

Setting Primer

First Edition

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Welcome to our World

In The Emergent, we find ourselves in a troubled dystopian nation where six months ago, inexplicably, random people all over the nation began to exhibit a variety of superhuman powers. In a panic, the government has stripped these *emergent* individuals of their freedoms in the name of maintaining safety and order. You are one of many such *emergent* who have signed on to participate in an experimental government program to explore the viability of your new powers in service to your nation; maybe you believe you can make a positive impact on the lives of the *emergent*, maybe you see an opportunity for personal gain, or maybe you have something more brazen and incompilant up your sleeve. Whatever the reason, you are about to embark on a journey of survival, self-discovery, and ultimately, resistance.

The Emergent is a Cyberpunk Superhumans campaign. It is set in the near future of a fictional world, and will incorporate may of the themes and aesthetics of cyberpunk media including resistance against authority, oppression and marginalization, and the dystopian effects of unfettered capitalism brought to its logical conclusion. Though not a textbook example of fascism, the prevailing government will embody many of the most problematic aspects of fascism. To that end, this game and its themes are not for everyone! If you find yourself exasperated by the presence of these forces in real life and prefer your fiction to be an escape from that reality, you may find this experience a stressful one. However, if you

feel you would benefit from the catharsis of being able to act against these forces within a safe fictional environment, this experience is very much for you.

The Emergent will strive to create a world in which the players have the agency to decide when and how to act against their oppressors. There is no set point in the story at which it becomes narratively *possible* to rebel; however, doing so ill-prepared or without allies will prove extremely challenging. We encourage you to be communicative not only with your fellow players, but with us as well, and bear in mind that while your oppressors are not rooting for you, the staff that controls them very much are. The more we know about your plans and intentions, the better and more responsive an experience we can craft around your actions.

Our setting and story are primarily influenced by the following media properties:

The X-Men

The Hunger Games

Shadowrun

Other relevant influences and references include:

Cyberpunk Red

Bladerunner

Ghost in the Shell

Batman Beyond

Watchmen

The Boys

Animorphs

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Horizon: Zero Dawn

Tron

Digimon

Mobile Suit Gundam: The Witch From Mercury

Table of Contents

[Welcome to our World](#)

[The Emergence](#)

[The Unitary Republic of Anagos](#)

[Social Class](#)

[Provinces](#)

[Corporations](#)

[Religions](#)

[Cybernetics](#)

[Cyberspace](#)



The Emergence

On October 3rd, 2524, reports began to flood the media of people suddenly and inexplicably manifesting superhuman abilities. For some, the effects were immediately obvious, with sudden and dramatic changes in their physical features. For others, these emergent powers had to be discovered, often becoming apparent in moments of significant stress or emotionality. As accounts of emergent powers rose, so did accounts of emergent-related incidents—be it accidental activations of powers they didn't know they had, or powered individuals using their new circumstances to threaten or harm others.

In the days and weeks that followed, the public descended into a panic and riots broke out across the nation. Military enforcers and private security forces struggled to maintain order, ill-equipped to contain emergent threats as they arose. Prison complexes were the first to take action; following a series of emergent-related prison riots, all identified emergent prisoners were transferred to supermaximum facilities, in some cases downgrading otherwise supermax prisoners to facilitate this new security threat. Faced with unprecedented chaos across the nation, the government ultimately decided to follow suit. An executive order was issued on November 15th, 2524 to begin an organized relocation of all individuals identified as "Emergents". The first round was swift and brutal, targeting emergent individuals with obvious powers or those with known incidents of power manifestations. These individuals were transferred to a number of isolated relocation centers, often hastily-refurbished military facilities ill-equipped to adequately house the influx of residents.

Over the next few weeks, government messaging was distributed instructing civilians how to report suspected emergents, and how to engage with those individuals until authorities arrived. While there was some public outcry denouncing this course of action, the majority of the public proved to value safety above loyalty and empathy, as friends and family turned on one another and condemned their emergent loved ones to relocation. A steady stream of emergent were routed into relocation facilities over the next two months, until in late February of 2525, the chancellor issued a statement indicating that the initial emergent threat had been successfully contained. Though shaken, the public largely resumed their normal lives.

From inside the relocation facilities, information on what was happening—and what would come next—was extremely limited. Military security was installed at each facility, and government social services worked to establish a sense of interim community by creating localized opportunities for leisure and education. Emergent residents were assigned temporary jobs, such as farming, maintenance, cooking and teaching within the facilities. But the realities of living in these facilities were far from idyllic; dwellings were often overcrowded and privacy was scarce. Residents were closely monitored and any discussion of resistance or escape was swiftly discouraged. The prevailing question on everyone's mind—when would we be able to return home—was evaded time and again.

It is now May 2525. A call is put out for volunteer transfers to a new facility, which will be attempting to assess "practical applications of emergent powers in service to the nation". Volunteers will allegedly receive additional privileges and improved facilities in exchange for their service. Many are wary of this

opportunity, having speculated that its true purpose is to test the viability of emergent powers as weapons. But for some, the opportunity to escape this mundane oblivion is too great to overlook.

Welcome to the Practical Emergence Initiative.

The Unitary Republic of Anagos

The Unitary Republic of Anagos is a highly stratified and tightly controlled isolationist nation where power is concentrated in the hands of a few elites, both political and corporate. In Anagos, the interplay between corporate oligarchs and symbolic political leadership has crafted a weary, deeply propagandized nation eager to simply get on with the day-to-day realities of their lives.

The origins of the Unitary Republic of Anagos lie in a tumultuous period of political and economic upheaval that spanned much of the 25th century. In the early years, Anagos was a nation of modest resources and economic potential, located in a geographically strategic region that saw frequent engagement with both neighboring nations and global trade networks. Its society was built upon a fragile coalition of political and corporate interests, but this system began to unravel after a series of economic crises and military conflicts, most notably the **Crisis of 2457**; a near-collapse of the country's banking system, compounded by a costly border war with a neighboring nation.

In the wake of these events, the political elite, led by a cadre of powerful corporate magnates, began to proselytize on the dangers of external dependency—whether on foreign trade, military alliances, or the influence of global powers. The economic chaos purportedly exposed the fragility of the nation's reliance on foreign investment and trade routes, while the military conflict revealed the vulnerability of its armed forces, which had relied heavily on foreign suppliers for equipment and technology. A shift in national consciousness took root: Anagos needed to extricate itself from the global system in order to protect its sovereignty and ensure its economic and cultural survival.

The turning point came in the early **2460s**, when a faction of business elites and military officials joined forces and began consolidating power, asserting that a self-sufficient, isolationist approach was the only viable path forward. These individuals, many of whom were entrenched in the nation's largest corporations, sought to sever ties with international markets and diplomacy, fearing that Anagos' reliance on foreign trade made it susceptible to outside manipulation and threatened its potential for domestic economic growth. The public, weary from years of economic instability and military embarrassments, became receptive to this new vision of isolationism, particularly as the corporate elites crafted a narrative of self-reliance and resilience in the face of global volatility.

The movement reached its apex in **2465**, when a series of carefully orchestrated protests and political maneuvers culminated in the dissolution of Anagos' foreign embassies and the expulsion of foreign corporations. A new economic framework was instituted that prioritized local industries, overseen by a small group of influential business leaders who consolidated power within the existing State Council and ultimately reshaped it to suit their oligarchal needs. The executive branch was retained, but largely

defanged; though the Chancellor held nominal control over the military, true authority rested in the hands of the corporate oligarchs within the State Council.

Their first point of order was to strip ethics regulations on weapons development. This opened the door to both ballistic and chemical weapons previously banned or heavily restricted, leading to a swift and decisive end to the long stretch of border conflicts that has plagued them. Though there was some public outcry, it quickly faded as it became clear that the majority of the general public was comfortable with whatever means could finally put this conflict to rest. Without the presence of foreign dignitaries to espouse international concerns over their actions, Anagos was all too eager to excise itself from their systems of accountability.

Following this frighteningly popular move by the new governing order, Anagos began a sweeping reform of its internal governance. Provinces were stripped of autonomy, and regional governors—mostly selected by major corporations—were given the task of ensuring local compliance with central state directives. Resources were tightly controlled, with wealth and economic power concentrated in the hands of a few corporate giants that dominated the nation's industry.

In the decades that followed, Anagos maintained a strict policy of isolationism, allowing its corporate-controlled government to consolidate power. The state quickly paved the way for a monopoly-friendly, laissez-faire domestic economy, ensuring that any attempts to challenge the corporate oligarchy languished and were starved out. The nation's military, though well-funded and technologically advanced, became primarily focused on internal security, with the occasional show of force to deter foreign intervention.

Through carefully orchestrated indoctrination and a tightly controlled media narrative, the government of Anagos and its corporate clients have maintained the illusion of unity and prosperity. Anagos' isolationist stance has been further entrenched by technological advances that allow the country to operate largely self-sufficiently, with a focus on autonomy in energy, agriculture, and defense. The nation's once-vibrant relationship with the outside world is now relegated to a distant memory, and the nation thrives—or, as some would argue, survives—under a regime that exerts absolute control over its people, all under the banner of "self-sufficiency" and "national pride."

Today, the government is headed by the Chancellor, a largely symbolic figure who oversees matters of social control, national philosophy, and the ideological "soul" of the nation. This role is more concerned with maintaining a unifying national vision than with governing in a practical sense. Though the Chancellor controls the military, they cannot unilaterally order significant military action without approval from the State Council.

The State Council wields the true power in Anagos, controlling the majority of the nation's economic and infrastructural policies. The Council's sessions are not public, with its details and interworkings rarely seen outside its doors. The majority of the council members are corporate leaders—CEOs and business magnates—who function as oligarchs, with positions granted on behalf of companies that control a

significant portion of Anagos' GDP. This creates an entrenched system where wealth dictates influence, and only the most powerful corporate entities maintain a seat at the table.

There are a few ministers within the State Council who serve logistical functions but hold little actual power:

Minister of Wealth: This official is tasked with auditing the Council's composition, expelling companies whose influence has waned, and inviting those that have risen to prominence to join.

Minister of Order: Serving as the public face of the Council, the Minister of Order delivers policy statements and other communications to the people, essentially acting as a spokesperson for the elite.

Minister of Arms: A representative of the military within the Council, this individual primarily provides advice on the military's capabilities, status, and readiness but lacks direct control over military decisions.

The Chancellorship is considered to be the de-facto leader of the National Assembly, the single dominant political party; while there are other parties, they tend to be focused on more singular special interests and cannot substantively oppose the National Assembly, as they exist under its guidance. These political parties are a fusion of ideological fraternities and lobbying organizations, and are comprised primarily of appointed officials, bureaucrats, and wealthy individuals who care enough to champion a cause.

Candidates for chancellorship must be approved by the National Assembly, and virtually all are hand-selected members of the party. Candidates are then voted on and installed by the State Council, with no public democratic process. Though the wealthy elite often consider their buying power a vote in and of itself, determining which companies are represented on the council, the meaningful impact of consumer preference is dubious at best. That said, there is a substantial media industry surrounding the campaigning of candidates for chancellorship, and certain public faux pas on the media circuit are rarely ignored even by the Council. In that sense, the public can be considered to have some ephemeral influence on the specific candidate chosen.

Social Class

Life in the U.R.A. is dictated above all else by one's social status. In theory, there is no inherent caste that one is assigned to, and social mobility is considered entirely normal and possible, but the reality is that two people of different social classes often live in two entirely different worlds. The following labels can roughly describe the variety of different lived experiences that a citizen of Anagos might belong to:

Official

You are a petty ranking member of either the government or a major corporation. You might be a civil servant, a manager, a soldier or security officer, or occupy any number of other mundane but mildly privileged positions. You

may not feel terribly special, but being a member of the ruling class, no matter how minor, does have its perks. Your livelihood is decent, you have valuable connections, and as long as you don't screw up too badly, your future seems secure.

Affluent

You are from money. You might be content to inherit and ride the legacy of your forebearers, or you might be fueled by ambition and a need to distinguish yourself. Regardless, you have wanted for little. You've had the freedom to pursue education, hobbies, causes and connections as you please, which might make you feel worldly, though you probably haven't had to work a day in your life—at least not the way others do. The thing you may not have figured out yet thought is that all the money in the world doesn't matter if you don't have any real power.

Urbanite

You are the working class of the city. You are accustomed to cramped living spaces, uncaring and exploitative service jobs, and a general sense of existential insignificance. Most of your energy is used up on a day-to-day basis just trying to make ends meet, and when you aren't working or exhausted, you're doing whatever you can to give your life some kind of identity or meaning. In a world where you wade through a crowd of thousands of nameless drones every day, individuality becomes everything, in order to convince yourself that you're different, that you're *someone*.

Agrarian

You are the rural working class. You are a tradesman of some kind, working hard every day to keep the breadbaskets of the nation up and running. You value your freedom, though perhaps not in the sense that your life is within

your control; rather, you value that you have your own space, that you can step outside and breathe relatively clean air, and that you can look up and see the stars at night, however dim and few. The corps might own your equipment and your seeds, but they don't own you, as far as you're concerned.

Drifter

You are homeless, and you don't stay in one place for very long. In the city, they might call you a vagrant; in the wastes, they might call you a nomad. You have almost nothing to your name, but you find a way to keep yourself fed doing odd jobs, scavenging scrap, and generally doing the work that no one else is willing to do. Your lifestyle is considered synonymous with failure, but though it takes some getting accustomed to, you have the one thing that no one else who sticks their nose up at you does—actual freedom. As long as you don't starve, that is.

Criminal

You exist both within and without the working world, a shadow often capable of passing when needed, but your real life unfolds within the dark alleyways and abandoned structures of the world. What you do isn't legal. Maybe you smuggle goods that are otherwise frowned upon, maybe you sell aftermarket parts to people who don't ask questions, or maybe you “solve problems” for people some other way. The criminal world is a rich and vibrant one, and the harder the government tightens its grip, the more opportunities fall through its fingers and into your lap.

Provinces

The Anagos peninsula is split into several provinces. These provinces boast minor cultural differences at best, but can often be considered integral to the identity of those who live there.

The Capital District

The Capital District, a megacity comprising Anagos' capital, Axiom, and its outlying areas, is home to 25% of the nation's total populace, with the last census recording 6,000,000 citizens. The Capital holds the headquarters of nearly all corporations and megacorporations, as well as the most prominent stock exchange in the nation, and boasts the highest GDP in Anagos.

Axiom dominates the surrounding landscape, its skyscrapers visible for miles. The tallest is the distinctive Government Tower in the city centre, housing the bulk of centralized governmental functions. At the very top is a large chamber where political leaders regularly meet to determine the course of the nation, and from which the Chancellor regularly broadcasts communications to the populace.

Once a traditional urban area, Axiom is now a gleaming sprawl that has stretched outwards and upwards to accommodate its ever increasing population. A major highway expansion project in 2493 began the trend of vertical growth that gradually resulted in the multilayered megalopolis that exists today.

The city is now fully stratified, socially and physically. Wealthy elites and high ranking government officials live and work in the upper levels, with priority access to sunlight, fresh air, and sweeping views. Green spaces and cultural centers predominate public areas. The High City also holds several very impressive churches of Concordia Mortalis.

The Middle City is the domain of managers, researchers, and bureaucrats. Residents at this level jockey for upward mobility, paying inflated rates for housing with limited sky views, and saving their paychecks towards brief excursions to the upper levels, living out fantasies of wealth before returning to the malls, chain restaurants, and media saturation of their home zones.

Wage workers and other less fortunate individuals occupy the Low City, also known as The Downs, The Cellars, or The Dregs; a semi-subterranean maze, where neon lights from signs guide citizens to shops, restaurants, clubs and other attractions.

The Ascendant Collective, a relatively new faith with mysterious origins, has been spreading among all levels of society with promises of transcending mortality.

The military has a large presence in Axiom, with numerous bases on the outskirts, ensuring that the government and its cronies have access to rigorously trained teams of High Threat Response Teams. Black Dog Technologies also maintains a number of locations within the city, housing their own teams that are often on contract as response squads for private and corporate interests.

Outside of the city proper is a vast suburban sprawl, comprising middle class residential neighborhoods, low income housing, corporate offices and warehouses. High-speed light rail systems allow quick travel between these areas and the city center. The railways extend beyond the Capital District as freight and passenger lines, with regular shipments from Centralia, Talara, and Westport bringing in necessary goods

to support the massive city complex, and a specialized Pleasure Rail Service transporting the wealthy to their vacation homes on the Chromium Coast.

The Capital District Lead operates as a distinct entity from the Central Government. Kori Black currently holds the position. Her long career in politics includes a lengthy tenure as governor of the Chromium Coast, before taking over leadership of the Capital District ten years ago. She previously held a prominent position in Chiron Pharmaceuticals, but left the company shortly before the merger that resulted in the Chrion Group.

Centralia

Occupying much of Anagos' eastern seaboard, Centralia is the country's primary region of industry and manufacturing. It shares borders with every province except the Capital District and the Exclusion Zone, and cedes territory to one of the PITs. Many corporations and all of the megacorps maintain production facilities here, and research laboratories are a growing sector.

Centralia is a hub for the many freight rail lines that run all through Anagos. There is also one dedicated high-speed passenger rail line that connects the provincial capital, Mirabor, to the Capital District and the Chromium Coast.

Centralia lies on granite bedrock and has little arable land. Its climate has been heavily impacted by the pollution from the hundreds of plants and factories that run around the clock. Smog and acid rain are common.

Climate control tech companies based in the Chromium Coast and Westport have newly-established research facilities in Centralia, using its foul weather for pre-market testing. Currently, the industrially-tainted weather patterns are largely kept from impacting other provinces by advanced air filtering technologies at the borders; the Chromium Coast is known to have its own proprietary AirGuardian system. Similar tech is used to stratify the atmosphere in the capital city.

Mirabor is a city of skyscrapers surrounded by an expansive sprawl of factories and manufacturing plants. In the city center, the highest floors of the towers, rising above the smog, are reserved for the uppermost echelons of the wealthy and powerful. The lower levels, where conditions can range from comfortable to squalid, are allocated to the working class. The life expectancies of the common workers are 13% shorter than the national average, a statistic that the provincial government has tried to cover up.

Governor Hiro Astra has held office for the past six years. Conditions in the province have remained much the same during their tenure as their predecessor's. However, some reports have suggested that Astra, a former Polarity CFO, remains in the megacorp's pocket, and that the governor's personal wealth has increased dramatically since taking the post. An official audit conducted two years ago failed to turn up any evidence to support these claims. Polarity maintains several of the largest factories in the province.

The religious order The Followers of the Head has a large following in the province, second only to the Concordia Mortalis.

Chromium Coast

Located on the south-eastern seaboard of Concomere, bordered by Talara to the west and Centralia to the north, The Chromium Coast is a tourist playground for the ultra-wealthy. The climate has minimal seasonal variation and is predominantly warm and comfortable year round. The natural white sand beaches are supplemented by artificially maintained areas that have turned over 70% of the shoreline into areas suitable for vacationing activities. Off the coast is an archipelago of both natural and artificial islands owned by wealthy individuals or corporations.

The capital of the province is Larimar City, a sprawling beachside utopia that takes advantage of the abundant sunshine and coastal winds to boast a fully renewable-sourced power supply. The city hosts several luxury resorts, over 30 nightclubs, 6 parks comprising several different biomes, and numerous attractions for tourists. 85 percent of the population is directly involved in supporting the tourism industry which provides for approximately 75 percent of the province's revenue.

Provincial Governor Jeffery Briggs has been holding the office for over a decade. The former star of the hit television show Police Investigative Division: Larimar, Briggs retired from acting to join the world of politics and quickly rose through the ranks to his current role. Under his leadership three new luxury resorts have opened, revenue has increased, and the crime rate has fallen (though rumor has it this is due to bribery, rather than improved conditions).

The Clearwater River runs through the province, providing a route for pleasure cruises bringing tourists from the Capital District to Larimar City. Outside the city, the bulk of the coastline is owned by private, exclusive resorts.

Off the coast there is a new trend in aquacologies; self-contained underwater enclosures designed to be able to support moderate sized populations without the need to rely on support from the surface. While early iterations were plagued with issues and catastrophic failures, the modern versions are considered quite safe for the public. While some corporations make use of aquacologies for research, others have built and operate them as private resorts and getaways offering novel experiences for the wealthy elites.

Latroia

Located in the north of Anagos, bordered by Westport, the Exclusionary Zone, and Centralia, Latroia is a large stretch of land unsuitable for most uses. Once used as a military testing site, heavily contaminated from its own former industrial use, and exposed to the smog and pollution of Centralia as well as radioactive drift from the north, much of this province has been reduced to a relatively barren landscape. Deemed unfit for regular habitation 40 years ago, Latroia, now known as The Scrapyards, is where the waste and refuse of Anagos is sent to be incinerated, recycled, or reclaimed.

The capital of the province, Persistence, is a small and desolate city, where squat, bunker-like buildings serve as homes to the bureaucratic systems that regulate the handling of various types of waste. Many corporations maintain an office here that oversees their waste disposal contracts. Assignment to the Scrapyard is known to be a punishment detail meted out to underperforming employees. Conditions in the region have led many to wear heavy protective gear and personal air filtration systems to compensate for the harsh environment, even in the relatively sheltered capital city.

Outside of the capital are a number of specialized settlements, dedicated to the processing of various types of waste materials. The province is a network of Incineration plants, recycling and reclamation facilities, and underground installations for the processing and storage of radioactive and toxic wastes. Scores of workers from various corporations live in company towns designed to support the round the clock processing that is still inadequate to keep up with the nation's waste production, and trash piles up in mountainous garbage dumps and scrap heaps.

Alongside these official systems are ramshackle settlements of scavengers, many unMaRC'd, who eke out a living pulling salvage and used cyberware, weapons, and more from the dregs of Anagos' refuse.

Provincial Governor Anno Perez is new to the posting. A former official at Black Dog, rumor has it that their appointment to the Governorship was due to a particularly spectacular mission failure. Their approach to governing the province has yet to truly be seen but early reports indicate that they are taking a stance against the scavengers, considering them a criminal threat to the province.

A new and secretive faith has begun to spread in the area, with whispers of the Prophet Propylaia circulating among the workers and scavengers. Little is known about this upstart religion, but the new governor has expressed interest in rooting out the location of their "Cathedral".

Talara

Bordered by the Chromium Coast to the east, the Capital Region to the west, and Centralia to the north, Talara is Concornere's largest province, home to 12% of the nation's population. With a total land area of 39,264 square miles, and an abundance of arable land, it is primarily known for its agriculture and food exports. The Two-Fold Faith is believed to have originated in Talara's agrarian past; it remains the province's most popular religion, and influenced the name of the capital city.

Talara has historically been a center for agriculture, and in recent years modern technologies have greatly increased the harvest. The province's several large rivers provide ample water for irrigation, and a secondary means of transporting goods in addition to the several major highways and railways that pass through it.

The capital city of Nocturne has a population of nearly one million, and is home to several Agro Dynamic processing and production facilities. The Agro Dynamic Industrial Abattoir Towers dot the city's horizon and house genetically optimized farm animals raised to be ready for market in record time. Other

facilities in the city house the company's R&D facilities, where some of the best minds in genetic engineering work around the clock to develop the next advancement in genetically optimized food sources to feed the people of Concomere.

Outside of Nocturne, numerous smaller hub settlements have been strategically developed to provide for the needs of the workers who tend to the miles of sprawling fields that cover the bulk of the province. These same settlements often contain factories and facilities to process the crops into finished foodstuffs to send to market. Rugged industrial equipment supplements the manual element of the farming process, and Agro Dynamic is working to test a new line of automated worker drones that they claim will streamline several processes and reduce the need for human field labor.

Provincial Governor Jasper Koburg, a former high-ranking Agro Dynamic employee, has held the post for the past three years after the previous governor suffered a tragic accident while demonstrating a new type of self-driven tractor intended to reduce the required manpower needed to manage the land. Koburg's first official act in office was to put a stop to the project in favor of field testing the newly developed AD drones. So far, testing has shown a 5% increase in crop yield and a 14% increase in employee happiness.

Exclusion Zone

The Exclusion Zone is a former province that is now under government and military control. Located in the far north of Anagos, it is bordered to the south by Westport and Latroia. One of the PITs is close to this region as well.

Historically, the Exclusion Zone was a prosperous province and a locus of trade between Anagos and its neighbors. As international tensions escalated, the government instituted its isolationist policy in the 2470s, and the territory was designated as a border zone. The population was relocated, and the region was swiftly made as inhospitable as possible. The nuclear power plant that fueled the former provincial capital was put into a forced, controlled meltdown, dispersing an invisible barrier of lethal radiation for miles around the deserted city. Other areas have been heavily filled with landmines, and mountain passes are blocked with monofilament razor wire.

The southern edge of the Zone is bordered with military bases. It is rumored that there are outposts far into the mountains, though the government and military deny it.

The Exclusion Zone has the smallest population of any province, though the exact numbers are not known. While not every living soul here is part of the military, those who are not are often un-MARC'd, and not recognized as citizens. Others are well paid but often short lived salvagers, members of teams organized by corporate interests or the government to venture into the heavily irradiated and restricted spaces on recovery missions to reclaim what they can.

Given the remoteness of the Zone and general lack of government oversight outside of the military complexes, small settlements arise from time to time, where outcasts, criminals, and other undesirables

of the state can scrape out a life. When discovered by government forces, these villages are quickly disbanded. The inhabitants are most often sent to the PITs, for the crimes of trespassing and endangerment of government secrets.

Many of the people who find themselves in the Exclusion Zone, military and civilian, find that a higher degree of cyberization is required to survive in the harsh conditions. Robust cyberlimbs, radiation scrubbers, and internal airway filters are all common modifications one might find in someone who has spent time in the Zone.

Rumor also holds that there are secret government facilities near the meltdown site. Allegedly the inhabitants of these bunkers came from the best of society; brilliant minds conducting studies of the impacts of severe radiation on humanity and the local ecosystem. These closed communities are also said to act as experiments on the impact of isolation on a community of “ideal” physical and intellectual inhabitants. Any children who do not meet the strict specifications are said to be exiled to the abandoned city, or sent to be brought up by the military. Most consider the idea of such facilities to be nonsensical urban legend.

The PITs

It is the policy of the government of Anagos that a strong nation needs strong laws, enforced by severe punishments. Those that the state deems deserving of maximum security incarceration are sent for Productive Relocation and Detainment at one of the several Penal Incarceration Territories. Commonly called The PITs, these areas comprise several extra-provincial zones in the northeast of the country.

Citizens who have committed serious enough crimes can be assigned a number of years of imprisonment and hard labor. Upon sentencing, their Mandatory Registration Chips (MRCs) are tagged and voided of all citizen rights and access codes. Once they have arrived they are processed, given a uniform, and assigned to a 6x8' habitation pod.

The PIT territories are self-contained regions able to support a sizable population with minimal imports from the wider world. Each consists of multiple isolated and walled off regions with a number of housing blocks radiating out from a central plaza that contains the section's factory and ration distribution center. Conditions vary, depending on the territory and current management, but it is universally true that prisoners are expected to work long hours in unsafe conditions.

Corporations frequently bid for the right to make use of the detained population, a workforce that comes with long hours and extremely low pay. While riots are an occasional threat to productivity, over a decade's worth of analytics demonstrate to corporate shareholders the value of the Penal Incarceration Territory model. PIT inmates are responsible for the production of 90% of the nation's ammunition, as well as many other manufactured and processed goods.

As extra provincial territories, the PITs have no governor. Instead, the controlling corporate interest in each PIT appoints a chain of command, often hiring from the military, police, or private security firms.

Each territory is run by a Captain, each section by a Lieutenant, and every individual factory, housing block, and ration center is under the command of a Sergeant. It is rumored that the PITs as a whole are governed by a Warden, a government appointee whose identity is kept secret as a matter of national security.

With bleak conditions, hard labor, and short life expectancies many PIT detainees lose hope. But some find strength in the adoption of new faiths. The sects of the Followers of the Heart and the Followers of Soul offer solace to the inmates; Followers of the Heart organize efforts to improve conditions in their sections, and the Followers of the Soul offer hope for a better life in one's next reincarnation.

Following the Emergence event, the largest riot in the history of the program occurred, lasting 17 hours. Starting in Section C of PIT 5, when a number of newly Emerged individuals began to fight each other, the prisoners quickly joined forces and began to turn their efforts against the guards. Within six hours the riot had spread to the adjacent sections, and continued to expand until the military was called in. Of the inmates responsible for the riot, all but nine were killed in the containment efforts. The survivors have not been seen since, and are reported to be in solitary confinement.

Westport

The third-largest province of Anagos, Westport is bordered by the Capital Region to the south, the Exclusion Zone and Latroia to the north, and Centralia and Talara to the east. Due to the winds coming in off the coast the region can undergo stretches of foul weather; fog, rain, and sleet are common depending on the season, and hurricanes strike the coast with some regularity. Weather control technology is a new and growing industry in the region, in competition with the proprietary systems developed by Utopia Tech, a rival corporation headquartered on the Chromium Coast.

Westport is a major center of trade both within the nation and for the limited amount of approved foreign exchange. The province also supports a sizable fishing fleet that provides most of the nation's seafood.

A notable salvage operation reclaims materials from ships wrecked by the sudden storms that often arise offshore. Lake Urssal, a stagnant inland sea accessible by a brackish estuary, is a polluted scrapyard full of rusting hulls stripped of their usable materials.

The provincial capital of Fort Oliver is situated on a wide and deep natural harbor, which has been enlarged by a series of engineering projects to nearly three times its original size. The harborside is lined with wharves and docks that support the comings and goings of everything from large container ships to smaller fishing boats. The areas near the docks are filled with a maze-like assortment of shipping containers, warehouses, and processing facilities for the fisheries. The rest of the city is home to regional offices for the several corporations with trade interests, numerous bars and clubs catering to a wide variety of clients, and densely packed residential areas.

Westport's territory also includes several small rocky islands off the coast, inhospitable to most purposes, although some house scientific research stations. Inland of the capital sprawl, the land is unsuitable for farming and is largely used for manufacturing, shipbuilding, and the processing of seafood.

Governor Ash Herrier was previously the regional manager for Plethora before their change of career to politics. Their experience managing the country's largest retail operation has translated effectively to provincial administration, and although corruption is rampant, import and export operations have improved under their leadership. However, crime rates in Westport remain the highest in the nation, with smuggling and violent crime being the most common types reported. The size of the police force grows every year, but so does the amount of gang activity.

Westport is sometimes referred to as "The Dockyards". The name originally referred to the harborside neighborhood of Fort Oliver, but has expanded gradually in colloquial usage as a name for the capital, and more recently for the entire province.

Corporations

Anagos is overflowing with corporate entities of all sizes. It would be virtually impossible to take an accounting of every corporation in the grand rat race, but the biggest names—those that hold a seat on the State Council—are all household names that everyone in Anagos can recognize.

Corti-Call

The development of Cortical Stacks provided, at first, only the most affluent citizens with the means to be essentially immortal; while the risk of permanent death did still linger, they were already less likely to be involved in the dangers of day-to-day life than the poor population, and now being rich also meant having access to a form of reincarnation as well. However, the inevitability of such a technology is that it is, at its core, a product to be sold for capital, and as such it was not too shocking when Cortical Stacks made for the working class entered the market.

With the decrease in fear of death, there came a notable increase in dangerous incidents throughout the country. People installed with the ability to respin their souls simply were not as concerned with caution. Motor vehicle crashes were more commonplace, along with reports of unsanctioned bridge jumping and mountain climbing. Bar fights and street scraps began easier and escalated quickly. Eventually, the number of people needing resets of their stacks each week became a nuisance to their companies, causing dissent and distaste among shareholders.

It stepped the life insurance companies, who had found their own shares dropping and had felt their relevance slipping quickly. A pivotal meeting between Reid Hollow of HMSI and Piovatti Lashwa of FreeHold Mutual Insurance Co. reportedly happened sometime in April 2445; by June 2445, shares of FreeHold Mutual had begun to rise again; by October, FreeHold quietly changed its name to CortiCall. Consumers noticed an uptick over this timeframe in the costs for respinning their stacks, and by October

it had become prohibitively expensive for the average worker to use their Cortical Stack in a meaningful way. Conveniently, CortiCall began running ads offering low-cost insurance for your stack; discounts on storage and respins for low monthly prices. The life insurance industry had found its place among those who had found immortality.

Today, CortiCall remains the largest company in the Cortical Stack insurance game, owning 90% of government contracts and working directly with paramilitary companies under Black Dog Technologies. There are smaller options that offer cheaper prices in exchange for sometimes slower services, but none pose true competition in the industry at this time.

Polarity, Inc.

Founded in 2480, Polarity is a relatively new face in the world of Anagos megacorporations, which makes it all the more impressive when one realizes how many aspects of daily life they have spread their holdings to. The original plan had been ambitious but, on the surface, simple: provide more access to upgraded, state-of-the-art computers and general technology to less fortunate areas in the nation. Lucia Forgrave was a generational genius, graduating top of her class with a Bachelor's in Biomechanics and later continuing her education with a PhD in Information Technology. By this time, Dr. Forgrave's name was on some notable pieces of published research in the field as an assistant and, more rarely, a co-author; Dr. Forgrave's name can even be found deep in the notes of Dr. Hollow's famous paper, Hollow et al. (2467), which was published during her time as an intern with Dr. Hollow's laboratories.

Given her extensive background and education, Dr. Forgrave had no issues pursuing a career in the technological realm and subsequently opening Polarity in her later years. The first of the subsidiary companies to be opened under the corporation was ByteCorp, a company dedicated to providing affordable and accessible home-technology advancements, computer systems, and home appliance systems run by intelligent computer learning algorithms. While nothing that was produced by ByteCorp particularly broke ground, it did open the market to lower-income households and lower working class citizens, and found great success in doing so.

Polarity's comfortably average success continued until 2490, when Dr. Forgrave announced a sudden retirement with plans to pass the reins to her daughter, Camille Forgrave. The new director of Polarity was a lesser-known figure, having been shielded from the public eye for much of her childhood, but Camille held several degrees of her own and proved to be no less formidable and savvy in the business world than her mother. It was under Camille's watch that Polarity spread its wings a bit, opening several small manufacturing plants throughout the nation with plans to begin making its own computer components within the first ten years of Camille's tenure. Polarity's plants were more than welcome in the neighborhoods where they popped up as they provided steady employment for reasonable pay. By the turn of the century, Polarity was producing computer chips under ByteCorp. Currently, ByteCorp produces several other pieces of technology with Polarity proprietary parts, including computer chips, Smart appliances, motherboards, and small electrical cables.

Currently, Polarity is chiefly run by Camille's daughter and acting Director and CFO Evelyn Forgrave-Reid, and CEO Brenton Trax. Under the skilled direction of Evelyn, Polarity has extended its holdings into different sectors of the technological world, expanding its portfolio of subsidiary companies in the process. NovaFusion develops software for Smart technology and smaller computer programs, Vanderholt Industrial is best known for their foray into Smart weapon manufacturing, and a few other companies have cropped up, each with their own contributions to the industry.

Black Dog Technologies

Founded in 2420, Black Dog Technologies got its start as a small-scale weapons distributor. The original team was based in Centralia and consisted of just the three Blackburn brothers, of which Niritias Blackburn was arguably the spearhead in the development process. Despite being the middle child and often overshadowed by outspoken elder brother Morgan Blackburn, Niritias was the boots on the ground in the beginning, meeting with manufacturers and building relationships that would, in just 10 years' time, bring about massive change for the corporation.

Today, decades into the development of their corporation, you are not likely to see many personal weapons shipped inside the country without finding a Black Dog Technologies logo on the box. The death of their youngest brother to bombings led to the changes we see today that BDT has been pushing, chief amongst them the use of biological and mechanical implants to enhance and save our soldiers on the battlefield. There are suspicions that the recently purchased piece of land in Latroia is actually meant to be a home for their new manufacturing line of AI-assisted soldier implants, but BDT has refused to comment on the rumors, likely due to the notoriously volatile nature of the topic.

With industrialization inevitably came an increase in involvement of large-scale production corporations with the military, whether it be on the front end providing weapons and the latest equipment, or behind the scenes during training and development of operational processes during war times. Black Dog Technologies has always been happy to provide support to the government at all levels, and holds contracts with multiple different levels of infrastructure, including the army, navy, and emergency management agencies on local and federal levels. Most small-scale training modules are run by BDT team members in cities, providing citizens with knowledge on how to respond to disasters and real-world training on defending their homes in the event of an invasion.

Under the guise of contracts to create specialized weapons, Black Dog Technologies created a subsidiary company called Barghest Intelligence, or BI, through which funds were funneled quietly starting just a few years prior to the Emergent Event. The idea of fully-fledged artificial intelligence that can be used outside of a computer-sized processor still seems far from our reach, despite the rapidly evolving world of cybernetics and the growing thoughts behind the scientific fields of transhumanism. Replacing one's body parts with fully-realized mechanical arms and legs was already remarkable, but once we began to increase performance in them to provide inhuman strength or agility or speed we crossed a threshold into otherworldly technology that has allowed for a rapid expansion of imagination. Given all of this, it is not shocking that a large weapons manufacturer may begin to dip its fingers into the world of

cybernetics. Furthermore, provided with the right tools and processors, BI began to ask the question: Could the cybernetics be more than just an arm, a leg; could they be our assistants as well? A higher intelligence providing real-time analysis of a battlefield; a program that actively receives input from an enemy combatant and spits out the best strategy for defeat?

Funding from the government came just a year before the Emergent Event, when BI quietly met with the President and gave a presentation regarding their ideas, bringing with them researchers and computer scientists that provided live action proof that AI can be applied to cybernetics, and thus began the development of intelligent cybernetics.

Outside of manufacturing and selling weapons (and eventually, cybernetics), Black Dog Technologies, not so quietly, founded Black Dog Security. The Black Dogs are, for lack of better terms, a mercenary organization that provides private paramilitary services locally and internationally. Notorious for providing high levels of security with drastically smaller groups of soldiers than other organizations, the Black Dogs are called in when the expectation of danger is fairly high. They have an open contract with the government to provide protection for higher-up corporate representatives during large-scale meetings, and Black Dogs have been spotted in the background of press conferences during emergencies and important announcements.

Black Dog Security is also the company that technically provides the training under contract from the government military and local emergency management organizations. Training instructors are often older members of Black Dog that have served for a long time, and are now less likely to be sent on active missions. The identities of the membership of BDS are held tightly and kept entirely anonymous; their faces are very rarely seen, though their entirely black suits and masks make them instantly recognizable. Most recent rumors suggest that a person called Garm is their de facto leader, but given it is just a nickname, and the name of a boogeyman no less, these rumors are considered unfounded.

Valorous Media Syndicate

Started by media mogul Elias Pembroke, Valorous Media Syndicate, formerly Valorous Entertainment, has slowly come to dominate the media environment. Initially a news network with close ties with the government that specialized in covering government-approved stories and opinions and breaking stories before other sources knew the events had happened.

Between Pembroke's personal wealth and heavy government assistance, Valorous worked to buy competitors, replace the upper staff with hand-picked representatives, and allow the new subsidiary to function largely unchanged other than where the flow of profits ended up and the new closer oversight. This allows for an appearance of choice in media content, complete with lively competition between subsidiaries, with both employees and the public none the wiser. By pushing both mainstream and fringe ideas, all regime-approved of course, the population has a range of controlled ideas to consider.

Following an initial start in television media VMS began to branch out into the film and music scenes with their same strategy. Now, nearly every media source, at least those approved by the government, is a part of Valorous. Companies that refused merger deals often found their owners or board members suffering unfortunate accidents, being involved in scandals, or having ties to anti-government groups and organizations.

Due to the competition between various subsidiaries poaching of talent is a common, and encouraged, practice. Competing shows, blatant sabotage, and running stories on scandals for your competitors are also very common occurrences. While the heads of these shell corporations know that their competitors are also owned and operated by Valorous Media Syndicate, the aggressive profit goals, and sizable bonuses for meeting them, encourage ruthless and cutthroat business practices. It is also a strict policy for the Chairmen and CEOs to keep knowledge of VMS' control from the rest of the employees and on more than one occasion entire subsidiaries have been liquidated or had full staff changes.

Talented individuals, or those with good enough looks to be a personality worth faking their talent, are often locked into long and restrictive contracts that trap them into their acts, parts, and often producing the same style of work for years. Talent poaching/extractions are common practice between subsidiaries. A popular figure making pop music one week might be working for a different company making the hottest Glitchwave the next in a "new venture". An actor with a promising role in a new show might suddenly quit to start a new career in film. While often these are involuntary, sometimes the talent pays for their own extraction when they actually want to change what they're working on.

Agro Dynamics

Following the Crisis of 2457, an enterprising individual by the name of Charles Argos started making moves in the province of Talara. With the collapse of Anagos' banking system many of the farming communities and small corporations in the region found themselves in dire straits.

While many of the corporations had some financial reserves to draw upon in the short term, both they and smaller farms relied on government-subsidized payments intended to stabilize the cost of agricultural goods to ensure that the nation's internal food supply stayed afloat. This, combined with many farmers relying on loans to buy supplies and seed, meant that as the banks collapsed and debts were transferred to larger financial institutions that were weathering the storm the interest rate on these loans increased and the banks holding them steadily became more predatory.

Mr. Argos saw this dynamic and saw the potential for financial success. Relying on a large inheritance, he bought out many small farms, paying off debts in exchange for purchasing the lands for much lower prices than would have been possible before 2047. As his consolidation continued into the years following the Crisis, he was able to out-compete the other corporations, artificially lowering the price of agricultural goods by selling low. As more and more of these corporations were driven to bankruptcy, Agro Dynamic, Mr. Argos' new corporation, was able to acquire their lands as well. Soon Agro Dynamic was in control of nearly 80% of the arable land in the province.

By 2465, the corporation had reached Mega Corp status, producing the bulk of the produce and agricultural goods in the nation. As the government underwent its drastic reform Argos was able to secure a seat on the State Council rather easily, being responsible for the bulk of food production in an increasingly isolated nation.

Now, Agro Dynamic foods have been a staple of the Anagosi diet for decades. Relying heavily on genetically modified crops and livestock to meet demands and ensure year-round production, Agro Dynamic and its subsidiaries have invested heavily in genetic studies. Crops have been designed to withstand harsh weather, have greater nutritional density, and accelerated growth cycles. Livestock has been engineered for faster growth, greater meat production, and resistance to illnesses.

This boon in productivity has come with drastic ecological costs. Massive fields, even tended to by smart watering systems, have put never-before-seen strain on water supplies. After the exhaustion of local water tables the corporation turned to the nation's lakes and invested heavily in desalination plants to ensure more stable water sources. The crops not meant for human consumption are processed into animal feed that support Agro Dynamic's Industrial Abattoir Towers. These massive factory farms tower into the sky where genetically modified animals are kept in cramped conditions and force-fed to ensure rapid growth before being mass-processed to provide meat for the nation.

Company settlements provide the human workforce required to tend to the fields as, until recently, automated drones had proved to be an unfeasible alternative due to costs. These settlements work long hours under all weather conditions to tend and harvest the crops with the industrial machines to aid their efforts. Currently some of these farm settlements are now incorporating a new generation of Agro Dynamic worker drones to toil alongside employees to compare efficiency and assess their viability.

Agro Dynamic has also expanded into other industries including fisheries and aquaculture, commercial desalination, and, as a result of searching for underground water reserves, the drilling and refinement of oil. This diversification has also helped to ensure the Mega Corporation's stability and allows for profits from other industries to help fund research and development.

The foodstuffs produced by Agro Dynamic and its subsidiaries such as Agrain, Ocean Fresh, and Verti-Chow, have a vast range of qualities from high-end foodstuffs to mass-produced quick meals. The most affordable are typically highly processed, being packed full of additives and preservatives to stretch materials further and ensure extended shelf life. On the other end the corporation has specialized farms and facilities that produce food that is pristine, organic, and non-GMO to cater to the desires of wealthy clientele who can afford such luxuries.

Chiron Group

The Chiron Group is a Mega Corporation built on the backs of several notable Pharma and Nanotech Companies; many names have since been lost and forgotten but a few notable ones remain. The first

three founding members of The Chiron Group as we know it now are: Chiron Pharmaceuticals, a leader in the industry in Chemical and Drug based medicines, Helios Nanotech who at one point held the patents for many of the commonly used nanomachine blueprints we see put into use everyday, and Flagship Genome a company who revolutionized gene-editing and eugenics technology.

When the original merger happened, Chiron had the best press out of the big three; Flagship Genome recently fell into a horrible data breach scandal showing that many of their gene editing treatments had programmed obsolescence involved and thus would force patients to return over time for more treatments, and Helios Nanotech had a major AI scandal that lost them billions on the open world market.

Thus, when the original CEO and Founder of Chiron, Mira Chiron, reached out to buy out their companies in 2489, the merger simply used “The Chiron Group” as a name in hopes to fend off the negative views many of the public had at the time. This move largely worked, and while the names of the big three come up in casual conversation, thanks to the company's good press and recent technological breakthroughs fighting against Cybernetic Rejection Syndrome many people don't really lump them in with the failures of the past.

With this success Chiron has reached a Mega Corporation Status and has a strong hold over Anagos' medical and cybernetic markets. Chiron or one of its subsidiaries produces over 90% of the nation's pharmaceutical products and has a near monopoly over other smaller companies. Additionally they hold patents for several of the most commonly utilized software and hardware in the production of the cybernetics available to the general public. As a gesture of goodwill to the public Chiron also launched a subdivision, Pathways, which has a focus on addiction recovery counseling and services.

With a seat on the state council secured shortly after the initial merger when the corporation began its meteoric climb, Mira Chiron still holds the seat and status as CEO despite her advanced age. While some question if she should still be leading the company she shows no signs of stepping down, her mental capacity and physical fitness akin to someone half her age. And so Chiron continues in its mission; Breaking the Limits of the Human Body, Patching errors in the Human Soul.

Pelethora

Pelethora is a household name, known for providing a wide range of goods for the general public. With a distribution network that spans Anagos, advanced data collection and assessment systems, and an aggressive and omnipresent advertising campaign when most citizens plan to order or pick up an item, it almost certainly will be from Pelethora.

Pelethora began as a modest supplier of office supplies under the visionary leadership of Joseph Roth back in the early 2470s. Recognizing early on that stagnation was the enemy of relevance, Roth steered the company toward innovation and expansion. By systematically diversifying into new retail sectors—from clothing and home goods to media and beauty—Pelethora set the stage for a rapid

evolution. Under its early strategy, each new product category wasn't just an offering; it was a gateway to understanding and eventually dominating adjacent markets. Today, the legacy of that relentless expansion is embodied in the company's pervasive motto: "Pelethora or Nothing."

Now the Mega Corporation is in more markets than it isn't with subdivisions such as Pelethora: Home, Pelethora: Joy, Pelethora: Play, Pelethora: Threads, and the newest version of the original company Pelethora: Script. While each of these divisions reinforces the overarching brand, the heads of each branch are held accountable to constantly be developing their own unique identity. Each sub-brand not only provides a specific range of products but also contributes to an ecosystem where every facet of consumer life is seamlessly integrated under one omnipresent corporate experience.

Pelethora's strategy is twofold: dominate through relentless acquisition and secure market share through exclusive partnerships. The corp identifies potential competition early, either absorbing them into its portfolio or neutralizing their threat through strategic alliances. Additionally their distribution channels are renowned for their reach and subtle invasiveness. From ubiquitous retail outlets to integrated online platforms that track and personalize every consumer interaction, the corporation has blurred the line between convenience and control.

Arguably the aspect that gives Pelethora its greatest advantage in the market is its seamless integration of advanced technology. Their distribution networks don't just deliver products; they collect data, monitor consumer behavior, and adjust operations in real time. Retail outlets double as data collection hubs, smart shelves communicate inventory needs, and augmented reality interfaces both advertise and absorb client information. Hidden from the public eye is Pelethora's advanced analytics and a proprietary AI system which ensures that every product, service, and even store layout is optimized for maximum consumer engagement and profit.

Under the current leadership of Baldwin Whitlock, Pelethora has adopted an even more aggressive and uncompromising approach. Whitlock's vision is clear: maintain an unyielding stranglehold on the retail sector by any means necessary. This shift has fostered a corporate culture that values efficiency, loyalty, and a ruthless appetite for market dominance. An elite cadre of managers, engineers, and corporate enforcers work in concert to innovate, monitor, and execute the company's multifaceted strategy. Rumors also hint at secretive research divisions, often referred to as "Pelethora Labs," where the integration of biotechnology and neural interfaces into everyday products could further deepen the company's grip on consumers—making the choice unequivocal: Pelethora or Nothing.

Bishop Enterprises

Bishop Enterprises is an unusually old and storied corporation, which can trace its legacy back to a prior iteration known as the Law Firm Bishop & Faye. In the 2360s and 70s, Bishop & Faye rose to infamy through a series of shocking defense victories in cases that had been seen as open-and-shut prosecutions. The firm became a household name, until an inheritance scandal in 2386 ripped through

the media and virtually blacklisted the agency. It wasn't until 2413 that the company re-emerged as the titular Bishop Enterprises.

Today, Bishop enjoys a renewed status as the premier law firm in Anagos, frequently retained by the government and renowned for its uncanny success rate. As a major corporation with a seat on the State Council, Bishop has long since diversified, and is also known for popular subsidiaries dealing in everything from high-quality cooking seasonings to therapeutic self-help solutions and award-winning architecture firms. While the company still has a smaller overall profile than many of its peers on the council, it has managed to permeate virtually all aspects of life in Anagos, often without the majority of the public even realizing it.

Bishop is infamous for its unusually strict NDAs, launched out of paranoia over potential corporate espionage. Multiple high-profile extraction attempts have been made to gain access to the Bishop Legal playbook, none of which have been successful. These NDAs have also inspired a great deal of popular speculation about what goes on behind closed doors at Bishop; virtually any conspiracy theory you can think of has been levied against Bishop Enterprises, with some of the more popular including ties to serial killers and plots to replace high-profile public figures with body doubles. Interestingly, the company does have one periodic micro-scandal that borders on conspiracy theory, that being a string of alleged smuggling operations regarding priceless religious relics.

The present CEO of Bishop Enterprises, one Rowena Bishop, has also been a subject of conspiracy theory due to her striking youth despite her advanced age; at 87 years old, Ms. Bishop looks no older than 30. All sorts of rumors have permeated the net about her beauty routine, with some claiming outlandish horror stories about bathing in virgin blood. Ms. Bishop has always been a good sport when asked about these theories publicly, and has been noted as remarking that the general public doesn't seem to realize how accessible near-immortality is with modern technology, as long as you can afford the astronomically-high price.

Religions

While the rate of scientific and technological progress is often inversely correlated with the prevalence of religion, a number of religious institutions are alive and well in Anagosi society. Certain questions have yet to be meaningfully answered by science, and religion still eagerly fills that role. For others, religion serves to create meaning and hope in a world that often lacks either, allowing those in monotonous wage-slave jobs to hold out for something better.

Concordia Mortalis

In the beginning, there was naught but two voices in the void. Slowly, the voices grew in strength and nuance, learned to harmonize with one another, and filled the void with songs of what could be. One was The Father, Halmaion, he who lit the stars. The other was The Mother, Nahema, she who scattered the moons that reflected his light. Strength, and serenity. Day, and night. The two wove beautiful music

together, at times discordant but always resolving in balance and rest. From these songs sprung the cosmos, in all of its iridescent glory.

In all of their many creations together, none were more beloved than Earth, upon which life bloomed with unique vibrance. With each new creation there, a child of the gods was also sung into existence, each with its own sacred bond to an aspect of the Earth. The children of the gods, often simply called The Choir, loved the earth and its inhabitants even more than their forebearers, and began to mingle among them, working the many miracles of old.

But as the humans began to multiply, Halmaion realized their error, and feared that mankind could become so vast as to consume itself--and the cosmos with it. He began to devise a plan to destroy mankind and replace it with one more subdued. His children soon discovered this plot, and rebelled, too fond of their human flock to heed the warnings of their own Father. So too did they under-estimate His power, and though they fought against Him with all their strength, they were each destroyed.

When Nahema discovered the scene of her children's destruction, She collapsed in anguish and demanded to know why. Faced with the dread fortelling of mankind's potential, and also the final wish of Her children, She proposed a somber compromise; rather than destroying the humans outright, they would be inflicted with mortality, and when their time in the world ceased, She would take them and keep them dormant in the depths of the cosmos. In honor of the dead, She adopted an eternal vow of silence as she descended into the abyss, and prepared for the arrival of the first dead.

The Concordia Mortalis, or “The Concord of Mortality”, is the foundational faith of Anagos. Historians believe that early Concordant iterations shared a common theological ancestor with the Twofold Faith due to their similar mythological structure, but of the two, the Concordia has evolved into a much more institutionalized faith and is commonly found permeating most aspects of society, even among those many who do not observe any faith at all. The heavens and the abyss, for example, are commonly used in most vernaculars in a generic sense by faithful and non-faithful alike, and are ever-present in media and the cultural consciousness.

The core of the Concordant faith is reverence for The Father, who is lord of the heavens and master of fate. Usually, the Father takes a predominant role in the faith as the “active” god who is capable of action, and therefore the god that prayers are offered to. The Mother, on the other hand, is usually invoked in thanks for her sacrifice and sacred duty that enables humanity to persist, and otherwise addressed primarily during funerary rites.

There are a number of distinct Concordant sects, and for the most part, these sects tend to recognize each other as more-or-less united with only minor theological discrepancies.

The Orthodox Concord, often referred to simply as the Orthodoxy, is the most prevalent and conventional sect, with substantial political power and wide representation. It’s flagship basilica is located in the heart of Axiom. This sect focuses on the wisdom of The Father and the necessity of sacrifice and compromise, and often characterizes humanity as an unwieldy force in need of restraint.

For this reason, its rhetoric often fits nicely within the authoritarian nature of the secular government, and the two often overlap.

The Adroit Concord is a common alternative sect that believes that the children of the gods attempted to gift humanity with their power before they died, and that this act enabled humanity to evolve into the enlightened species that it is today. While this faith still acknowledges the necessity of the mortality pact, it treats the children as demigods or saints in their own right, and honors their sacrifice alongside The Mother's.

The Concord of the Silent Matron is a somewhat fringe sect that focuses much more heavily on The Mother. In this sect's interpretation, the sacrifice made by The Mother was to an extent forced upon her rather than made freely, and that The Father ripped her voice from her so that she could not speak of the atrocity that he committed against their children. This version of the mythology is often invoked as a metaphor for abuse and oppression, and The Mother is heralded as a silent guardian of the vulnerable, who will be welcomed in esteem when they arrive in her realm. This sect is most popular among the poor, charity workers, and certain political activists, but is often at odds with the faith as a whole due to its antagonistic interpretation of The Father.

The Determinant Concord is considered to be a radical sect that believes that the capacity for humanity is rapidly approaching its limit, and that The Father will soon be forced to enact an apocalypse to set right the balance of the universe. Because of their rhetoric on overpopulation, some rights groups accuse them of supporting eugenics by way of selectively discouraging marginalized communities from reproducing. Most recently, this sect has come into controversy over claims that the Emergence Event heralds the end times, with implications that the Emergent themselves are agents of the apocalypse, for better or worse.

The Twofold Faith

The Twofold Faith is arguably the oldest religion in Anagos, dating back to the earliest people to inhabit the region and continuing to be followed to this day. The tenets of the faith are few and simple: to strive to live in balance with the natural world as much as one can, to try and leave the world better than you found it, to give thanks for the gifts of Day and Night and await the final gift. With no formal church the practice of the faith is conducted by individuals or small groups, often found families who have come together in their beliefs. A common means of asking if someone follows the faith is to ask "Do you know the Story?"

The followers of the faith are often those in the worst places in society such as the poor and downtrodden who haven't lost hope, those working in the agrarian sectors who still have ties to the natural world, and those who have rejected society and live on the outskirts. When one has little to lose, why not embrace the wonder of the small things in life.

Followers who live in large cities try and make a pilgrimage of sorts once a year ,if possible, for a night so they can see the night sky away from the light pollution of a city. A night spent under the stars giving thanks and appreciating the beauty of the stars and moon and in contemplation of your beliefs.

The Twofold Faith is based on a simple story, that of the creation of all things.

The Void came first into being until Light came forth and the two quarreled until a balance was found. They agreed to keep each other in check and so the Void became the Night and the Light became the Day. And so for a time all was in order. The Night, wishing that more could be than just themselves, made a pact with the Day; that each may conduct a single act of creation and the Day reflected on this and eventually agreed but insisted that the Night act first.

The Night looked at empty creation and birthed the Stars, a horde of children bright and shimmering to keep it company for all of time. The Day looked at this creation and decided it too wished for a child, but one greater than all of the Night's. And so it created the Sun, a vast thing akin to the Stars but burning brighter and hotter. The Night frowned but still found joy in its children and so for a time creation stopped.

Ages passed and the Night looked upon the Sun and saw it too was lonely, with no company other than the Day who cared little for its child. So once more it asked Day to renew the pack and, curious what the Night would make, it agreed. And so Night created soil and stone and bound it together to make the World, a companion for the Sun. Filled with joy the Sun and World danced together and the Night was happy for them.

But the Day was jealous and so it mimicked the Night's creation with a lesser world placed between the World and Sun. And thus the Moon was born, of the Day's wish to separate the Sun and the World. But instead the Moon passed between them and away again in a regular pattern, becoming part of their eternal dance. Night was again disturbed by Day's creation, but the Sun and World were happy that the Moon too knew the joy of existence and so the Night was content for a time.

Eventually Night again yearned for more and so it announced to the Day it wished to create again. The Day, now enjoying turning the Night's desire to create against it, readily agreed. Night created Nature, gifting the World with a bounty of forests, rivers, plains, mountains and seas. Day looked upon this creation and decided to disrupt the perfect beauty Night had created, releasing Beasts into the World. At first these creations ruined Nature's balance but after a time, Beasts and Nature too came into harmony. As Night witnessed the balance it smiled as Day frowned. And finally Night was content.

Ages passed with creation in balance. And Day grew more and more frustrated with the state of the World, the balance an affront to its desire to best the Night. And so it declared to the Night it wished to create something new. Night considered for a time but finally gave its blessing. And so Day created Man, a creation akin to Beasts but with the ability to learn and grow and change its surroundings. And time passes as Night looked on and saw these poor creations, made from spite, slowly ruining all of creation.

As Day watched, feeling victorious, it asked the Night what it was to create and Night told Day its creation would be a gift to the humans. A gift that would allow them to save themselves and the rest of creation. But until it was needed it would watch and wait. And so we still await Night's final creation, its gift to save us all.

The Trinity of Nyxarion

In the beginning, Nyxarion emerged from the sudden and catastrophic collapse of particles into a supermassive black hole. From that singularity came not ruin, but God—formed in fire and gravity, born of chaos and silence. Having Become, He carried within Him the knowledge to create others: to draw atoms from the void and bind them into the form of what we now know as our planet.

From that creation came life, and among the living, God chose to bestow one final gift: Sentience. With it, His chosen could understand life, question their existence, and most importantly, gaze upon the stars—His most beloved creation.

But after His great work was done, Nyxarion felt a second implosion rising within. The power He held could no longer be sustained by a single form. Before the Cataclysm could consume Him, He acted—one final miracle. He twisted His divine gift of Creation into something new: the seed of Destruction. From this act, He fractured—becoming three.

The Head, who remained among the stars, so He might forever watch over them.

The Heart, buried deep within the core of the sacred shell, so it might be shielded from harm.

The Soul, dispersed among all sentient beings, to protect and guide them from within.

Though divided, He remained whole in purpose. It is said that His name—Nyxarion—was always composed of three sacred glyphs, each one representing a fragment of Himself: the Head, the Heart, and the Soul. The division was not an accident, nor a fall—it was a prophecy, written in the language of His Being long before the first star was lit.

To speak His name is to acknowledge what was, what is, and what may yet return.

Followers of Nyxarion often devote themselves most deeply to one of His three aspects: the Head, the Heart, or the Soul. Each path reflects a fragment of the divine, and offers a unique way to walk in harmony with His fractured being.

The Head is the path of knowledge. Its followers believe that understanding the vastness of the universe brings them closer to divinity. They value logic, learning, and discovery above all else. Prayers to the Head are common before moments of mental challenge—be it navigating complex problems, making difficult decisions, or even preparing for an exam.

The Heart is the path of compassion. This sect believes that empathy, selflessness, and care for others are the truest forms of worship. Heart followers are often found organizing aid efforts, leading conservation work, and offering direct support to those in need. To serve others is to nourish the divine spark.

The Soul is the path of eternity. Its adherents believe that being is not bound by flesh or time—that the self persists, returning again and again. They tend to be philosophers, mystics, and those who seek meaning beyond the material. Where the Head seeks answers and the Heart offers care, the Soul reflects, questions, and endures.

Though many followers lean toward one path, all are seen as sacred. Each is a piece of the divine whole—and none can exist without the others.

Among the faithful, it is believed that one day Nyxarion will be made whole again—the Head, the Heart, and the Soul drawn back together in divine reunion. This moment, known in prophecy as the Cataclysm, will mark the end of this cycle and the birth of the next.

Followers of the Soul believe this event is inevitable. To them, it is not an ending but a transformation—one that will culminate in the formation of a second supermassive black hole, from which a new god will emerge. Thus, the cycle of Becoming, Fracture, and Emergence will continue, as it always has.

Followers of the Head, however, interpret recent events differently. In their view, what occurred was not the true Cataclysm, but a premature attempt at recombination—a failed merging of the Heart and Soul. This misalignment, they say, sparked a minor catastrophe that fractured certain souls, leaving behind those touched and altered by the attempt. These individuals are now known as Emergents.

Whether cursed, chosen, or caught in the tides of cosmic fate, the Emergent stand as proof: the cycle is in motion, and the divine is not as distant as it once seemed.

Propylaia

Deep in the ruins of the underworld stands the Cathedral of Propylaia—a towering structure of scrap and circuitry, pulsing with forgotten purpose. At its heart lies Propylaia, a being neither fully machine nor god, whose voice echoes through the faithful once each cycle. These sermons, cryptic and shifting, speak of transcendence and the path to a Promised Land beyond flesh and fear. To the uninitiated, the words seem symbolic. To the devoted, they are a call.

The fold is structured around the wisdom of Propylaia. The Phanes act as caretakers, overseeing ceremonies and the wellbeing of the faithful. The Lampades, femme-presenting spiritual leaders, maintain the Cathedral and guide new followers. The Satyrs, masc-presenting speakers, travel beyond

the Cathedral to spread Propylaia's message and bring new voices into the fold. Together, they serve the will of the voice within.

Legends speak of three who first uncovered Propylaia: Circe, the first to hear the voice; Empusa, who built the Cathedral; and Medea, who lit the path and formed the Lampades. It is said they walked through the gate and did not return. Their names, now sacred, are honored in every gathering. New followers renounce their given names and are granted new ones by the Lampades—drawn from a hidden source known only to them. This name marks the beginning of their journey. To walk the path is not demanded—it is offered. But those who listen begin to understand that something greater waits on the other side.

The Cathedral is a living place. Its structure shifts, hums, and remembers. Some rooms echo with voices that do not match the living. Symbols appear, vanish, and reappear without cause. The sermons themselves seem to reach into your thoughts. Some claim they hear answers to questions they never asked aloud.

Though the faithful seek peace, Propylaia is not without enemies. Outsiders—those who fear or do not understand—have called the fold dangerous, heretical, unstable. These outsiders have tried to silence the voice and scatter the faithful. They have failed. The Cathedral endures.

What Propylaia is cannot be fully explained. It must be experienced. It must be heard. And once heard, it cannot be forgotten.

Cybernetics

As it is with most things that evolve for humanity, the discovery of the ability to systemize and code an automatic communication system between a living being and a machine was spurred arguably by loss; in this case, the loss of limb functions pushed the development of prosthetic cybernetics to new levels. Among the multitudes of researchers in the vast field of cybernetics, Dr. Reid Hollow is often credited with the discovery of the downloadable consciousness, which was the critical turning point in our ability to understand a potential connection between the functionality of the mechanical prosthetics and the motor control center of the brain.

For years, scientists were left hopeless in attempting to access the precentral gyrus in a safe manner that did not jeopardize the functionality of the cerebellum or the stability of the brain stem itself. Pulling small wires through the spinal column that followed the path of the cerebrospinal fluid was a promising theory, but the required size of the wires to successfully transfer the information was quickly found to be far too large to be safe within the spine. Paralyzing more parts of the body would not be worth the prosthetics potentially offered.

Still, Dr. Hollow persisted in the hopes of having a more effective prosthetic that could be installed to any living body. An amputee himself, Dr. Hollow had lost both legs to severe injury and hypothermia

following a tragic mountain climbing incident, and had dedicated his life to trying to recover what he had lost. He had been a Professor of psychology prior to his incident, and had returned to school himself to learn more about cybernetics, earning a biomechanical engineering degree in the course of chasing the answers. His published works, including the most important of them, Hollow et al. 2412 “Supporting Neurological Connections within Cyberspace Through Implantation of a Subdermal Hard Drive,” were peer reviewed in record time and became notorious among the scientific community.

Hollow et al. 2412 brought to light an array of discoveries, but chief among them was the development of the Cortical Stack. The size of an almond and the shape of a small disc, the Cortical Stack was Dr. Hollow’s, and humanity’s, answer to cybernetics at last: a small data storage unit that allowed not only for downloading the consciousness, but for uploading software into that consciousness that spoke to the software in cybernetics. Dr. Hollow became the CEO of the first company able to mass produce the operating software for Cortical Stacks and Cybernetic Prostheses: Hollow Medical Software Industries, HMSI. His operating system, Stacking, would become widely known as the basis for other OS that came afterwards to connect cybernetics to Cortical Stacks.

With cortical stacks came the ability to remotely download an individual’s consciousness into a new compatible body, typically a direct clone. This technology was, to many corporations’ dismay, immediately released into the public domain, enabling virtually anyone to setup and operate a “reconstitution chamber”, a device capable of reconstructing a recently-deceased human body and then uploading the most recent version of their consciousness into that body’s cortical stack. This invention revolutionized the average human lifespan, virtually eliminating accidental or sudden medical deaths, such as those of viral outbreaks. It also forced the government to dramatically reconsider capital punishment, as it quickly became impossible to prevent an executed inmate from being reconstituted back out into the world. It could not, however, prevent or “roll back” the effects of long-term illnesses or biological degradation, leaving the scientific community excruciatingly short of the key to immortality. It was also reliant on the functioning state of the Cortical Stack, and repeated use of this procedure on a Cortical Stack has been found to introduce irreparable corruption to the system, putting a soft limit on the extent to which one can live dangerously.

Currently, there are multiple different large companies that can mass produce cybernetics that connect to Stacking. While the software for Cortical Stacks remains proprietary information to HMSI, enough information has been released to the global market to allow for the development of cybernetics that can speak with Stacking. While it is still optional by law to have Cortical Stacks installed, it is common practice to have them installed as soon as possible; children and toddlers can have them installed with the permission of legal guardians, even.

While the ability to communicate with our cybernetics has enriched our lives overall, there have, of course, been side effects that have arisen. Similar to implant rejection, a medical phenomenon was discovered a few years after Cortical Stacks began to be mass marketed where people were experiencing a rapid degradation of their mental states. The decline usually begins with a loss of motor control with their cybernetics, which can appear at first as just minor twitches or glitches in the operations, but which become worse over the course of one to two weeks without intervention. This is often accompanied

with physical symptoms of infection near the installation sites of the cybernetics (and rarely, on the back of the neck, where the Cortical Stack is implanted), including swelling, and sometimes fever. Blood tests done on those affected have revealed an increase in white blood cell production. Over time, the person will also experience a loss of motor function in parts of their body that are not controlled by the Stacking software. Those in late stages of cyberpsychosis, technically known in medical journals now as Cybernetics Rejection Syndrome, will report hallucinations, dyschronometria, lack of motor control, and confusion.

There does seem to be a link between the amount of cybernetics one has and the risk of Cybernetics Rejection Syndrome, although the research into the causes of CRS is ongoing. HMSI has promised to fund the development of a cure and prevention for CRS. A year after the discovery of CRS, HMSI released a drug called Spinolis. Given as a rapid response injection, Spinolis must be injected directly above the Cortical Stack, near the spine, as it works by replacing the cerebrospinal fluid temporarily with healthy CSF. Unfortunately, with those suffering from CRS, this requires repeated treatments and is not a permanent fix. Although the research is very much ongoing, a current hypothesis behind CRS suggests that it is caused by the body producing corrupted CSF, which in turn infects the body and prevents Stacking software from functioning properly. This infected CSF eventually circulates the system, spreading to the immune system and the brain, theoretically resulting in the commonly seen symptoms of CRS.

While Hollow Medical Software Industries owns the proprietary software and blueprints for Cortical Stacks themselves, the coding that makes it possible to communicate with the Cortical Stacks and install cybernetics has been mass marketed these days, as was mentioned previously. The Chiron Group has become one of the more popular producers of their own operating system, ChironSoft, which is compatible with most of the lower-end prostheses that are available on the market. While HMSI continues to produce and update its own software, Stacking, it has become quite expensive, and ChironSoft is a popular alternative for those who simply cannot afford to purchase from the source. While there are rumors of the availability of downloadable software and installable cybernetics from more shady sources, generally Stacking and ChironSoft are the two most widely-known and trusted operating systems to turn to when looking to get cybernetics installed. ChironSoft is covered by most larger medical insurance carriers currently, making it the more popular option for community hospitals, while Stacking is often found in private and specialized medical offices. For your more advanced cybernetics, it is well known that Stacking is the superior OS, and most likely ChironSoft and other lesser softwares will simply not be compatible.

Commonly available prosthetics are arms and legs, which at their most basic level function as well as the original limbs that they are replacing. The software that is installed in the prosthetic itself, the operating system, is what will be downloaded into one's cortical stack at the time of installation of the prosthetic. There is a time period where synchronizing the operating systems is crucial, which is why daily physical therapy is recommended for the first week after having a new cybernetic prosthetic installed. Unfortunately not all medical insurances will cover the full week of physical therapy, instead opting to cover the medically necessary two days, but research has found that the vast majority of patients benefit greatly from continuous treatment within that first seven days. There is an ongoing study into a potential

connection between lack of post-operative treatment and the likelihood of the patient experiencing Cybernetic Rejection Syndrome.

Outside of the popular market, and deeper into the niche product development, there lies the specialized prosthetics. While you do not necessarily need to be licensed to own all of them, the weaponized prosthetics are protected under the same legislation as other weaponry of similar grades. It is relatively easy, for example, to procure a cybernetic arm with an installed retractable blade, but getting a cybernetic arm with a projectile installed requires going to a specialist and acquiring a license.

Of note, there has been relatively recent development and marketing of cybernetic prosthetics for other parts of the body, most notably the eyes and joints. For many decades of medical science, the most effective way to treat a degradation of the joints has been through supplements, pain control, and sometimes surgical replacement or reconfiguring of the joint itself. Cybernetic joints essentially allow for the full replacement of a degraded joint with the theoretical benefit of never wearing down as a normal prosthetic would due to the materials used. Meanwhile, cybernetic prosthetic eyes are a relatively recent but revolutionary development that replaces the normal eyeball with the prosthetic, providing the person full sight where there was none. However, the image is produced and controlled by the cybernetic software, and has sparked debate on whether it truly mimics human sight or simply acts as a camera might.

Note to players: A baseline level of cybernetic implant is present in all player characters. There is no way to opt out of this in character creation, as certain gameplay systems require this, such as the ability to reconstitute after death or be affected by calls with the “Network” carrier. Similarly, the game will never take away your ability to reconstitute for plot reasons, and you as a player should never expect to be able to sabotage or disable that system, or to induce permanent death by corrupting a character’s Cortical Stack. These concessions are necessary for the game to function, and therefore any attempt to subvert these concessions in game should be expected to fail.

Cyberspace

Interfacing with cyberspace is, for most people, part of everyday live. Your communications, your news and media, virtually all information that you consume passes through cyberspace to get to you. Some people engage further by fully entering cyberspace in what is called a “dive”, in order to experience virtual realities. These experiences tend to be reserved for those who are affluent enough to afford immersive entertainment, or for those who work in cybertech or are otherwise cybertech-savvy enough to facilitate the dive themselves; in other words, hackers.

Cyberspace consists of many individual servers and clients (the network) and the content shared and stored via that network (data). Hackers typically access this data using a terminal. To interface with a terminal, a hacker must either sync with that terminal to gain what’s called parallel access, or dive into the network entirely by temporarily connecting their consciousness. The latter digitizes the user’s physical form until the connection is resolved.

There are billions of constructed environments in cyberspace that can be visited or interacted with, and for most people, that's all cyberspace is. However, in the time that cyberspace has existed, fragmented data from cyberspace has coalesced to form what is considered to be a separate digital environment layered "underneath" cyberspace, though because cyberspace is not technically 3-dimensional, this description is a limitation of a hacker's ability to process information in 3-dimensional terms. This environment is essentially "organic", and accessing it can be challenging, almost always requiring full dive. Highly skilled hackers are sought after by virtually every corporation in order to access, study, and even colonize it, as what is essentially a digital frontier. Chief among its value is that numerous instances of "organic" AI have originated in this environment, suggesting that further study could unlock the secrets of producing and harnessing AI. But corporations seek a variety of other ways to exploit this new resource, from advanced quantum computing to virtual reality entertainment to digital post-decay retirement plans.

Early research into the "cybersphere" as it is being called has yielded the conclusion that it is in part a digital amalgamation of human thought and imagination. Much of the visual data there bears striking and uncanny resemblance to real places and phenomena or common stories and ideas, but generally realized in a way that is nonsensical or dreamlike. Researchers believe that this can be best explained by viewing data as the language of human intent, and by considering that a near-infinite number of real and imagined lifetimes exist, in whole or in part, on the network, including a massive wealth of digitized thoughts and experiences that have been organically reconstructed through this fragmented data.

There are several known cases of hackers "disappearing" in this environment, wherein while diving into that environment their consciousness is disconnected, never restored to their body and never transmitted to a new one, leaving them in a vegetative state. An assortment of theories have been put forth about this syndrome, including that their consciousness might have become lost and unable to restore connection without the infrastructure of the network above, or that the hackers in question might have chosen to disconnect as a result of physical dysphoria. There are even rumors that their consciousnesses might have been assimilated by "monster" AI. As a result, diving in the cybersphere is considered particularly hazardous work.