellor are biological robots created by the Tehrmelern to handle most mundane tasks, and the Qellor can be easily updated and modified for other jobs.

The state of commonwealth controlled gathering worlds varies from worlds maintained just like the Tehrmelern maintain theirs, to strip-mined worlds that are polluted, destroyed and extremely toxic.

When generating Alternate Worlds, when you roll a Gathering World, roll a d20. If you roll a 14 or better then the resulting world is uninhabitable.

Farming World

Entire worlds given over to farming and ranching, these were the breadbaskets of the ancient commonwealth. Row upon row of vegetables, grains, fruits, nuts, and even the unique Tehrmelern meat trees, just one of these worlds produces enough food to feed the population of Prime ten times over. Tending these farms are the Qellor, millions of them, maintaining, harvesting, and mulching the rotted food back into the soil. And these worlds really beg the question, "How do you move that much food through the pathways?"

Food Processing

The first explorers to visit one of these worlds had a hard time figuring out what they were used for. The massive biomachines created by the Tehrmelern cover the world. Typically, these worlds are in the midst of a global ice event, where glaciers cover the entire planet. Temperatures hover between -95°C (-140°F) and -30°C (-22°), which are perfect for Tehrmelern food storage technology. The biomachines process raw foodstuffs into various forms of processed food, while in other storage areas the foodstuffs are stored as is.

Unfortunately the last time these facilities were used was during the start of the Mellor War, so even with advance storage technology, 90% of all the food is inedible. Only the highly processed food for lesser commonwealth worlds has maintained its nutritional value. Packets of pot noodles and Tehrmelern's version of Spam are the only edible things on these worlds.

Industrial

These worlds are never Tehrmelern in origin, but are the domain of the different Commonwealth cultures that made use of lifeless, barren versions of Earth for industrial uses. Approximately 70% of these worlds could be considered to be light industrial: Small complexes geared toward specialty manufacturing. These worlds belong to the more advanced commonwealth cultures, which have learned to keep their footprint on a world to a minimum.

The other 30% are massive, heavy industrial complexes, spanning the globe. These worlds were run by the younger Commonwealth cultures, which were still learning the ropes and the new technologies of the older cultures. Many of these worlds are heavily polluted, but since they were already on the way to either a Mars like climate or a Venus one, it was not an issue.

Distribution Worlds

These worlds come in two types: ***Small distribution centers*** and ***Expo Worlds***.

Small Distribution Centers

Distribution centers were where the Tehrmelern and the more advanced Commonwealth cultures would gather and trade with the younger cultures. Goods, devices, and other items would be on display and various forms of exchange would be worked out between the traders and the goods delivered to their final destination. Some of these worlds were abandoned and are a treasure-trove of high, medium and low technology. However, most of these worlds were ground zero for Mellor infestations and lie in ruins.

Expo Worlds

Expo Worlds make distribution centers look like garage sales. Entire worlds given over to the shameless display of the highest of the highest technology, these worlds are prizes to behold when found in any condition. They are also always prime platform worlds. These were the places where the Tehrmelern and the most advanced of the Commonwealth cultures would gather and show off their latest feats of technological prowess. From the latest in biotechnology, nanotechnology, even femtotechnology to concepts that are beyond understanding by humanity at this time. Every one of the Expo Worlds had a Mellor infestation, and every one of them stamped that infection out of existence, but not without some collateral damage. There is a 5% chance that what was used to defeat the Mellor is still active and dangerous. This can range from nanoterrors to bioweapons. Enter an Expo World with caution.

Military Worlds

Before the Tehrmelern abandoned the Fringepaths, they began to relearn the ancient art of warfare and create a military to fight the Mellor threat. With little knowledge of fighting or military tactics, they applied their intellect to create both a defense and offense to battle the Mellor.

The war hit so hard and so fast, billions of Tehrmelern were killed before they were able to fight back. However, years of peaceful living made this very difficult. Their first attempts at combating the Mellor were non-lethal in nature. Unfortunately the Mellor considered non-lethal as a joke and used it to torment their former masters before killing them.

The Tehrmelern scoured the Fringes for weapons from many of the warlike races that they had quarantined from the Commonwealth. They tested, reworked, improved and created weapons of mass destruction that horrified them.

In the end, these weapons were considered a last resort and they used their own technology to create the ultimate bioweapon, one that would definitely defeat the Mellor. No one knows what

happened to that weapon, it obviously didn't work. The Tehrmelern were forced to leave the Fringepaths. It must be noted that most of the Tehrmelern weapons found were not designed to be used by the Tehrmelern themselves. It is speculated that the Tehrmelern created a warrior race to do its dirty work, but no evidence of such a race's existence has been found.

Note: These worlds are almost always locked down with a security level crystal key, types 7 through 11. The most dangerous worlds are always locked down with a rainbow crystal key.

Manufacturing

These automated factory worlds were used to produce the weapons the Tehrmelern hoped to use in their battle against the Mellor. The types and kinds of weapons produced on these worlds varied and only a few examples can be found.

Weapons Storage

These worlds are the high security weapons, ammunition, and hardware storage sites. Everything on these worlds is locked down using crystal key types 9 to 11. This includes some of the weapons themselves.

Weapons Testing

Dead or uninhabited worlds turned over the testing of weapon systems and capabilities. Many of these worlds are mildly radioactive from the fallout. On some, the testing fields are still littered with half finished or abandoned projects and materials. Some of which are still active, just waiting for a target.

Training Centers

Theses are the worlds the Tehrmelern and their allies, (and maybe their artificial warrior race), learned the ways of battle and war. Barracks upon barracks dot the land, along side training areas and hospitals. Some training areas are fully functional urban areas. Others are more primitive villages and towns. All show signs of use: scars from weapon's fire and other modes of destruction. It is suspected that the last of the Tehrmelern operated from these worlds, holding back the Mellor horde.

Recreational Worlds

The Tehrmelern had an extensive number of worlds that were set aside for recreation. These alternate Earths included entire worlds that had been terraformed into vast parks that were tended by the Qellor, as well as nature preserves for unusual forms of life and for some truly alien life that was brought in from the stars.

Nature Preserve

These worlds have been set aside to protect fragile ecologies or animal species. Many of these preserves are of such unprecedented beauty that the Tehrmelern wished to keep them this way for future generations.

Nature Park

Entire worlds made over into parks for the enjoyment of all races. These were safe, quiet, and well managed worlds designed for recreational fun. These worlds are dotted with picnic and camping areas, with scattered shelters or the ubiquitous Tehrmelern house trees that function like apartments. The Qellor are present on these worlds, patiently maintaining them in the state that their masters had decreed.

Technical Parks

Second to their love of all things nature, the Tehrmelern loved the concept of the amusement park. –From gigantic world-covering complexes, to their Pocket Stop Playgrounds, these technological wonders were the showplaces of fun and ingenuity. It must be noted that even though these complexes appear to be mechanical in nature, once you delve inside, you find biomachines running the works. It seems the Tehrmelern got a thrill from the appearance of riding in machines, not biological constructs.

Arcades

The sense of community and family were very important to the Tehrmelern, so they created worlds that would call them to work together in fun amusements and engaging learning centers. Many of the amusements require participation by everyone and make use of various imaging and sensory technologies to provide absolute realism to the participants. –Many of these complexes are still operational, and are still looking to amuse someone. But be warned. One species amusement may be another's bafflement. Many of these machines are totally incomprehensible by Primers and they don't often come with instructions books

Home Worlds

Across the Fringepaths, the Tehrmelern left the remains of their settlements. These settlements varied from their popular house trees to towering bioconstructs, nearly a mile tall and capable of housing a million people. Along side these wonders of bioengineering are the crystal towers of the other commonwealth cultures. –Nearly all Tehrmelern worlds have been abandoned, while some of the commonwealth worlds may still have inhabitants.

Individual Settlement

Typically this is a single structure as simple as a small shed or shelter or as complex as a massive 150-room house tree waiting to take care of its residents.

Small Village

A small cluster of buildings consisting of between 6 and 20 structures, these are in close proximity to each other. These villages may a street of sorts, or just overgrown weeds between the buildings. Some are of Tehrmelern manufacture others are commonwealth structures. Despite their simple exteriors, these are high tech structures and may still be functioning after all these years.

Settlements

These settlements consist of a number of buildings from a modest 50 to 100 buildings, to large settlements of up to 500 or so buildings. Most of these (85%) consist of the smaller number of buildings, though almost all are high tech wonders of automation or bioengineering, depending on whether they are commonwealth settlements or Tehrmelern ones.

Long Settled World

These are the former home worlds of the Tehrmelern and the commonwealth cultures. All the Tehrmelern worlds are empty and abandoned, while many of the commonwealth worlds are still inhabited, most of them are still rebuilding from the Mellor Wars. Many of these worlds are eager to hear about what is going on out on the Fringepaths. Some will be more than eager to get their hands on any crystal keys the IDET team may have.

Other Areas

These are worlds that can defy normal expectations. Some are the shattered remains of a home world, leveled by forces unthinkable by man, to places where the very laws of nature may not apply.

Battlegrounds

The enormity of the Mellor War is what first hits you when you visit a world that was decimated by the unholy forces of war that were unleashed there. These worlds are dying; barely anything is left alive, though in some pockets, there is some life struggling back. Masses of equipment and ruins dot the landscape as the combined might of the Tehrmelern and the commonwealth fought off the Mellor controlled armies.

The oxygen content is on the low side for these worlds, and radiation is still an issue, especially where multiple gigaton warheads were used.

Pocket Stops/Pokiwols

~~Why We don't know why~~ the Tehrmelern created the Pocket Stop, also known as a "Pokiwol" or "Pocket World", ~~is unknown~~. These small, enclosed universes are rarely more than a few miles across, though some have been encountered that were up to 40 miles across. Some are globes, some are valleys, and others are open plains that "wrap" around. A few have one-way portals. That is, the portal you use to enter the Pocket Stop cannot be used to leave the Pocket Stop. You have to use a different portal to return to the Fringepaths.

Pocket Stops are the rest stops of the pathways. Through a minor design flaw and lack of maintenance, Pocket Stops tend to collect living and inanimate objects from nearby worlds. A prime example is the Earth Prime Pocket Stop at 0,6.

Otherplaces

Of all the worlds that are part of the Fringepaths, *Otherplaces* are the oddest. Why the Tehrmelern connected to these worlds is unknown, as *Otherplaces* are universes where what we understand as the normal laws of nature, science, religion, what have you, do not apply. Many are worlds where M.C. Escher would feel comfortable. Some of these *Otherplaces* may temporarily conform to the expected natural laws, but then slowly begin to slip back to their true aspects.

Luckily, the portal will encapsulate Fringeworthy and their equipment within a personal space-time bubble. These bubbles act as an interface between the Fringeworthy and the outside world, allowing them to breathe and talk to each other. But these bubbles have a limited duration, the length of which is determined by how much the *Otherplace* deviates from normal laws of nature. This can vary from only an hour or so, to several days. When the bubbles start deteriorating, the person or object inside will start adapting to the local physical laws, which is almost always fatal.

UNITED NATIONS EARTH, AKA EARTH PRIME

Earth Prime is our Earth, up until the Portal base was discovered in Antarctica.

PRIME PLATFORM

Portal 1: White Island, Antarctica. Status: Open, Ring Station

In the early years, this is the home of the United Nations Interdimensional Exploration Base, Antarctica, also known as Hatsumi base. All missions were controlled from this base year round, though

only during the Antarctic summer where missions launched from the base. During the fall and winter seasons, a skeleton crew and company of UN troops are stationed here guarding the portal.

After the other portals are unlocked and opened, the base is turned into a research and quarantine base. It also becomes a major center of supply for the Antarctic continent. Supplies and gear are shipped over the platform from warmer portals and then distributed across the frozen continent.

In its second year of operation, Director Borodin procures a “failsafe” device: A 10-kiloton Russian nuclear weapon. It is placed near the center of the electrostatic dome and can be detonated either by the commander of troops stationed in the dome, or by a deadman switch located in the mission control hut on White Island.

Portal 2: Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, Bahamas. Status: Locked/Damaged (Sealed), Warp

The Freeport warp is sealed at the highest level. Even a rainbow key cannot unlock this portal. According to Schmert “Dangerous is that entry, not safe for common gentry. Do not pass through that spinning gate, or you friends will refer to you as forever late.” Eventually the ring station will be repaired and passage through that gate will be available. (See Fringeworthy Portals Book 4 for more information)

The Freeport ring station is buried under tons of sediment, where an ancient earthquake collapsed the shore of the island thousands of years ago. When activated, the warp will appear on the shore of some the most expensive real estate in the Bahamas.

Portal 4: Manuel Peak, Richardson Mountains, Yukon, Canada. Status, Locked, Ring Station

Sealed in an artificial cavern 100’ under Manuel Peak, at 5,550’ in elevation, it is the highest ring station on Earth. Located 60 miles north of the Dempsey Highway in the Yukon, its sheer isolation makes it the second quarantine and research facility for UNIDA. There is no exit from the cavern, the walls and floors are made of fused silica: yards thick, black obsidian glass.

There were plans to put in an exit, but because the cavern is hermetically sealed, it is the perfect place to study various biological entities. It is also the only base considered secure enough to hold an infected Mellor. A small, 1 kiloton “decontamination” device is located in the cavern. It is sufficient to vaporize any known or unknown biological entity.

Portal 5: Isla de Pascua (Easter Island), Chile, Status: Locked, Ring Station

Also known as Rapa Nui, the ring station is located in a lava tube complex that is only accessible at neap low tide at the southwestern end of the island near the ancient village of Orongo. The extinct volcano Rano Kau created the lava tubes. There are no Moai associated with this structure.

When this portal is opened and it’s location determined, the Chilean government graciously leases the section of the island to the UN for 10 billion dollars a year. Since Isla de Pascua is also a UNESCO World Heritage site, UNIDA and UNESCO worked together on how best to exploit this site.

Because the island is so isolated and has no facilities for large cargo vessels or infrastructure to support such, the ring station is kept in a locked condition, but UN troops are stationed, along with Chilean armed forces. This portal is being kept in reserve if anything were to happen to the other operational portals. Politically, this is probably the only use this ring station will ever see. Its location is in a very sensitive and important religious location for the island’s natives and public opinion is such that, all the other portals would have to be destroyed before this portal could ever be used.

Portal 7: Odo Island, part of the Bonin Islands, Japan. Status: Locked, Warp

The ring station lies at the bottom of the Philippine Sea, in the Shikoku Basin, 40 miles east of Odo Island. The basin has always been underwater, therefore there might be remains of a base around the Ring Station.

Odo Island is home to a fishing village and several small farms. It is also incredibly mountainous as it is a dormant volcano. The volcano last erupted in 1054 and did massive damage to a portion of the island. Local legends say that a monster lives in the mountain and it occasionally rumbles into life, belching fire and lava.

Due to the unsuitability of the island's terrain, a massive floating island was constructed off the southern shore of the island, and the warp moved onto the structure. Officially named United Nations Interdimensional Exploration Base, Odo Island, the large artificial structure gained the nickname of "Monster Island" or "Kaijū Shima" in Japanese (怪獣島) by the local workers.

UNIEBOI becomes the base of operations for Chinese, Indian, Siberian, Japanese, Indonesian, Southeast Asian, and Australian based IDE teams.

Portal 8: Cherskiy Range, Sakha Republic, Russia. Status: Locked, Ring Station

Located at approximately 66°N, 141°E in the Cherskiy Range, the ring station lies inside a cavern at the head of a glacial valley, and it is located over a hundred miles north from the M56 Lena Highway.

Portal 10: North Sea. Status: Locked, Warp

This ring station is now in the middle of the North Sea, located in what was a Paleolithic community, buried under several feet of silt. When activated, the Warp will appear on Terschelling Island, part of the West Frisian Islands, Netherlands. The nearest city is West-Terschelling, a small village of 2580 people.

Portal 11: Rebiana Sand Sea, Libya. Status: Locked/Damaged, Ring Station

Buried under the sand dunes, is the Rebiana Ring Station. When it is uncovered, either by excavation, or when the winds move the sand dunes off of it, it will be plainly obvious that the ring is damaged. It wobbles visibly, five inches back and forth. If activated, on the platform all the pylon lights will flash. Anyone foolish enough to step through the portal will have a 1 in 6 chance of not transiting to the world side of the portal.

However, there is a 100% chance of the following: The person will take 3d6 stun damage and then catch fire, taking 1d10 points of fire damage. You cannot protect against this damage, it bypasses all armor and protection. This is a hard fire to put out, as the very fat in the body is burning. Every round the person is on fire, roll a d6. On a 6, the fire burns out. On a 1, it increases the damage by +1 the next round. Rolling on the ground will give the extinguishing roll a +1, and if someone uses a fire extinguisher, +3 to the roll. Survivors of this damage will spend several months recuperating in a hospital, or at least a day attached to a Tehrmelern Doc Box.

ALTERNATE PLATFORM

The portals that are locked do not have a description. We are leaving these for the GM to create the world that exists on the other side. Feel free to use your imagination or to use any of the worlds from the Tri Tac Games' Portals books. This is your universe, feel free to populate it however you see fit. It is up to you, the GM, to decide when each of these portals can be unlocked and their contents discovered. Remember, you need a crystal key of the correct security level or higher to unlock a Portal.

Portal 1: Locked

Portal 2: Rebellion America: Franklin, West Virginia. Status: Open, Ring Station

The Ring Station is in a underground cavern, approximately 200 feet underground, 8 miles north of Franklin, West Virginia, 1870 CE. See "Rebellion America" for more information.

Portal 4: Locked

Portal 5: Locked

Portal 7: Locked

Portal 8: The Junkyard: Status Open, Ring Station

A Ring station opens onto a pokiwol world that is only 40 miles in circumference, 12.6 miles in diameter. This little world is a garbage dump of material from alternate Earths. Filled with ships, aircraft, cars, refrigerators, floppy discs, and just plain rubbish, most things here appear relatively well preserved and may have come many other Earths. See "The Junkyard Pokiwol" for more information.

Portal 10: Locked

Portal 11: The Hunting Lodge: Jungle Region. Status: Open, Ring Station

The Ring Station is located in a patch of jungle on a world that is an Alternate Geological where the world has only a single continent. Initial entry to this world will find "offerings" left by the ramp to the portal. The offerings will consist of food and rocks piled into small pyramids.

Dinosaurs rule this world during the day and by mammals during the night. None of the dinosaurs show anything more than animal intelligence, but among the mammals there are at least one known group of nocturnal proto-humans, the Night Apes. Chimpanzee sized apes, with large eyes and tremendous body strength; they are sapient enough that several have been discovered to be Fringeworthy. However, they are not sapient enough to be trusted with anything more advanced than a rock. Their language is very basic, it contains only about a hundred or so words, but those are sufficient for them to communicate their daily needs and social life.

On Earth Prime, the Fringeworthy Night Apes can communicate in human language the portal gifted them with, but anything more complicated than "Give you food" or "Do not defecate over there" is lost on them.

Under Borodin's orders, a secure facility is built: a fenced in area around the Ring Station that many call the "Hunting Lodge." The lodge is a stopping point for incoming travelers. Plans here involve a security complex and a vehicular center if they can keep the dinosaurs and the Night Apes out of the area.

Oh, and the very large mammal that seems to prowl the jungle at night. Rumor has it that it is monstrous ape, some 15 feet tall, affectionately nicknamed "Kong." So far, no one has ever seen it, just the broken trees and dead Tyrannosaurus Rexes it leaves behind.

ALTERNATE WORLD DESCRIPTIONS

REBELLION AMERICA

Location: Alt 0, 2

Portal Type: Ring Station, Location 38°45'23.24"N, 79°23'55.54"W

Type: World

Atmosphere: Terrestrial

Life: Terrestrial with human civilization

Gravity: 1G

Day: 23 hours, 55 minutes, 57 seconds

Local Year First Explored: 1870 CE

Dominant Language: English with a Southern United States accent with British overtones.

Technology: Local tech to the Ring Station is circa 1830's to 40's. Firearms are ball and cap with cartridges just being introduced in Europe. Medicine is comparable to 1850's American and Europe.

Description: Welcome to a world where some of the people of the Dominion of North America, are eager to be free of colonial rule. Not all of them, of course, just the ones that want to own slaves. Into this world, UNIDA and TÆSS have decided to maintain a strict hands-off policy on, though individual members of both organizations are keen to upset the apple cart.

History of Alt 0,2

It is 1870 and the colonies of the Dominion of North America occupy the eastern portion of North America, from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean, from Florida to Hudson's Bay. The majority of its 100 million inhabitants are steadfast in their loyalty to the Queen-Empress of the United British Empire, Her Imperial Majesty Queen Victoria. The Yanks, as they're affectionately known, revere the memory of the Dominion's founder, Sir Benjamin Franklin, the Dominion's first Governor-General (1776-1783.)

La Republique Louisienne occupies the middle third of North America, stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rio Grande and the Rocky Mountains, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Circle. With 8 million inhabitants, Louisienne is the breadbasket of the continent. A hereditary republic, La Republique Louisienne's current ruler is Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles Bonaparte, the son of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The southwestern quadrant of North America is occupied by El Imperio de México, established in the early 1800s when the Mexico's Viceroy, Crown Prince Ferdinand of Spain, revolted against his father's rule. Aside from the British Empire, Mexico (population 200 million) is the most powerful country in the world. Prior to the mid 19th century Mexico was an almost entirely agricultural nation, and a poor one at that. The discovery in 1849 of the world's largest gold reserve in the northern province of Alta California spurred a wave of industrialization and mass immigration from the Catholic regions of southern and eastern Europe that made Mexico Imperial Britain's most successful competitor.

The northwestern quadrant of North America, extending northwards along the Pacific Coast from Alta California to the Arctic and eastwards to the Rocky Mountains, contains the Archduchy of Novy Rossiya. The current Archduke, Mikhail II, is related to the current Russian Tsar, Alexander II.

History of British North America

London, England, Benjamin Franklin, loyal British subject, is not only successful in negotiating with Parliament in revoking the Stamp Act in 1766, but in preventing them from passing the Declaratory Act as well. Instead he strikes a bargain:

The 13 Colonies will repay the war debt for the French and Indian War over the next ten years. If at the end of those ten years, if there is a portion of the debt is still owed, Parliament can issue a one-time tax to pay off the remainder, with a 10% penalty.

He is able to do this as he had purchased several “rotten boroughs” in Britain, and with them, their members of Parliament. His new mouthpieces are able to convince several influential members of Parliament that it is better to allow the colonies to trade freely, and to use the increased commerce to pay off the colonial debt faster than restricting the colonies to trade only with Britain. He also makes deals with these members that if they invest in certain *good merchant captains*, their returns will more than make up for lost trade. These “good merchant captains” that he pairs the members of Parliament up with turn out to be the most scurrilous of the New England colonies’ smugglers. Evading British trade laws with a MP as your backer, made the profits that they made that much more sweeter.

Selling this deal to the colonies was a bit harder to do. The Continental Congress reconvened and Franklin laid forth the plan that had been proposed by Parliament. Part of the deal was that the Crown reserved the right to appoint a trusted Governor-General of the colonies. This person could be one of the colonials; so various names were drafted and submitted. Franklin managed to be one of the names submitted for approval.

Once back in England, Franklin used his rotten boroughs to make sure he got the appointment. After a majority vote, he returned triumphant as the new Governor-General of British Colonies of North America. Part of the act consolidated all the British colonies under one rule, including the Canadian and Caribbean colonies.

So the Dominion of North American was based on Benjamin Franklin playing with what passed for dirty British politics at the time, using fair means and foul to keep Parliament from angering the colonies, keeping the colonies as part of the Empire, and increasing home rule at the same time. That he also benefited from this deal was incidental. He later became the richest man in the Americas as a result.

Franklin declared Philadelphia as the capital of the new colonial government, and set about creating an organization that would outlast him for years. With the help of his son, William Franklin, they put forth a framework that would later lead to the Dominion of North America years later. In seven short years, he created the British Colonies of North America. Resigning due to ill health, he put forth his son William, as his replacement, to continue on with the good work he started. The Colonial Congress, debated long and hard over this, but in the end, the mantle was passed on to William Franklin, and he became the second Governor-General of the colonies.

To make sure his son kept his leverage, Franklin willed him his fortune and his interest in the rotten boroughs back in England. Franklin died five years later, watching with pride as his son guided the colonies onwards to self-rule. For the next 27 years, William Franklin proved to be a worthy successor to his father, and in 1810, he tendered his resignation to the crown. He also broke with tradition and did not propose his son, William Temple Franklin for the office of Governor-General, primarily because he believed that the colonies should decide for themselves who next to govern them, and secondarily, because his son showed no interest or aptitude for the office.

The next Governor-General put forward by the Colonial Congress is John Quincy Adams. He served for 20 years before resigning, saying, and “This office is a heavy burden. One that a younger man than I would bear with less effort.”

During his tenure, he advanced the colonies and proposed a consolidation of territories, turning the colonies from separate states and into provinces, each with their own governor. The governor for each province is selected by the Governor-General from a raft of nominees put forward by each provincial assembly. He also was instrumental in the purchase of Florida from Spain, and added that benighted land to the Crown’s possessions.

Jason Van Buren became the next Governor General, and it was under his term of office, that the colonies became the semi-autonomous Dominion of North America. This occurred in 1845, and Van Buren served for another 15 years before dying in office of a heart attack.

Alexander Scott Tayler became the new Governor-General in 1860, and it is during his term of office, the Congress of the Dominion elected the first Prime Minister, Henry John Franklin, the great, great, grandson of Benjamin Franklin. He currently serves as Prime Minister of the Dominion of North America in 1870, as does Governor-General Tayler.

Despite the benefits of home rule and more freedoms as a Dominion, there has been trouble from the so-called “Sons of Liberty”. This group was formed by Samuel Adams in 1766, and never disbanded after the British Colonies of North America was founded. They have been agitating for total independence from the Empire, and their more violent members have resorted to terror attacks against any and all targets. The group was outlawed in 1823, but has managed to survive after many attempts by the Crown to eradicate the group.

Recently, the Sons of Liberty have joined forces with individuals the slaveholding provinces, as the British Empire was considering ending slavery on the continent. In 1835, Parliament abolished slavery in the Caribbean colonies, mainly due to the fact that the Church of England was found to own slaves in many Caribbean plantations.

The slaveholding provinces have never trusted Parliament, and rumors abound that an act abolishing slavery completely in the Empire was in consideration in 1870. Of course, any such act would have to be confirmed by Dominion Congress. Unofficial vote tallies indicate that such an act would pass the Congress, thus alarming the more influential slave owners. Talk of Abolition in any of these provinces could get a man lynched. The former governor of the Province of Virginia, James Buchanan, was impeached and removed from office by the provincial assembly, supposedly for malfeasance in office. In reality, Buchanan was a staunch abolitionist, and didn’t care who knew. It was only by dint of his wealth, and surrounding himself with freedmen, did he survive. He moved to the city of Franklin in the Virginia province and settled down to live his life as he saw fit.

History of La Republique Louisienne

After the dreadful harvest of 1789, there is general unrest in France, as the misguided policies of the crown had lead to disastrous results. In 1790, the Assemblée Nationale des Hommes Libres meets in Paris covertly, and plan to address the inequities of life under the rule of royal that is in cahoots with special interests.

In August that year, with grain production still not up to par, the Assemblée Nationale stages a demonstration protesting lack of wheat and bread. Marie Antoinette supposedly makes a fateful statement about the protesters: “They cry that they have no bread. They cry they have no wheat. Let them cry that they have no cake as well!”

La Revolution de la France Libre is a bloody one. Much of the nobility flees France, with several bound for the former French colony of Louisiana. La Nouvelle-Orléans swells with an influx of population. In France, the revolutionary government is formed along lines proposed by a young aristocrat. This aristocrat, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, joined the Assemblée Nationale and became one of influential leaders of the La Republique les Gens de la France.

La Republique was founded on the nascent ideas of socialism as Rouvroy had formulated them. "To each man, according to his wants and needs. No man shall own the land solely. The land is the property of the people of France, and not of one man... So to each man, a share of the land shall be accorded, from which he will do with as he wont... All men should strive for the betterment of his brethren, as they strive for his."

The remaining nobility in France left soon after the formation of the new government. Including certain Corsican noble family...

The young Napoleon Bonaparte could not stomach what had happened to France, and sought solace in the young, thriving city of Nouvelle-Orléans. Here a man could make a name for himself.

With the wholesale exodus of French nobility to former colony, the Spanish crown, wisely decided to cede the land it found unmanageable to the people in residence under the guise of returning it back to the legitimate government of France.

With the British colonies on the one side, and the Spanish ones on the other, the then Duke of Louisiana, decided to consolidate the land "returned" to them. Here the young Napoleon found a place in the Armee de la Louisiane.

The Duke first tried to peacefully annex the various native nations north of Nouvelle-Orléans, but found them quite reluctant to cede their sovereignty. So the Amree was sent north to pacify them. This is where Napoleon became famous as an Indian fighter. He rose through the ranks until he ended up in command of the Armee de la Lousiane.

His greatest achievement was the annexation of the Sioux in 1812. The Armee met a fairly well armed (weapons supplied by British traders in the region) mass of Sioux, lead by Tecumtha. Before engaging in battle, Napoleon requested a parlay with Tecumtha. The two met with their trusted lieutenants and tried to come to some form of agreement, however this was meeting of two indomitable wills. Then Tecumtha proposed that instead of spilling the blood of thousands of men into the Missouri river that the two leaders fight, the winner having dominion over the land and the people.

Napoleon's lieutenants where shocked by this offer, but Napoleon accepted it. "Perhaps this is the way it must be. If I am to risk all to gain all, I should risk my life to save all."

The next day they met in a field with their troops surrounding them. Napoleon was armed with his sabre and main gauche, Tecumtha with a metal-banded war club, spear, and ax. The battle lasted for nearly an hour, both men bloodied and wounded. Napoleon finally disarmed Tecumtha and with his sword at other's neck refused to take the other's life. "To take his life will cheapen it! He fought for what was his and for his people. For this I grant him his life. You Tecumtha are a valiant and brave man. A man I would rather have at my side than as a martyr or spirit, fighting me from the great beyond. Join us in our great Republic, as an equal, and not as a vassal!"

When word of the nearly bloodless conquest of Sioux reached Nouvelle-Orléans, the tale of Napoleon's personal battle grew with the telling. By the time it reached the Duke's ears, the Corsican had fought ten braves with nothing more than a dagger. It had a different effect on other tribes as Napoleon gathered them under his wing with promises of equality and self-rule. "...But not as a separate nation.

The Republic of Louisiana cannot allow separate nations to exist. You are either part of the Republic or you shall no longer exist at all.”

Like a triumphant Caesar, Napoleon returned to Nouvelle-Orléans at a front of an army made up of both French and Native American troops. The crowds were jubilant and the city partied like it never had before. Cries of “Napoleon notre sauveur!” and “Napoleon notre roi!” echoed across the quarters. Something that Napoleon took to heart.

In 1814, he was crowned as the ruler of the Republique de Louisienne. He ruled and defended the Republique from all attempts by the British to conquer it. He ruled the Republique for 25 years until his death in 1839 at the age of 70.

His son, Napoleon Francis Joseph Charles Bonaparte, was crowned as ruler of the Republique and still reigns at the time the portal was found and was 51 years old at the time. The Republique is in an uneasy truce between the Empire of Mexico and the British Empire. It shares control of the Mississippi with the British colonies, but commands the mouth of the Mississippi with its capital city of Nouvelle-Orléans. However, the Mississippi is threatening to change its course and follow the Atchafalaya River, leaving Nouvelle-Orléans on a minor tributary. The crown has ordered that this should not happen and his engineers are working hard to keep the Mississippi river within its present banks.

The population of La Republique Louisienne is 80% Native America, 18% French, and the remaining 2% is distributed between Spanish, English, German, and other European nationals.

Locations near the Portal

Portal Location

The portal is located in a large dome-shaped limestone cave in what would be West Virginia on Earth Prime. The cave is artificially made, and the dome's base is lined with rooms that seem to have been molded from the rock and not carved. The dome is 600 feet wide and 90 feet tall and is 300 feet underground. The surface of the dome is smooth, though it shows signs of stalactite formation. Based on the size of the stalactites, the dome was built approximately 2,000 years ago.

The dome's interior is completely bare, as though all machinery and other equipment had been stripped from the dome and the rooms lining the dome. The rooms lining the dome are of different sizes and some have more rooms molded further into the limestone rock. There are shelves and channels formed into the rock, as well as what looks to be mounting brackets made of corroded steel, the only bits of metal that can be found in the entire dome. There is shaft that leads to the surface to a hidden entrance. The walls of the shaft are perfectly smooth and provide no handholds.

All the rooms were made for a being half as tall as a human being. The rooms are short, only 6' tall, and everything, shelves, doors, and the shelf brackets are all at a height convenient for a being of short stature.

Further investigation yields a chamber with many flights of stairs that lead upwards. The tread of each step is shorter than normal, as though the steps were meant for someone with shorter legs and smaller feet. It will take about half an hour to climb the stairs if the hero pushes it, or an hour if he takes his time.

If he tries to climb the stairs as fast as possible, he must make a Vigor roll. If he fails, he gains a point of fatigue. If he tries to push it on the way back down, he must make an Agility roll, otherwise he will trip and fall down a single flight of stone steps, taking a d4 in damage.

The shaft and stairs lead to small, natural appearing cave, with one end filled with rubble. Clearing the rubble with reveal that the cave on the other side is dank, muddy, cold, and everything is covered in bat guano. But there is a path and it leads to the outside world.

The portal is located in an area that corresponds to the Germany Valley in West Virginia, Earth Prime. The dome is located near the town of Franklin, population 1,200, in the province of Virginia. Franklin is home to McNulty's Tavern, the only tavern in the province that doesn't care about skin color or race. Franklin was founded in 1798, and it is a sleepy little hamlet nestled in the folds of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Chamberlain Plantation

The portal cavern leads to a rocky hillock in the midst of a large cornfield. This field and surrounding thousand acres is the property of one Anston Chamberlain, a very opinionated and bigoted man that ever strode the earth. Chamberlain owns this plantation in County Pendleton, Virginia, along with 200 slaves who work it. He is a cruel man, prone to rages and will not think twice about beating anyone to within an inch of their life. This location makes this a difficult place to sneak past and to the nearby edge of the property.

Anston Chamberlain owns a Chartered Plantation. The governor of the province of Virginia granted the charter and Chamberlain is major producer of feed corn, hard cider, and preserved vegetables for the Virginia Militia. He has a guaranteed minimum price for his crops, but normally sells his crops to the province at market prices. Chamberlain is very rich and very powerful in County Pendleton.

He is also secretly a member of the Sons of Liberty. He's been supplying the local cell of Sons with food and weapons. He knows that his position and wealth shield him from any scrutiny from the Crown.

There are several smaller farms in the same valley as Chamberlain's plantation. His men own some of the farms, others are just family farms, growing crop for the nearby town of Franklin.

Franklin, Virginia

Overland, Franklin is only 8 miles away, but that is up and down hills and through cultivated fields and forests. The fast way there is by s winding country road that passes through a natural cut in the mountains and hills of County Pendleton. It's a 12-mile journey, but if one is eager to help a farmer to load up his wagon with produce, a ride could be had to Franklin.

Franklin is the county seat and has a population of 4,000 people. Franklin is a farm town, with most of the businesses in the town geared toward supporting the local farmers. As it is also the county seat, the local county government is located here as well, such as the Pendleton County Courthouse and the Pendleton County Constabulary. There is a well-appointed library and even a local newspaper, the Daily Franklin News. Prices are all in American Commonwealth dollars, shillings and pennies.

THE JUNKYARD POKIWOL

Location: Alt 0, 8

Type: Pokiwol

Atmosphere: Terrestrial, humidity: 10%

Life: Microbic

Gravity: 1G

Day: 24 hours

Description: IDET 1 first encountered the Junkyard Pokiwol on their first mission. Instead of the lush green land Sayuri Tenuma had remembered, instead were piles of junk and debris drawn from all the near alternate worlds. IDE Team 1 found several interesting artifacts, including an alcoholic beverage that induced Psionic powers when drunk. Fortunately they destroyed all the bottles they had found in a wood yacht not far from the Ring Station.

The gray areas on the map are fairly flat, while the brown regions are covered in debris. The orange regions are fairly new debris, and the yellow regions are very new debris mounds. Each square on this map is 6" across.

This small world is made up entirely of debris and junk from nearby alternate worlds and Earth Prime as well. Things like odd socks, bottles, out of date tech, broken vehicles, sometimes even buildings. How or why this pokiwol collects this material is up for conjecture. Research and observation of how fast new debris appears on the pokiwol estimates that it has taken nearly a thousand years to accumulate all this junk. The world grows thicker at 27 feet a year, or just under an inch a day in new debris. In addition, only non-living and non-sentient items are drawn to this pokiwol. Dead bodies clean of any microbes can be found mummifying in the dry air of this pokiwol.

Some test core drills have discovered that anything below 500 feet is crushed beyond recovery. Also, the deeper you dig, the older the debris becomes in terms of technology and sophistication. The sky is visibly curved, as though it was being viewed through a fish-eye lens. The terrain visibly curves away and it always feels like your moving on top of a very large ball. This world can invoke the hindrance **Fringe Vertigo** and cause the Hero to make a test against it.

Because this world is made up of debris and junk, the surface of this world is somewhat treacherous place to walk on. In other places, the debris has settled into a flatter, more stable surface. Heroes can move their normal pace across the flatter surfaces (gray). Across older debris mounds, (brown on the map), they move at a -2 pace penalty on the mounds, and the newer debris falls (orange

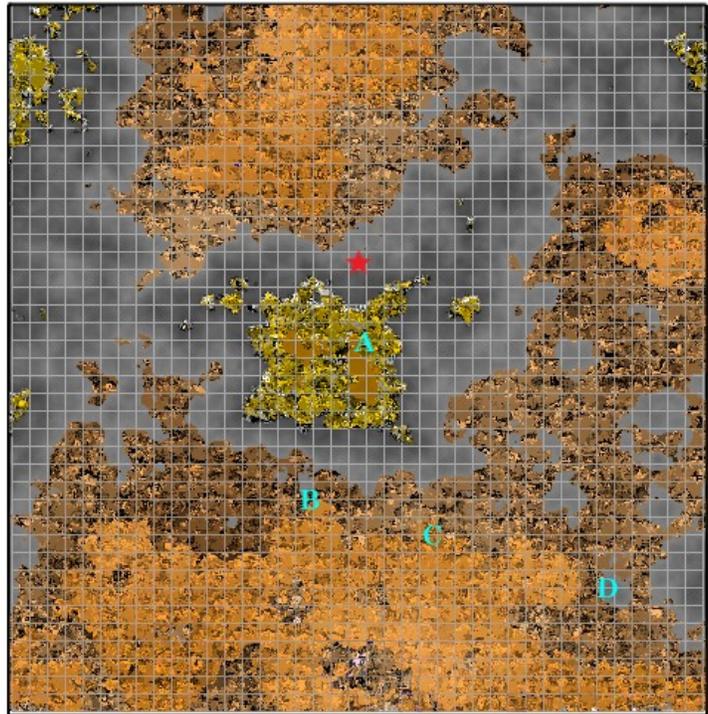
★ Ring Station

A: The Yacht

B: The Long Trailer

C: The Crooked House

D: The Buck Roger's Spaceship



and yellow) are a hazard to navigate. Per square on the map, make an Agility test. If they make it, they are at Pace -2. They fail, they are half their Pace. A critical failure can bring a mound tumbling down on top of them for 4d6 damage over a medium blast template.

Scrapyard Challenge

The following are locations on this world where the Heroes can potentially find new items and material. Weather on this pokiwol is bright and sunny. No sun, but sunny nonetheless. Clouds do dot the outrageously curved sky, but if they have to, sleeping out in the open shouldn't be a problem. But the more interesting choice is to search the area and see what has deposited itself on the pokiwol.

There are dangers on this world. Debris piles up into teetering towers that eventually topple over and crash. To escape a toppling tower of trash, the Hero has to make an Agility test to dodge out of the way, or take between 2d6 to 5d6 damage, depending on the composition of the tower of trash.

No place to rest my head

The wooden yacht is right where IDET 1 said it was. However, it is not in the pristine condition that they left it in. It is now buried under several feet of junk. Newspapers, paper cups, individual socks, masonry, all sorts of useless detritus. The newspapers are in bundles and are from a place called Nieuw Amsterdam and are in Dutch. They are all from the same date, one week ago, and seem to be little worse for wear. Several intact copies of this newspaper can be obtained.

Note: If anyone can read Dutch, the paper has news from a bustling metropolis, with major shipping news and a rich publishing trade. Heroes who speak German or related language can make a language roll. A success gets them basic information; with a raise they can get all the information.

The paper is not on newsprint, but on good quality paper and is obviously laid out using an old fashion typesetter. However, the newspaper has ads for computers comparable to current models, if not a couple years out of date. Most surprising is the four pages of full color comic strips that look more like works of art than common entertainment.

There's very little politics in the paper, that's all relegated to the two editorial pages and the one "national" page. The paper mostly concerns itself with trade relations and commerce with the other nations of North America. The country the newspaper is from is Nieuw Nederland, lead by a governor-general. The city of Nieuw Amsterdam is run by a city council that is more worried about tariffs than reelection.

However entertaining the newspaper is, the fact is that the it will take a day just to clear the junk off of the yacht to make it livable if the Heroes want to stay here. So the choice has to be made: Clear the junk off, or look for someplace else.

The Long Trailer

Half buried in debris, is a stainless steel camping trailer. It's some 50 feet long, and is very angular in design. Looking at it, the first thing one notices is that its manner of construction is off. Where rivets would be used, a different fastener is used. The wheels, while flat, are different in design and construction. Nothing about this trailer indicates that it was constructed by European influenced culture.

In fact, the impression one gets is that this has a decidedly Mesoamerican style and design. As though the Aztecs or Mayans had lasted long enough to invent travel trailers and automobiles of their own. The metal panels are literally stitched together using metal wire and sealed using a latex rubber compound. The door to the trailer is octagonal in shape: the corners of the door are cut off, forming the tall eight-sided shape. Numerous glyphs adorn the exterior of the trailer, but are totally unreadable by

anyone. Finally, the wheels are not of contemporary design, being made of a type of vulcanized rubber unknown to anyone on the team. For one thing, they are white in color, not black. Another is that all four wheels are flat and the axels between them are bent at odd angles.

The interior has what one would expect: A living/dining area, a kitchen, and sleeping area. However, none of this is in the European/American style. The living and dining area consists of low tables and cushions. The kitchen has a wood fired stove and various clay storage bins and no refrigeration. The sleeping area consists of a large straw mattress that looks to be used communally. The condition of the interior is pretty shabby. Everything has seen a lot of wear and tear and none of it is in good condition. The straw mattress has sprung many leaks; straw is everywhere, and the cushion in the living area smell of mildew and rot.

The flue for the stove is broken in several places and the clay pots that make up the storage system are just shards of broken pottery. However, the structure is still watertight and there's glass in the windows.

The Crooked House

This is some sort of outbuilding from a construction site. It's sitting cockeyed on the ground, tilted at a twelve degree angle and the building is most definitely not square. The windows are all broken out. A sign in Russian states that this is the Stanislaw Imperial Construction Company's property, with an address in Madrid, Spain. The building seems to have been near a fire. Close enough to have several exterior panels singed and blackened. Inside the building are recognizable construction tools, with odd brand names from all over Europe and the Middle East. All the tools are in good shape and can be used for their intended purposes.

However, the same cannot be said for the building. Moving about in it for a bit or leaving the door open longer than a few minutes, will cause the building to collapse and trap anyone inside in the resulting debris. Anyone inside can make an Agility test to escape, but if three or more people succeed, they all get in each other's way and only the person with the highest Agility score will get out of the building in time. Ties are resolved by the higher of the two Strength scores.

It will take 30 minutes to free anyone caught inside from the debris safely. No one will take any damage from this collapse; it's more of a nuisance than a deadly trap.

The Rocket Ship

After going around a mound of junked sinks and toilets, the searchers will be confronted by wondrous sight: A fully intact, honest to God, Buck Rogers' Rocket Ship. The name emblazoned on its side is "X-12 Gamma Blaster". The cabin door is open and if it's night, a light will shine from the inside.

Inside is something out of a 1930's pulp magazine. A cockpit more suited for an airplane than a spaceship, controls consisting of rheostats, knobs, levers, and plenty of buttons and guillotine switches.

Sadly, while the ship has power, whatever it is that makes it fly is totally non-operational on the pokiwol. It seems that the engines come from a universe with somewhat different laws of physics than Earth Prime's. Still, there's a lot of interesting technology on this ship, including an armory full of blasters (operational), jet packs (non-operational and dangerous), and Space Patrol uniforms and badges.

Junkyard over time:

As the years go by, the junkyard will get bigger and bigger. UNIDA will try to use it as a base of operations, but the continual collection of debris will bury any permanent building, or if they are regularly cleared off, end up in valleys or pits.

A better use of this world would be as an information resource, as junk from all the nearby alternate worlds collects here. Of course not all of these worlds are on the Fringepaths, but a goodly number are. Also, this pokiwol can be mined for resources: copper, iron, aluminum, rare metals, and other metals. The most efficient method would be to strip mine the world, as that would prevent collapses of any mine shafts.

Mysteries of the Junkyard Pokiwol:

There are some mysteries that have to be solved about this world:

The Ring Station:

The in fall of new junk is fairly uniform, yet the Ring Station is never buried under it, nor is it blocked by falling debris. There is always a clear pathway to the ring from either direction.

This mystery is tied to another: Does the new junk simply appear on this pokiwol or does it fall from the sky? The answer is that new junk simply appears. There seems to be a preference around the Ring Station to keep it clear and to leave a path, so only new junk that can lie flat appears near and under the Ring Station. The ring, ramp, and pylon just float upwards enough for the new junk to appear under it.

The Atmosphere:

The atmosphere of this pokiwol is always breathable and maintains a standard mixture of oxygen and nitrogen. Pollutants from diesel vehicles are quickly flushed from the air. No plants or animals other than those brought by visitors to this pokiwol live here. Any attempt at seeding plants fails, as there is no suitable soil for a plant to grow in. Animals die out due to lack of food and water. Yet, in the presence of so much rusting metal, the oxygen levels on this pokiwol stay stable.

The source of the fresh atmosphere is tied to pipes that dot the surface. They are unobtrusive and look like they are just another piece of junk. Instead they are part of a vital recycling system buried deep in the pokiwol's core. One pipe exhales oxygen and nitrogen and another inhales the atmosphere. Somewhere underground the atmosphere is scrubbed, cleansed, and oxygenated. Piped back to the surface to maintain a livable atmospheric mixture. Each pipe is only 6 inches in diameter and is made of ordinary iron.

Dropping a camera down either pipe results in the camera getting vaporized. The system is designed to keep the pipes from clogging. They always stay sticking about 6 to 12 inches above the surface of the junk. They are extended from below, as marvelous mechanisms literally grow the pipes longer as needed.

The airflow out and in from these pipes is quite forceful. The output pipe can support a small object in the air such as a bowling ball or other similar object. The input pipe can cause 2d6 in vacuum damage if you try to place your body over it and block it. This is not a good idea, as the system will not tolerate a blocked pipe.

Attempts to block the input pipes result in the object having a hole cut through it. There is a warning before this happens; the object gets very warm two actions before the hole is cut through. On the first action, the object becomes uncomfortably hot. On the second action, it becomes blisteringly hot and does 1d6 in damage if touched or sat upon. If the warning isn't heeded, then the energy cutter will cut and remove whatever is blocking the hole. This will kill anyone foolish to sit on the object and it will remove a hand holding the object in place, if the intense heat of the cutter does not burn it first.

Adventure Seeds

- **Junkyard Dog:** A self-repairing non-sentient robot arrives and it is damaged and needs to be repaired. It's looking for compatible technology, and any tech the Heroes bring with them is just the ticket, as is the X-12 Gamma Blaster rocket ship. The Dog will go after tech, not people, so if they drop any tech that uses electronics, the Dog will ignore them. Hopefully.

The Dog will be very resilient and unless it's completely destroyed, it will rebuild itself and resume trying to repair its damaged body.

- **Tower of Pisa:** A tower of debris threatens to crush a spectacular find: An intact computer of unknown make and capabilities. Keeping the tower from falling over on the find will be difficult. And unless dealt with, the Junkyard Dog will put in an appearance as well.

To further complicate things, on the other side of the tower is the Heroes' base camp, so toppling it in that direction isn't a desired outcome either.

- **Old Betsy:** After a bit of a walk, the Heroes scramble over a mound of bent and broken fenders, they see what looks to be an intact Ford Model T truck sitting under a pile of debris. Digging it out, they find that it's not a Ford Model T truck, it's a replica of one and under her hood, beats the heart a modern engine and computer control system. This is a self-driving robotic car, and it looks to be fully intact and just missing some gasoline and needs new battery.

They can push it back to their base camp, but they must make a Vigor test or they suffer 1 Fatigue. If they replace the battery with a fuel cell, and either get some gasoline or convince the car's controller to adapt to diesel or alcohol, the car will start up and become fully functional.

However, you never get a fully function device in the Junkyard. There's always a flaw. The flaw for Old Betsy is that it's programming is corrupt and it refuses to stay near or allow people to get inside of her. She will blow the horn if someone is behind the wheel, and leave the door open in hopes the passenger will fall out as she tries to spin and turn sharply. She will drive away just far enough to keep the Heroes from getting in, and then lead them on a chase until she runs out of gas or the fuel cell runs out of power. Despite the programming flaw, she is 20 years ahead of any similar vehicle on Earth Prime. Keeping her from wrecking herself or being crushed under a toppling tower of debris is very desirable.

LONDINIUM, BRITANNIA, PAX ROMANA

Location: Alt -2, 8

Portal Type: Ring Station, south of Londinium, in the Foro Caelestis Alternis Mundus

Type: World

Atmosphere: Terrestrial

Life: Terrestrial with human civilization

Gravity: 1G

Day: 23 hours, 55 minutes, 57 seconds

Local Year First Explored: 1482 CE, the 10th year of Emperor Tiberius Plinius Spartacus reign

Dominant Language: Brythonic (British Celtic) with heavy Latin influence 80%, Lingua Romana (Pax Romana Latin with heavy Celtic, Germanic, and Semetic language influences. Sounds more like Modern Italian.) 40%.

Technology: Local tech is 15th century, social skills 12th century. Roman flintlock rifles are in use, as are other military weapons, though soldiers still carry swords for close in fighting. Medicine is fairly advanced, equal to 17th to 18th century Europe on United Nations Earth. Mechanical devices are in use for various tasks, but slavery is still practiced. Steam power for various processes is in use.

Description:

GENERATING WORLDS

You can use the following tables to create alternate worlds, moons, and even planets for your game. Alternatively, you can use the Portals books from Tri Tac Games for these worlds, either as is, or as an inspiration for your own creation. Remember, this is your game; you decide what worlds are where. However, if you do get stuck for an idea, the Portal books are a good jumping off point for your imagination.

Sometimes-

When creating a Prime world, use the Prime column for your dice rolls and use the Alternate column when generating one of the Eight Alternate worlds on an Alternate Platform. Roll a d100 for the general type of world, and then roll a second d100 for the specific type of world. Of course, these are the Unlocked portals on a node. Don't worry about creating the other worlds on a portal or platform. Keep them locked until you're ready to open them up to the Heroes.

When you roll one of the Alternate/Parallel Earth types, (Alternate Historical, Alternate Evolutional, Alternate Geological/Climatic, or Alternate Astrophysical), there is a 25% chance that the history of that Earth is temporally shifted.

Roll a d4. On a 1, the Earth is temporally shifted.

Then roll a d20. If you roll of 20, the world is temporally shifted into the future. Otherwise the world is temporally shifted into the past. By how many years or centuries it has been shifted is up to you, the GM, to decide.

Prime Platform		Alternate Platform		Description
1st Roll	2nd Roll	1st Roll	2nd Roll	
01-50		01-50		Alternate/Parallel Earths
	01-76		01-76	Alternate Historical
	77-88		77-88	Alternate Evolutional
	89-99		89-99	Alternate Geological/Climatic
	100		100	Alternate Astrophysical
51-75		51-75		Tehrmelern Commercial and Utility Worlds
	01-50		01-50	Gathering World
	51-86		51-75	Farming World
	87-91		79-80	Food Processing
	92-99		81-87	Industrial
	--		88-99	Small Distribution Center
	100		100	Expo Worlds
76-95		76-95		Recreational Worlds
	01-95		01-95	Nature Preserve
	96-98		96-98	Nature Park
	99		99	Arcades
	100		100	Technical Park
96-99		96-97		Home Worlds
	--		01-75	Individual Settlement
	--		76-85	Small Village
	--		86-95	Settlement, Small
	--		96-97	Settlement, Large
	01-95		98-99	Long Settled World, Commonwealth
	96-100		100	Long Settled World, Tehrmelern
--		98-99		Military Worlds

			01-75	Weapons Testing
			76-85	Training Centers
			86-99	Manufacturing
			100	Weapons Storage
100		100		Other Areas
	--		01-93	Pocket Stops
	1-100		94-98	Battlegrounds
	--		99-100	Other places

SPECIES

After you roll the world type, if you selected an Alternate/Parallel world type, determine what the dominant species is on that world. In this section of the Fringepaths, 50% of the worlds would be human occupied worlds. As the Fringeworthy travel, the mix will change in favor of another species. The "Other" choice is for you the GM to create your own species using the Making Races rules in the Savage Worlds Deluxe rules book. Human includes all of humanity's hominid line from Homo Erectus to Homo Neanderthalensis to Homo Sapiens.

There is a 1% chance that that world has discovered the Fringes and is actively exploring them. Roll a d100 to determine how many years they have been exploring the Fringes.

D100	Species
1-50	Human
	D100 Subspecies
1-75	Homo Sapiens
78-84	Homo Neanderthalensis
85-88	Homo Denisovans
89-94	Homo Erectus
95-100	Homo Floresiensis
51-60	Great Apes
61-70	T'Ziel
71-75	Blizniz
76-80	Dimixi
81-82	Keegak
83-100	Other

GENERATING SYSTEM PLATFORMS

To create Solar Systems and Star Systems to go along with these new worlds, the following charts have been supplied. Use them exactly as you did the world generation charts and you can add the flavor of a fully created galaxy to your new world.

GENERATING SYSTEM PLATFORMS

Use the following table to generate the location for each System Platform portal on your Alternate Worlds. These in particular, link to different places in the Sol solar system of Earth Prime. If you have generated a star system that differs greatly from Sol, pick and choose the names and locations yourself. This is just a guide on how to do it. Remember that you can only have Eight Destination portals. One Pathway portal gets you to this platform and one goes further out one level to the local group of stars.

D100	Location	D100	Location
1	Mercury	47 - 57	Other moon
2	Venus	58 - 60	Rings of Saturn
3 - 9	Earth's Moon	--	Moons of Uranus
10 - 11	Mars	61	Miranda
12	Phobos	62	Ariel
13	Deimos	63	Umbriel
14	Ceres	64	Titania
15	Vespa	65	Oberon
16	Pallas	66 - 76	Other moon
17	Hygiea	--	Moons of Neptune
18 - 25	Other asteroid	77	Triton
--	Moons of Jupiter:	78- 87	Other moon
26	Io	86	Pluto
27	Europa	89	Charon
28	Ganymede	90	Nix
29	Callisto	91	Hydra
30 - 39	Other moon	92	Eris
--	Moons of Saturn	93	Dysnomia
40	Mimas	94	Sedna
41	Enceladus	95	Quaoar
42	Tethys	96	Orcus
43	Dione	97	Varuna
44	Rhea	98	Ixion
45	Titan	99	Other Kuiper Belt object
46	Iapetus	100	Oort Cloud object

GENERATING STAR-HUB PLATFORMS

Star-Hub Platforms are simply that; platforms that have pathway portals to eight nearby star systems. Generating Star-System Platforms is a two-step process: You first determine the type of star system that the Pathway Portal leads to, and then you generate the eight locations for each “end” portal.

Number of Stars

Determine if the star is a binary star by rolling 1D10. On a roll of 7 or more, the star is a binary. Roll again, and if the roll is 7+ on 1D10 add another star and roll again until you don't roll over 7.

For each star, roll on the following table:

Star Spectral Type

D100	Spectral Class	Color	Notes
1 - 49	M	Red	
50 - 63	K	Orange	
56 - 70	G	Yellow	Roll 1D10. On a 10, the star is a subgiant
72 -74	F	Yellow-White	Roll 1D10. On a 9+, the star is a subgiant
75	A	White	Roll 1D10. On a 7+, the star is a subgiant
76 - 85	White Dwarf	White	
86 - 98	Brown Dwarf	Deep Red	
99	Giant	Varies	Roll 1D10: 1 = F class, 2 = G class, 3-7 = K class, 8+ = K class subgiant
100	Special		Could be B-class or O-class stars, neutron stars, protostars or other rare stellar objects

Finally, for each portal on the Star-System Platform, roll on the following table to determine what type of planetary body it is connected to just as you did for the System Platform:

Planetary Type

D100	Type of Planetary Body
1 -18	Asteroid
19 - 62	Terrestrial Planet
63 - 66	Dwarf Planet

67 - 89	Moon around Gas Giant
90 - 98	Moon around Super Jovian
99	Terrestrial planet in a Gas Giant's or Super Giant's Trojan point
100	Double Planet. Each planet is either a Terrestrial (60%) or a Dwarf (40%).

For Terrestrial Planets and habitable moons, use the following tables:

Gravity

Roll a d20 to determine the general gravity category. The equation in parentheses determines the specific gravity expressed as unit of 1g, or Earth's gravity.

d20	Result	Gravity Modifier
1-2	Microgravity (Less than 0.4 - 0.5 G)	-10
3-6	Low Gravity (0.5 - 0.8 G)	-5
7-15	Normal Gravity (0.8 - 1.2 G)	+2
16-20	High Gravity (1.2 - 2G)	+10

Atmosphere

Add the Gravity Modifier to this the roll to determine the atmosphere type. The atmosphere of a world determines how easy it is to breathe and also modifies the temperature. Add the temperature to the base temperature for terrain outside the portal for the final average temperature. Normal atmospheres, those like our own world's, have less temperature variation than other types. ~~Add the Gravity Modifier to the roll to determine the atmosphere type.~~ Exotic atmospheres are made up gases such as chlorine, methane, fluorine, or other combinations of gases. Dense atmospheres tend to have more carbon dioxide and can be at poisonous levels.

d20	Result	Terrain Modifier
2 or less	Vacuum	-20
3-6	Thin	-

		17
7–14	Normal	0
15–18	Dense	+
19 or greater	Exotic (Reroll d20, ignoring rolls 19 and 20. Add Gravity Modifier)	n /a

Terrain Outside the portal

Planets have a multitude of terrain types. This table generates the type of terrain outside the portal on the planet. Planets with None or Thin atmospheres will tend to be deserts, regolith, or ice balls. Think of Mars, the Moon, and Pluto.

The average temperature is for the temperate zones. On the equator treat the temperature as 60 degrees warmer, and at the poles as 60 degrees colder. Temperatures are in Fahrenheit.

d 20	Terrain	Average Temperature
-11– -19	Regolith	Varies with time of day. Can vary by $\pm 250^\circ$
0– -10	Ice plain	-120
1–3	Arctic	-22°
4–5	Temperate Plains	50°
6–8	Temperate Forests	60°
9–11	Jungle	70°
12–14	Marsh/Swamp	65°
15–17	Desert	85°
18–20	Water	50°

Just to re-cap, at the end of this creation process you should have a world platform with eight 25' planetary portals leading to different locations on the unique world of your own creation (or an existing world if you were just creating a [singlen](#) Alternate) and a 50' portal that leads to this unique world's Alternate Worlds Platform. On the Alternate Worlds Platform, you have two 50' portals that lead laterally

to the Fringepaths, a 50' portal that leads to this unique world's solar system platform, a 50' portal leading back to the Prime Platform and eight 25' portals that lead to different Alternates of your unique world. On the System Platform you have only two 50' portals: the one you arrive on and the one leading to this world's Star-Hub Platform.

There will also be eight 25' portals that lead to various locations in that solar system based on the values you chose above. At the Star-Hub Platform, there are eight 50' portals leading to eight different local star systems and the one 50' portal you arrived on for a total of nine. Each of these eight 50' portals leads to a Star-System Platform around a different nearby star within 40 light years of the Prime. These platforms possess the single 50' pathway portal that connects them to the Star-Hub Platform and eight 25' planetary portals that lead to various locations in the newly created solar system. This is the end of the tree as the Tehrmelern see it.

Enemies and Allies

FRINGE PIRATES

Pirate

Most low-level Fringe Pirates were either conscripted into service by the Pirate Commander, or shanghaied off of a world that the pirates raided. In any case, their lot in life is to provide cover and fire support while the commander and other pirates go after the loot.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7/9 (+2/+4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Fringeworthy

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Heavy Weapons Pirates

A step up from your typical Pirate, Heavy Weapons Pirates have mastered the use and operation of high powered weaponry, up to and including light cannons. They typically get an extra share of any loot taken during a raid for their expertise and fire support.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7/9 (+2/+4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Fringeworthy, Rock and Roll!, Steady Hands

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Medium Machine Gun (30/60/120, 2d8, ROF 3, Shots 100, AP 2, Snapfire) or Heavy Machine Gun (50/100/200, 2d10, Shots 200, AP 4, HW) or Rocket Propelled Grenade (24/48/96, 4d8, MBT, AP 9, HW, Minimum arming range 6" otherwise does 2d10 impact damage.) or Man Portable Anti-Tank Rocket (24/48/96, 4d8+2, MBT, HW, Snapfire), Heavy Pistol (15/30/60, 2d8, Shots 7, AP2, Semi-Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Pirate Lieutenant

The veterans of many raids, Pirate Lieutenants have risen up in rank and now are in command of 4 to 6 lower level pirates or conscripts.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean, Wanted

Edges: Fringeworthy, Ace, Block, Combat Reflexes

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Heavy Pistol (15/30/60, 2d8, Shots 7, AP2, Semi-Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Pirate Commander

Pirate Commanders are typically the person who found the financing and organized the Fringe Pirate band. Sometimes they are in charge of a raiding band, other times they command a firebase on a world rich with loot.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d10, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Taunt d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean, Wanted

Edges: Fringeworthy, Ace, Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Inspire, Nerves of Steel

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Heavy Pistol (15/30/60, 2d8, Shots 7, AP2, Semi-Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Conscript

Pity the poor bastard who is conscripted into service by Fringe Pirates on their world. They get a half share of any loot, do all the scutwork and are little more than slaves. They might be taught how to fire a rifle, but they won't get the good ones that the pirates have. On Low Tech worlds, they use bow and arrows and more primitive melee weapons.

None of the Conscripts are Fringeworthy and most are taken as hostages to keep their home village under control. They are used as frontline troops, little more than cannon fodder, and any that survive a pirate raid of a town or city on their world just prepare for the next one, praying to their gods that they survive. Still, they do get a half share of any loot, so it's not all bad. However, they know that if the pirates leave, their lives aren't worth spit...

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4,

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Wanted, Loyal

Edges: --

Gear: Modern Tech: Bolt Action Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8, Shots 5, AP 2) or Musket (15/30/60, 2d8, 2 actions to reload), Knife

Low Tech: Leather Armor (+1), Bow (12/24/48, 2d6), Short Sword (Str+d6) or Spear (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), Knife (Str+d4)

Mechanic

Someone has to keep the trucks and steam powered vehicles in working order. That's where Pirate Mechanics come into their own. Sometimes they ride with a raiding band, but for the most part, they work at a supply or raiding base keeping everything running and functional. This typically rates them 2 shares of any loot taken. Otherwise a wheel might fall off your armored vehicle in the middle of a raid...

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Craft (Blacksmith) d6, Driving d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Steam Power) d6, Knowledge (Mechanics) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Repair d8+2, Shooting d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Quirk (Something Genre appropriate.)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Mr. Fix It, McGyver

Gear: Tool belt or toolkit, Heavy Pistol (15/30/60, 2d8, Shots 7, AP2, Semi-Auto), Knife (Str+d4), Large Spanner (Str+d4)

Psirate

Unique among pirates, are the Psirates, Psionic Pirates. Fringeworthy individuals blessed or cursed with psionic powers. These pirates can manipulate or hurt people with just the power of their minds. Not as physically imposing as a pirate, Psirates are just as dangerous as any pirate, if not more so.

Because Psirates are almost as rare as Fringeworthy, you normally don't run into them in your average pirate band. Add one or two to the mix when the IDET characters are having an easy time of it dealing with pirates.

Young Psirate

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Psionics d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7/9 (+2/+4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Fringeworthy, Arcane [Power-Background](#) (Psionics)

Powers: Telepathy, Charm, Disguise

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Psirate

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Psionics d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7/9 (+2/+4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Fringeworthy, Arcane Background Power (Psionics), New Power x2

Powers: Telepathy, Charm, Mind Reading, Telekinesis, Bolt

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

Experienced Psirate

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Psionics d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8/10 (+2/+4)

Hindrances: Greedy, Mean

Edges: Fringeworthy, Arcane Background Power (Psionics), New Power x5

Powers: Telepathy, Charm, Mind Reading, Telekinesis, Bolt, Deflection, Armor, Burst

Gear: Armor Vest (+2/+4), Assault Rifle (24/48/96, 2d8+1, ROF 3, Shots 30, AP2, Auto), Knife (Str+d4)

IDTS Transport Driver

Someone has to deliver the goods from a raid back to the main base, or drive to a local trade center to sell or trade the loot for necessary gear and the occasional luxury. That's the job of IDTS Transport Drivers. They drive the Fringe Paths in anything that has wheels or treads. Sadly, this is usually while the driver is hopped up on amphetamines. Fringe Paths are long, straight roads with nothing to see, so most drivers need something to stay awake on a 500 mile drive.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d10, Fighting d6, Notice d6+2, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Habit (minor)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Ace, Alertness

Gear: Truck of some sort, Heavy Pistol (15/30/60, 2d8, Shots 7, AP2, Semi-Auto), Knife (Str+d4), Amphetamines (for driving long distances)

Healers

Healers come in all shapes and sizes. Some are natural healers, using what nature provides to heal the sick and wounded, and others are modern doctors and nurses, lured by the possibility of treasure, and 4 shares of any loot.

Healer, Natural

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Medicinal Plants) d8, Notice d6+2, Healing d8+2, Shooting d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Vow, Pacifist (minor)

Edges: Fringeworthy, Healer, Alertness

Gear: Prayer rugs, herbs, fungi, incense, bandages, alcohol, blades

Nurse

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Medicine) d6, Notice d6+2, Healing d6+1, Shooting d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Code of Honor

Edges: Fringeworthy, Intern, Alertness

Gear: Basic Medical Kit, Light Pistol (10/20/40, 2d6-1, Shots 9, Semi-Auto)

Doctor

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d4, Knowledge (Medicine) d8, Notice d6+2, Healing d8+2, Shooting d4

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Greedy, Code of Honor

Edges: Fringeworthy, Intern, Doctor, Alertness

Gear: Doctor's Bag, Pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, Shots 6, AP 1, Revolver)