

## PAPRIKA (F 1.0)

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*“The parade of lunacy is coming, and it is in your name...”*

Normally, you'd be expecting either the Lady or perhaps somebody else to explain the situation to you – but as it is, things are a bit too quiet. The room itself is empty, save for a table upon which an ornate place card rests. The place card itself has nothing on it save for a kiss mark and a single word.

Paprika. The spice? Or perhaps a stylistic name? It doesn't explain anything at all.

But there's a note that was resting underneath the place card, and perhaps what's written will explain things a little better.

The Survey Team ventured into this world shortly before your arrival – but the technology which they found was something they weren't entirely prepared for. The world itself isn't anything too alien – for those who have been to Earth, it'll be like going home again. The survey team was able to procure some samples of the local technology, but before they could delve further into the world, she...

“Came, yes, yes, that's when I showed up! But the Survey Team is sleeping right now, so we shouldn't disturb them.” A woman's voice from over your shoulder, a presence that went unnoticed up until now, but even as you turn your head she's gone.

The room transforms and you find yourself in a plush office, a woman sitting in a lounge chair in front of you. The table is gone, the note is gone but the place card remains in your hand and the woman smiles.

“Hi there! I'm Paprika. It's such a pleasure to meet you!”

Every time you blink, something in the room seems to shift. A plant in a bottle appears in the corner, the painting in the back of the room dances, the refrigerator near the door seems to shift about. This, you can only assume, is the work of this “Paprika” lady, the smile on her face doesn't change as she watches you take it all in.

“Seems like I have a job to do! So let's get right to it! You, here for a decade? It'll be such a fun time, even if I can't be there with you all the time. Oh well, in any case, I can bring you up to speed in place of that old guy. Let's let grandpa sleep a little longer shall we?”

As Paprika explains, advances in technology have reached a point where scientists can dive in to the dreams of people and interact with them. This, made possible by a piece of technology called the DC Mini, has in turn led to many new advances as far as psychiatric therapy goes. But as it stands, the technology is in an early testing phase at the Institute of Psychiatric Research, and so much of it is kept heavily under wraps.

Or at least, they try to keep things under wraps, but as Paprika explains a little further – there have been field tests conducted on civilians. Lately though, something slightly more disturbing has been happening...and word of civilians being affected have reached some folks at the Institute of Psychiatric Research.

You don't have to involve yourself with the Institute's problems of course. Society is at one of its most tranquil periods and this is a great time for science to take leaps and bounds... that is, if things like the DC Mini can make it past the trial phase. But that's just extra information on top; it's a wonderful time to be living on Earth, so you shouldn't have any worries at all.

As far as helping you out goes, Paprika hands you an envelope. She has to play by the rules she says – or else the kind Lady will wake the Survey Team back up. Inside it are some resources, presumably to help you prepare.

**+1000 CP**

“Well we have plenty of time here, so before you wrap your head around preparations and whatnot, why don't you tell me a little about yourself?” A little background check couldn't hurt, right? If anything, she should know how to help you fit in to this society.

### [Basic Evaluation]

Well, why don't we start with something simple – take a look at these profiles, and see which one seems to suit you the most? If I can get a better idea of what you're like, then it'll help me figure out how to better prepare you for anything that comes ahead!

Profile	Description
<b>The Outlier</b>	Hmm... so you don't feel like you fit in anywhere? That's alright; there are a lot of people who wouldn't fit in especially when I've given you such a limited selection to work with. Even so, I can still help you prepare to the best of my ability, to help you assemble together a skillset that can pull the real “you” out.
<b>The Psychiatrist</b>	A person more interested in the minds of others and how other people click? I like that! I really do! That's the kind of thing that fascinates me too, slipping into other people's dreams and just watching it like a movie! I'll make sure to whip up something that'll help you as far as delving into other people goes. And hey, if anything, you can always work at the Institute of Psych Research – even if the chairman is a demon to work for, they're always looking for new talent!
<b>The Scientist</b>	Hmm, more interested in the tech side of things? Well I suppose I can't fault you, technology can do all sorts of wonderful things – I kind of wish I had a friend here for this, but I shouldn't have any

	trouble whipping together something that'll help you sate your technological curiosity. With technology on the rise, you can probably apply yourself anywhere – but the Institute is always looking for a helping hand! Sheesh, at this point I feel like I'm doing PR work... The chairman probably wouldn't appreciate it either, that old fart.
<b>The Investigator</b>	A fan of looking into mysteries and solving problems? That's pretty neat! There are tons of things that still go unsolved even now, so you'll have plenty of problems to chew at, that's for sure. Finding something to help you with your mystery hunting urges shouldn't be too difficult I think! I think the Tokyo Metropolitan department is still looking for help – the client I know that works there seems to be swamped with cases all the time...

There's a matter involving your appearance of course – everybody should have a body that they can be happy about – and so Paprika has no problems with letting you choose what you're going to look like here as long as you remain a human. Can't really walk around looking like a monster in modern day Earth now, can you? You'd probably get shot at like in those cartoon shows.

**You may choose your appearance and gender at will as long as it fits within human norms. Your age can be freely chosen between the ranges of 15 to 50.**

Paprika looks down at a clipboard that has appeared in her hand and frowns. It seems like the Survey Team was going to set up locales for you to safely arrive in, but they all went to sleep before they could get to it. I guess I'll have to work up a bit of my own magic! Don't worry, you can decide where you want to go now, and it'll be ready by the time all your preparations are made!

With a snap of her fingers, 8 paintings show up. **You may choose one picture at will to tunnel through**, and show up on Earth at that destination. If you weren't aware, Paprika will make it evident that every one of these pictures is somewhat related to Tokyo. She can only paint what she knows after all.

<b>The Picture</b>	<b>The Destination</b>
<b>Skytree</b>	The Tokyo Skytree is without a doubt the tallest structure in Tokyo. A broadcasting tower for both radio and television channels, the view from the top of the Skytree is undoubtedly breathtaking, but other than for sightseeing purposes the Skytree doesn't have much appeal to common folks.
<b>Budokan</b>	Appearing in an empty Budokan certainly makes for a rather hollow entrance – but at least it's better than finding yourself suddenly tossed into a packed crowd on opening night. The

	<p>Budokan is a stadium venue used for both concerts as well as martial arts events in the past. You could certainly wait for a concert to come around, but it's probably better to just take the train and actually get into town.</p>
<b>Kabukichou</b>	<p>The Red Light District which came from an old duck sanctuary, Kabukichou has a vibrant night life unrivalled by anywhere else in Tokyo. But such a vibrant area comes with its own dangers, as gang activity is very common here, and getting on the wrong side of a gang can make your time here very, very unpleasant.</p>
<b>Roppongi Sky Aquarium</b>	<p>An amazing aquarium in the Roppongi district, it's pretty much a must visit – though appearing randomly in an aquarium up in the sky might be a bit disconcerting at first. The Roppongi district itself was designed to be largely self-sufficient – and true to that ideal, you can pretty much find anything that you might need here, though finding a long term place to stay might prove to be a little bit costly...</p>
<b>Miraikan</b>	<p>Generally referred to as the Future Museum, the Miraikan is museum dedicated to technology and technological developments. The Tsunagari permanent exhibition is a highlight of the museum, and the Geo-Cosmos globe display is probably the most notable centerpiece – as it displays real time information of various weather elements all over the world. Going to and from the Miraikan is simple, as the automated Yurikamome transit line can get you to downtown Tokyo in a flash.</p>
<b>Yumenoshima TGD</b>	<p>One of the several artificial islands in Tokyo, the Tropical Greenhouse Dome in Yumenoshima is a bit of an oddity, considering the island itself was constructed with landfill waste. Appearing within the Dome might prove to be a bit of an interesting experience, as the Dome contains many plant species from all over the world – though you probably don't want to overstay your welcome, considering normally you have to pay to enter the Dome.</p>
<b>Institute of Psychiatric Research</b>	<p>The Institute of Psychiatric Research is an offshoot research facility that collaborates with many other campus hospitals in the region – though its chairman is a bit reclusive, and people believe his stance towards technology is a bit hypocritical, to the point where collaborative research is no longer as common as it used to be. Like many other research facilities in Tokyo, public transit connects the Institute to anywhere else you might need to go, a blessing to many of the folks who work here.</p>
<b>Meiji Jingu</b>	<p>A Shinto shrine dedicated to a former Emperor, this is likely to safest place to pop out, considering tourists only come at certain hours, and the forest surrounding the shrine makes for a good</p>

place to gather your bearings before setting off. Located in the Shibuya ward of Tokyo, it is close enough to several main transit lines that you can find your way out of Tokyo from here as you see fit.

With that settled, you might as well move on to your preparations! The Survey Team had set up quite a number of things to help you prepare, addressing things like **basic training**, **your companions**, extra **accessories** and... oh, there's something here about **nightmares** too... Hmm... that sounds interesting...

## [PERKS]

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*It certainly isn't necessary if you don't intend on getting involved with the whole business with the DC devices, but without a doubt, the DC devices aren't going to go away, and sooner or later you'll probably cross paths with it. In that case, wouldn't it be better to prepare yourself in advance?*

*Perks that fit within your profile are discounted by 50% and the first perk is free.*

## THE OUTLIER

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### **Tabula Rasa 100**

As somebody who doesn't necessarily fit in anywhere, you'll learn before long that approaching things with an open mind is crucial if you want to keep opportunities at hand, and along the way, there will be many people who will try to pull you in one direction or another. If that wasn't bad enough, you'll more than likely come across enough experiences along the way to leave deep impressions in your mind. Not necessarily good ones either.

It's nice then, that you're able to wipe your mind clean every once in a while. When those old scars come crawling out of the woodwork, when the biases planted into you by others impair your vision, just concentrate and push them aside to regain a clear mind. In time, they'll come crawling back in though – so it certainly isn't a permanent solution. But a moment of clarity is wonderful every now and then, wouldn't you agree? It probably won't do you much good to repeatedly wash your mind clean though – the mind is generally something you don't want to tamper with too often.

### **Hyperarousal 200**

Many creatures share a common instinct, one tantamount to their survival – something that we humans boil down to a “fight or flight” response. A split second decision is all it boils down to, deciding between running away and standing to fight. Whether it's in a dream or in reality, you don't have the luxury to hesitate when this moment strikes.

Being able to control that reflex is something that sets you apart from others. While it's true that folks with more experience can temper this reaction to some extent, very few people can control it like flicking a switch as you do. When you need to fight, your body surges in strength, and when you need to flee, your mind kicks into overdrive, looking for a way out. That said, it's still your body that you're manipulating, and flicking switches randomly won't do much for you.

Use this with care, use this with purpose, and it should serve you well.

### **Shadow Complex 400**

The shadow is often our blind spot, something that we don't tend to pay attention to; something that we tend to forget exists. But it doesn't mean that shadows are insignificant.

Just as things lurk in the shadows of our minds, there are many things which lurk within physical shadows, remaining unseen. If you lurk within the cover of shadow, certainly prying eyes will likely pass over you without a second thought.

But whereas shadows in the real world are easy to point out if you're willing to turn and look, the shadows of the mind are often sudden in plain sight. By attaching yourself to another within a dream, you can become their shadow, only breaking free from their body when you find an opportune moment. Thankfully, the process won't harm your host, though it'll probably scare them senseless. Try this outside of the dream world however, and you'll likely find that you won't be able to remain within an individual's body for very long. There's a clear divide between reality and fantasy after all.

### **Duality 600**

Many people you meet from day to day have very definite personalities. Their actions, their choice of words, their opinions all come together in one comprehensive package. But for every individual who seems "intact", you'll find others that are wholly fragmented. One personality one day, a completely different one for the next – folks with this phenomenon are like unpredictable storms. But not all of them know how to use that to their advantage. Anyone can lash out without warning, but it takes experience and dedication to master the many facets of multiple personalities.

While some folks will spend their entire life with a single distinct personality, with time and energy you can fragment your mind to intentionally create an offshoot personality. With your memories and your experiences, these offshoots are undoubtedly you – to begin with. Personalities grow and change with time and experience after all, so don't be too surprised if these offshoots aren't mirror copies of you after they gain their fair share of both time and experience.

You'll find that with enough time and experience, your other personalities may be able to manifest themselves into a form that only you can see. Normally people would call them imaginary friends perhaps – but these friends are a bit more capable than you'd believe. You all share a body after all, so it's not too far out of the question for them to borrow the senses that

you aren't using to look out for potential threats. Communicating with one another is as simple as thinking – regardless of how many personalities you have, you still have one body.

In the dreamscape where the spirits of the mind can run wild, these other personalities are even more formidable, to the point where even if you can't defend yourself properly against assaults on the mind, they'll still be able to mount a stolid defence. Their bodies, though ethereal in the real world, become tangible within the boundaries of a dream.

Just as a friendly warning though: fracturing yourself too many times isn't going to be very healthy for your mind, and you should take not to break up your mind into so many pieces that you can no longer assert your authority over all the other personalities. While you can reintegrate these personalities back into you at any time, be wary that any sort of individuality they've gained along the way will be lost, as expected.

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## THE PSYCHIATRIST

### **Cold Reader 100**

A patient's body language can tell you as much about them as their words can, and focusing on their choices, their habits, and their mannerisms often reveal things that they might otherwise try to hide behind words. By focusing on an individual and observing them closely, you'll quickly come to notice their habits and their tells. With a bit more time and familiarity, their inner fears, conflicts, and concerns will become apparent to you as well, without necessarily needing them to open up to you.

Use your skills with tact, and you'll find that you can always remain a step ahead of your peers. The things that they try to hide, the things they want to ignore, if you feel that a confrontation is necessary, you can pull these things out and force them to face the source of their distress or fear.

### **Gentle Coercion 200**

Unless you're looking for a fight, persuasion is generally preferred over subjugation. Subjugation can win over the body, but not necessarily the mind - which persuasion looks to sway. With your level of expertise, it isn't so much the words that you choose which matter, but the way that you say it is what wins people over. There's something in the way you speak that turns even the most sceptical of individuals around, something that makes even the most stubborn fellows pliant.

Psychiatry involves relationships between people, and conversation is one of the best ways for such relationships to grow. The longer you spend time around others, the more they'll come to trust you, confide in you, and open up to you. Similarly, their close associates will also see you under a more positive light.

### **Slip of the Mind 400**

We all forget things, and sometimes forgetting is the only way to begin the healing process. If a patient can't accept the way things are, then perhaps forgetting it is necessary to help them begin to move on. Not necessarily the most preferable option, but an available one none the less. Normally a process such as this would require a fair amount of repetition, but with your level of expertise, you can take hold of their painful memories and seal them away – turning thought suppression into something akin to hypnosis, if you would.

The memory sealed is generally one that the subject would not want to linger – unwanted memories can be discarded without as much resistance from the patient after all. The sealing process requires a vocal cue, a keyword as it were, and accordingly requires some form of conversational exchange between you and the target. But once the seal is in place, the memory is locked away... until you activate the cue again in such a way that they can hear it.

The world within a dream opens up much more subtle possibilities, allowing you to bypass the necessities of a cue. By moulding memories within the dream, it becomes possible to slowly introduce change within the patient – allowing them to forget things without any sort of suppression. Well, they likely won't remember somebody tinkering around inside their head, but change in such a fashion, while subtle, is also slower than immediate thought suppression.

There are some individuals who are... particularly resilient as far as change goes. You might even go so far as to say that they're too stubborn to change. For individuals like these and individuals with willpower that is too strong to let go, it'll definitely be tougher to manipulate them.

### **Unconscious Phantasy 600**

Being one who deals with other individuals, sometimes dealing intimately with the minds of other individuals, the dream world is something that the psychiatrist interacts with on an intimate level. The scientists only care about the technology and advancing the efficiency, the board only care about their profits, but for a psychiatrist, the dream world holds a new possibility for interacting with the patients – especially when the world itself is pliable.

Within the world of your dreams, manipulating each and every aspect is simple. Transform the landscape as you will and recreate the images as you see fit, but once you move into a patient, there's an added layer of complexity – an inherent resistance that you need to overcome. So while you can still begin to transform their mental landscape, you need to be wary that their minds are likely not as flexible to outsiders as it is to themselves. Things like the background, the weather, maybe even the terrain can be easy to change, but try to move onto the patient themselves, and you'll likely meet with significant resistance. Sometimes though, small changes made consistently will have a more substantial effect on an individual than something massive.

The changes made to the patient's dreams will accumulate over time. Consistent fair weather within a patient's dreams may make them happier; a devastated landscape may take away



what hope that they have – it's up to you to figure out how you want to help a patient, and how to get there.

With a fair bit of practice though, you'll be able to manipulate these powers of yours to a limited degree even outside of the dream. In a dream, travelling through a painting is just a matter of thought. In reality, doing the same thing will take substantial effort and energy. Your abilities affect yourself more easily than the environment, and they affect the environment more easily than other individuals – this is especially true in reality, to the point where attempting to manipulate others will likely fail.

Just be careful when you use these abilities with bystanders around, not everyone can tolerate “breaks” from reality so easily, and you wouldn't want to make everybody around you start on the slow path to insanity, would you?

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## THE SCIENTIST

### **Proof of Concept 100**

A small measure of planning goes a long ways, and even if you're not the kind of person who likes to pour over procedures and possibilities, it still helps to have some semblance of a guideline as far as approaching a task goes. With an objective in mind and your past experience at hand, you can quickly assemble the basic drafts for a safe work plan.

Be it a necessary tool, or a standard operating procedure that needs to be made, the key is that the quick drafts you pump out can be understood by even the most basic workers, children even – though a plan is exactly that, it doesn't come with any additional resources that might be needed to realize it.

### **Unnecessary Distractions 200**

When serious work needs to be done, no one can afford distractions. Every minute spent on a distraction is a minute wasted away from the task at hand, a minute delayed from completion and success. Closing off the doors to your mind, you can enter a state in which nothing exists in your perspective except you, and the task at hand.

With all of your resources and focus directed upon a single target, you'll find that not only can you complete the task far quicker and far more efficiently than normal, your ability to learn from the task at hand and absorb experience out of the venture grow by leaps and bounds as well. Just... make sure you are in some place where people won't try to disturb you before you start, alright?

### **Creating the Dream 400**

When it comes to working inside the dream, you'll discover that your experience has an additional benefit. Psychiatrists are undoubtedly experts at handling the intricacies of human minds, but they have nothing against your technological expertise.

The dreamscape is whimsical, but at the same time it offers to you an amazing amount of flexibility. All of the tools, devices, and plans in your mind can be actualized in this space, even if circumstances normally would not permit it. For a scientist in control of the dream, it can become a workshop bent to their will. Of course, you'll have to be wary that the dreamscape being whimsical, the things that you make may not have the full effects of their equivalents in reality – especially if you didn't go through the normal creation process.

As a scientist you should know full well that what works in a dream likely won't work in reality – but if you do try, you'll find that while creating something out of nothing may be nigh impossible, manipulating the properties of existing materials can function to a certain degree. When used outside of the dreamscape in this capacity, your ability shifts existing properties of objects – rather than a process of pure synthesis.

### **Intermesh Capacity 600**

The person behind the design of the DC device was... well, a little bit eccentric. Some would call him a child stuck in a genius' body. After all, the DC device did not originate from some grand scheme, but rather our local genius' notion that it would be wonderful if people could all connect to one another on a subconscious level.

But in a sense, that's exactly what scientists and technology does right? Our advances in communication have linked people from the world all over, and the DC device will take that to an even higher level. But you... you represent the next step in the process – with your abilities developed, the DC device won't be a necessity anymore.

The DC device, in its earliest trials, had already demonstrated strange adaptive behaviours. Without security protocols in place, it could drag people into collective dreams – but it was far too easy for people to lose themselves completely once they entered into the maelstrom. With you as a center however, you can anchor the dreamers who enter your collective dream to ensure that they don't forget who they are. The dream being collective as it is, you should be prepared that the other dreamers can add in their own contributions as well. While you have a fair measure of control, enough to restrain them from doing anything too crazy, it'll be a matter of how much attention you pay to their actions.

While the DC device's strange phenomena has been proven to work even on individuals who are awake, your abilities are far more effective on things that naturally exist in networks in this case, like computers. To try and pull awoken individuals into the dream, you'll have to be fairly close to them – but if you start linking yourself together with computers, you can ensnare

individuals by proxy. Just be wary that the larger the “net”, the more difficult it’ll be to maintain a level of consistency throughout, and people will wake up much sooner.

As you might expect, not everyone can tolerate the integration process to the same degree. Drawing a person in, in person, is a generally safe process. But attempting to pull them in via a remote device will clearly strain their mind a fair bit.

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## THE INVESTIGATOR

### **CSA 100**

By nature of their trade, investigators generally end up more observant than other people. After all, the roots of a crime are often hidden beneath a layer of deception and deceit. At least, that’s how it happens in all of the mystery movies I watch! Regardless, being able to point out the peculiarities with a scene is a skill that opens up new opportunities all on its own. Whether it is things that were intentionally concealed, or things that would otherwise seem to mundane to notice, you have a knack for pointing out what doesn’t belong.

It naturally helps if you have a prior image to refer back to, but it isn’t altogether an absolute necessity, and when you find yourself in a dream or illusion, often that prior image might work against you by creating a sense of familiarity. In times like these, that knack of yours is almost like a sixth sense, pointing you towards the flaw within the dream. Very few dreams are entirely like reality after all, and as familiar as they may be, there are generally deviations which can be exploited.

### **Aggressive Interrogation 200**

When the scene won’t cough up the information you need, the situation may call for a bit of “cooperation” from the suspects and witnesses. There are plenty of reasons, plenty of excuses for which they might not be willing to give up information, but that’s why you have to be persistent about it. Like a wolf cornering a sheep, you can take their words, their choices, and help them create a cage for themselves. The more they say, the more they act, the more you can manipulate them into revealing what it is that they know.

With enough time, your presence alone will coerce the suspects around you to cooperate. No need for words, no need for trickery, just pure intimidation will be enough to loosen their lips. Under such duress, it becomes rather easy to tell when they’re running their mouths without a shred of honesty, or even if they’re trying to deliberately withhold information.

### **Forceful Entry 400**

There are many places where you can’t simply call for a search warrant, and a person’s mind is one of them. When the time has gone beyond pleasant questions and crime scene analysis, sometimes the only way to find answers is to expose the suspect’s mind. As long as you can

maintain physical contact with the suspect, you can push into their mind with pure mental force alone. Not the most elegant of methods, but desperate times call for desperate measures.

When a person isn't dreaming, it is very likely that they'll have mental defences prepared to protect their psyche and their memories. With excessive force you can break these down – but be wary that damaging the individual too much can leave behind residual trauma. In the worst case scenario the damage may become apparent even on their physical body. You wouldn't want a suspect to become incapacitated before they can testify, would you?

### **Guilt Trip 600**

For most suspects with a shred of empathy, their own guilt is often a more severe judge of their crimes than the verdict coming from a jury. Most people can ignore this guilt for some time, until it catches up to them through the consequences of their choices, or the realization of what they've become. Why not accelerate the process a little? It's just a matter of helping people reconcile with their choices after all.

Guilt can help the mind do wonderful things. In some ways it's just as strong of a motivator as pleasure happens to be. The presence of guilt can help people see things that aren't really there, feel things that never actually happened, and inspire behaviour that wouldn't be normal.

But while hallucinations and obsessions may look simple in reality, the dreamscape helps escalate things, and make them all the more real. You could say that the dreamscape is the court room, the jail cell, and the sanatorium all together in one neat little package.

Trapped within a nightmare of their own making, as long as they remain free from external influence and can't resolve the monstrosities created by their own guilt, they won't be able to wake up. Bit by bit, their personalities will be shaped by guilt, as it slowly replaces everything else and grows in prominence. Who knows, by the time they do wake up from the long dream, maybe they'll have become a better person from it all?

## **HYPNOS VARIATIONS**

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A branch with no discounts whatsoever, it would seem that most of the traits available here were based off of observation of the Institute's Chairman, and honestly, that man isn't the most reasonable or mentally sound individual, I have to say. Because of the dangerous nature of the traits, it follows a bit of a special format, as specified for each individual trait.

### **Gently Down the Stream 200**

Can't get the kids to sleep? Know some folks suffering from a bit of insomnia? Well you can just give them a little push and send them spiralling into a nice, fluffy dream, and they'll be asleep before they can even realize it. The transitions from this are extremely subtle, generally aligned perfectly with what they were doing prior to you giving them that little push. For folks who have very strong psyches, or even split personalities, they may become aware of this attempt

when you proceed with it – but whether they can resist or not depends on their mental strength. And nothing says that you can't dive in alongside them.

### **Fantastic Vision 200 (Requires Gently Down the Stream)**

We like to hold on to pleasant memories. Wonderful things that happened in the past are the things that we would least like to forget, but sometimes reminiscence can be a trap all on its own. When we're too busy immersed in the past... we can forget that time continues to move on without us.

Weaving a fantasy with daily images mixed with pleasant memories, it's possible to trap somebody in a limbo of sorts – an existence where their waking world is mixed with past memories that slowly replace the reality as they know it.

The further we immerse in delusion, the further we stray from reality, the more dangerous our minds can become. Over time, people suffering from these delusions may demonstrate malignant personalities – shifts in perception and attitude rising from the differences between the world of their dreams and what is actually real.

The more you show them the dream, the more they'll yearn for it, and the more antagonistic they'll become towards “reality” and all those who live in “that other world”.

### **The One Eyed Man 200 (Requires Gently Down the Stream)**

Whether we call them daydreams or delusions, it's not wholly abnormal for people to have power fantasies. After all, isn't it only normal to dream about the things that you could do, if only you were a little stronger, if only you were a little faster, if only you were a little smarter? Like flicking a switch inside somebody else, you can allow their bodies to do things that they might otherwise only be able to do inside a dream. A dream about being a track star may make the body faster whereas a dream about being a genius may make one smarter. Of course, this won't create any magic where there was none to begin with.

For the short period of time while the dream runs its course, their body and mind can defy their normal limits – a short and sweet dream as it were. Dream for too long though, and the dream will bear little difference from a delusion, and when the dreamer can no longer distinguish what is real and what is fantasy, then what their body's limits are will be the least of their worries.

### **Mandala – Yggdrasil 600 (Requires the One Eyed Man or Fantastic Vision)**

As dreams are shaped by memories and experiences, they require time to form, regardless of who the dreamer is. But for people experienced in manipulating the dreams of others, it isn't out of the question to use other people for... less savoury ends. There's energy within a dreamer after all, enough energy that it could even revitalize an aged individual – but harvesting that energy in a sustainable fashion requires a method with more “finesse” and delicacy than merely invading into a victim's dreams.

Planting a dream of your own deep within another individual, it'll slowly grow as it is exposed to the individual's memories and experiences. With enough time and exposure, the dream will mature within the individual, until it reaches a point when it can be harvested for mental energy without killing off the dreamer themselves. While each harvest will damage the dream which you planted within the individual – this damage can recover with enough time.

Leaving them alive serves more than a single purpose. For one thing, people that remain alive won't suspect themselves of being manipulated – but people with these seeds planted within them will periodically leave behind remnants of the dream, remnants capable of swallowing up those who wander close by. These remnants will fade away in time, but in places where people don't frequent often, remnants will often linger longer. The folks who get swept up within the dream can similarly be harvested – though protecting their psyche may be a bit more difficult.

If you happen to possess any of the black detritus leftover from the dreams of a corrupted individual – force feeding this to the dreamer will help accelerate the growth of the dream inside and reinforce its strength. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the individual – and from then on, the harvesting from the dream will also produce more of the black detritus.

What really is this black stuff supposed to be?

### **Mandala – Morpheus 600 (Requires the One Eyed Man or Fantastic Vision)**

There are those who believe that the realm of dreams is a sacred place, a domain which cannot be violated by the whims of technology. But not everyone agrees on whether the dream world should be left on its own – and indeed, there are advocates of the dream world who would prefer to see it invade into reality, rather than the other way around. Sometimes when they're faced with strenuous situations, it isn't uncommon to see people project their fantasies on the real world.

You can infuse this power into individuals of your choice, granting them a “talent” to blur the lines between dreams and reality. With this power in hand, elements of an individual's dream world will start manifesting in the world in a manner that follows no rhyme or reason. The problem arises the moment their projections become real – when fantasy begins to run amok within reality. As such, bestowing this power upon an individual is a risky venture under any circumstance, as a runaway imagination can cause things to go terribly, terribly wrong in a moment's notice.

But of course, reality doesn't just fall over flat over one person's avid imagination. The process of manifestation may happen at the person's whim, but maintaining the manifestations will drain consistently on the individual's mental integrity, until the mind decides to release the manifestation entirely to preserve its own sanity. The more significant the deviations from reality become, the greater the strain on the individual.

At the same time however, while reality may fight against the dream manifestations, other individuals themselves can succumb to the sheer insanity created by the manifestations. Those

who witness the world warping and twisting may succumb to the effect itself if their willpower is too low, spreading this phenomenon through crowds like a sickness afflicting reality. If you possess any of the black detritus leftover from the dreams of corrupted individuals, it can be used to help spread the phenomenon even faster – by corrupting people directly, but you'll need to understand that recovery after this is not particularly likely.

Just be wary that if the initial dreamer dies, everything that they've dreamed up along the way will fade away. If you're looking to spread chaos intentionally, you should keep that fact in mind.

## [COMPANIONS]

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*The man who would normally take care of your companions is fall asleep, with a large plush doll of a yellow bird gripped tightly in one hand. Paprika just smiles and put a finger to her lips to indicate that you should keep quiet and let him rest. He doesn't look like he'll wake up for anything anyways. Instead Paprika brings you over to the desk nearby.*

*Having friends around is always fun – she says, as she brings out a small book, and she indicates that if you need any help arranging for your friends to be here, she can provide you with some assistance.*

### **More People to Join the Dream 50 CP**

*Oooh you have friends from other places just like you huh? I can't wait to take a look at what kind of dreams they have... But of course in order to do that I guess I need to actually arrange for them to be here first, don't I? Well, it just takes a bit of investment on your part, and I'll grab some of the forms from under our friend's arms here, and we'll be all set!*

Import a companion for 50 CP; they gain 400 CP to spend on skills along with an identity choice for free.

You may import in a batch of 8 for 300 CP, with the same benefits.

### **Those Already Fast Asleep 50/100 CP**

*Hrm, you're more interested in the local folks you say? Well it's not like it is impossible, but I think it'll be easier if you convince them yourself to come along with you. The rest of the procedures will cost about the same as if you had brought a friend of your own... but hey, if you really want a person from Earth to come along – I suppose I can tweak their dreams a little and fix up some stuff here and there...*

This option is used for characters canon to this world – but costs 100 CP if you wish to start with them immediately. Otherwise, it costs 50 CP, and grants that individual the same benefits as an imported companion – which activates once you convince them to join you.

This option can be used to create generic human companions.

### **MALIGNANT VARIATIONS (DISCOUNTED FOR COMPANIONS)**

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*Hmm... I'll have you know, I happen to be a subject matter expert when it comes to alternate personalities. For one thing, I've dealt with them for a very... very long time. That being said though, if you're delving in to alternate personalities and dream spirits, well I might have a few tricks here and there that I can teach.*

*Honestly though, it'll be far easier for me to guide your companions through this rather than you. After all, a spirit needs an anchor, and for all intents and purposes you'll have to be their anchor*



*whenever they become a spirit. In return though, I'll make it a bit cheaper for them to go through the process. I have to make it up to you guys somehow right?*

These skills are intended for companions and as such are discounted for them. You may take them, but only at the given price.

#### LIMBO 100 CP

To start with the basics, adopting the form of a dream spirit means that for the most part, you'll lose the functions of a normal physical body, but that's just to be expected right? After all, if we dream spirits could act on the world, just think of all the fun we could cause... But it does come with a proviso of sorts – dream spirits need a dreamer, in other words, an individual to anchor themselves to. Stray dream spirits risk getting sucked into the collective dream you see, and trapped inside for too long, they'll lose whatever sense of self they once had. The anchor however, is optimally somebody with a deep emotional connection to you – mutual understanding makes the process much smoother.

There's one thing to keep in mind. To begin with, abilities that would affect dreams are always active in this state, though infringing with reality remains a bit difficult. To put it simply, a dream spirit doesn't necessarily see the world in the same way that people in real life do. Things like diving into paintings or television screens is child's play for us, but trying to affect people in real life can be difficult. It doesn't mean that we can't advise our anchors though – admittedly my anchor is a bit stubborn in that regard...

Naturally, as long as your anchor is alive, you'll be fine as well, but people can hurt you inside the dream just as you can hurt them, and excessive injuries will likely cause you to black out until you can recollect yourself together again.

#### A NAP IN THEIR BED 100 CP (REQUIRES LIMBO)

Thanks to the DC device, we've been able to dive head first into the dreams of other people, and it's a lot like watching a movie really! But for some folks, they don't need the DC device anymore to do something like diving into other people's dreams. Perhaps the DC device was just an aide to accelerate the process?

In any case, with this, you can also dive into another person's dream without any external aid.

For all intents and purposes you'll be residing into their head for a little while. Of course, depending on the abilities you have, you'll be able to do all sorts of fancy tricks, maybe even tweak with their minds, but always pay careful attention to what you do. Some choices you make could be beneficial to the dreamer under one light, detrimental under another.

#### ALARM CLOCK 100 CP (REQUIRES LIMBO)

Sometimes people get caught inside dreams, and they get so tangled up that they can't properly wake up. If they can't wake up themselves, then you're going to have to give them a

helping hand, after all, sleeping too much can be just as detrimental to one's health as sleeping too little. Regardless of what night terror may be trapping them, regardless of the affliction that may be gripping their consciousness, you can reach in to pull them out of fantasy and back into the world of reality.

#### A TENANT IN YOUR HEAD 100 CP

Cases of multiple personalities aren't too uncommon, so you shouldn't be too surprised if you find yourself with another dream spirit in your head. No, no, they're not really much of a companion like your friends, but they can act on their own just like other dream spirits can. Naturally, they'll be using you or whoever took them on as an anchor, but you'll find that each one has their own specific talents – they're all veterans after all.

#### MAYBE A LITTLE BIT OF SPICE?

A young woman in traditional Japanese garb, hehe, I remember that time, it was pretty amusing prancing about in that parade, but she's helpful, I'll assure you of that! Unlike the others, she has substantially more experience manipulating the nature of dreams, as well as identifying things that don't belong – to the point that she can break into dreams hidden within dreams. Granted, I've only seen that happen with very complex individuals, but hey, it's a neat trick none the less!

Of course, all that experience of hers doesn't just amount to finding dreams within dreams. She's very proficient as far as being a psychiatrist goes – but all that experience of hers really comes in handy when she or her anchor faces danger. She can easily appear to warn her anchor of possible danger or incoming threats, even before they can pose as a pressing threat.

#### HOW ABOUT A DRINK?

A pair of dream spirits, both middle aged men, who specialize as bartenders. That's right - they specialize in serving drinks to people. Look, don't ask where I meet these people alright, you find all sorts of folks in the dream world and these two are really handy whenever you need a mess cleaned up, especially if the mess is related to someone's dream.

That being said, they've seen all sorts of people during their time as dream spirits – so both of them are very good at one thing – helping people help themselves spiritually and mentally through simple conversation. Spending time with them has an oddly soothing effect, and even in people rampaging mindlessly, they can fish out some semblance of tranquility. To that extent, they're very effective, even when managing large crowds.

#### ROBOT NOBORU

A strange robot with a human's face, I recognize his face from somewhere...but I can't seem to place where. He's a little bit immature, perhaps fitting his appearance really, but he's very perceptive of his surroundings and also remarkably handy when it comes to handling

machinery within the dream and outside the dream. Though I suppose that's what you'd expect from a robot.

Out of the three, he's the most proficient as far as dealing with nightmares go – and traversing through nightmarish landscape and mentally strenuous situations doesn't seem to affect him at all, making him pretty reliable if chaos breaks out. That being said, he constantly seems to have food on his mind, and he's very enthusiastic about eating new things... even if he happens to be a dream spirit and only the anchor can eat things.

#### CROSSING THE LINE 200 CP (REQUIRES LIMBO OR TENANT)

As I always say, desperate times call for desperate measures, and sometimes, the circumstances are bad enough that even we dream spirits have to intervene. For a dream to intrude upon reality, the boundary between both worlds has to be removed, so you can expect that it put a bit of a strain on you to act in such a state. But regardless, you can freely use your dream abilities in the real world.

Be wary that the more you twist reality, the harder it will be for the world around you to normalize. Some effects of the dream can just fade away when the dreamer wakes, but there are some things which leave deep impressions, whether they're wanted or not. As a general rule of thumb though, in the real world it's far easier to affect yourself as a dream spirit than for a dream spirit to affect the world. Furthermore, if the change happens to be too significant, you may find that even your anchor can be swallowed up in it – and that does not ensue in anything good for you.

While this is active, the dream spirit is made corporeal for all intents and purposes. Be wary that this will mean the previous invulnerability the dream spirit possessed towards conventional threats will be nullified.

#### THE FEAST 300 CP (REQUIRES LIMBO)

When the going gets tough, sometimes it would be wonderful if you could just go binge eating and eat all of your problems away. Well... at least that's how a friend of mine would see it. Binge eating, me? Of course not! That being said though, if you've made a mess, or somebody else's dream has made a mess, you can help fix it – by eating away the irregularities left behind.

By consuming the dreams of others, you can recover your mental energy, and regardless of whether the dream is good or bad, you'll still find yourself sufficiently sated. When dreams start to affect the real world, you can similarly gnaw away at them and the dream elements affecting the real world will be banished away... into your tummy. As the mind and the body are connected, when you recover mental energy, your anchor may find that their own wounds will heal as well.

## [ITEMS]

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*Just like everywhere else, the store is quiet, though you can hear a person breathing softly nearby, a young girl by the sound of it. Paprika shows up behind you, roughly pushing you aside to get inside the store. In a blink of an eye, it seems like she's done a full lap around the place, and judging by the grin on her face things are to her satisfaction*

*I just love [shopping](#), don't you? It's a bit sad that they didn't stock any movies or anything, but they have this really strange gizmo – seems like they tweaked one of our original DC prototypes. Oh... right, you don't know about that yet, but no worries, the items all have their own labels! They've gone and put it in its own [section](#) though, so I suppose it's a little special. I wonder what they've gone and done with it actually...*

*Oh well! I can test it out later when you're finished window shopping! Why don't you take a look around? I should check and see if our little shopkeeper is having a nice dream. Just don't steal anything please; the nice Lady is still watching us you know, and I don't want you to give her any reason to spoil the fun!*

### SYNTHESIS ITEM

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*Paprika doesn't seem to care when you wander over to the isolated section, presumably she's busy doing her own thing, but an automated system introduces the lone item available for sale here. Taken from the technology that the survey team had discovered on their initial entry, the item here can only be purchased by you and you alone – though technically any one of your companions can utilize it if you so permit it. It has a wide variety of customization options – though that doesn't mean you have to choose any of them at all.*

#### **Dreamscape Navigator 50 CP**

*The Dreamscape Navigator, as it is named, is a device that creates a projection based upon the data which is inputted within. The existing DC Mini technology developed by the Institute for Psychiatric Research allows a person to interact directly with the individual's dream, whereas existing psychotherapy machines can actively record and replay dreams, but this device here was specifically designed by the survey team to complement both of these devices.*

*Retaining the record/replay function of existing psychotherapy machines, the Dreamscape Navigator also has a "projection" function, allowing it to overlay the dream world with the existing world. To contain this properly however, the Navigator creates a physical bridge between reality and fantasy in the form of a physical door. While the internal battery can sustain itself for long periods of time, the device does not work well on the move, and the physical gate will disappear should the Navigator unit be moved a fair distance away from it.*

*Without any particular abilities of your own however, the Navigator can only create a realm based upon what dreams it has recorded – and your presence within the realm is as an observer, with minimal interaction capabilities. The size of the dreamscape can become massive, but the area*

*that remains coherent is generally the size of a small city block at most. It takes more dreams collected in order to adjust the area of the dream as well as its appearance, but you should take care not to just grab any dream which occurs.*

FORM FITS FANTASY 50 CP

Normally within the dreamscape, you retain your own form – but with this, you can freely change your own form while within the dream. This is largely for aesthetic purposes however and falls apart when you leave the dreamscape. Similarly, anybody else who enters the dreamscape can control their own form in a similar manner.

YUME NIKKI 50 CP

As more dreams are introduced into the system, it can be easy to lose track of what dreams induced what changes. This module was made specifically to address this possibility, by recording changes made with the integration of each individual dream and making it possible to “extract” the dream from the dreamscape – not unlike how psychotherapy machines can in turn, divide a patient’s dreams into “individual scenes”. The dream, once extracted, is returned to the Navigator’s database.

INQUISITIVE FANTASY 100 CP (DISCOUNTED FOR THE OUTLIER)

This overhaul of the Dreamscape Navigator works to skew how the dreams that make up the “internal dimension” are presented. Elements taken from the local world that would help you fit in better are made more prominent, and things will show up within the dreamscape to give you a better idea of where you are, and the folks that are important. This does still depend on the dreams that you collect however, so the elements that show up to guide you generally don’t show everything that you need in order to “become a native” as it were.

SOOTHING VISIONS 100 CP (DISCOUNTED FOR THE PSYCHIATRIST)

This function acts as an overlay on top of the existing dreamscape, and it allows your mind to recuperate from stress and strain while you dwell within the Dreamscape. It can function to an extent on your physical body as well, but it isn’t as effective with the physical aspect of you in comparison to the psychological aspects. This will similarly function on others who enter the dreamscape as well.

CONTEMPLATIVE IMAGES 100 CP (DISCOUNTED FOR THE SCIENTIST)

A different overhaul of the Dreamscape Navigator, this variation takes a more technical approach towards the analysis of the dream. A technical feed monitors all individuals connected to the dreamscape, including those who contributed towards the dreamscape’s database of dreams. The information continues to update so long as the individuals are dreaming – creating a real time feed on what those individuals have been up to when awake. This functions so long as those individuals are within the same realm as the Navigator device.

#### SUSPENSEFUL SCENES 100 CP (DISCOUNTED FOR THE INVESTIGATOR)

This function is similar to the overlay which allows you to slowly recuperate while within the dreamscape, but it instead allows you to establish a certain degree of anonymity for all those within the dreamscape. Anyone who intrudes upon the dreamscape will be unable to see you, or individuals which you've invited within the dreamscape. As the nature of the dreamscape is inherently different from reality, standard abilities to sense one's presence are much less effective in this space.

#### DREAMCATCHER 100 CP

A wide scale dream capture module, working off of behaviour demonstrated by prototypes of the DC Mini itself – the module functions on everybody asleep within a small radius around the Navigator – meaning that the Navigator can capture dreams as you carry it around, without needing to interface with the DC device. These dreams are then stored within the database for you to process at your own discretion. With the use of the DC minis however, you can extend the Dreamcatcher's effective range dramatically, as it links up wirelessly to all synchronized devices and projects a radii from each unit.

#### GUARDIAN ANGELS 100 CP

It isn't uncommon for other people to show up in the dreams of an individual, but often the interactions between these phantoms and the dreamer are rather bizarre, and seemingly out of the dreamer's control. These manifestations however, seem to have a bit more life to them than the usual phantoms that linger about in dreams. They have thoughts of their own, and while there isn't anything else too distinctive about them, they can make for fine folks to pass the time with if you have nothing better to do.

Their purpose however is to maintain a certain measure of stability within the Navigator's domain, ensuring that external forces cannot hijack the dreamscape. To an extent, they act as an anchor for the dreamscape against the dreams in the outside world. If negative elements show up within the dream, they'll join together to fight them off.

Each time you take this, you'll gain 4 of these guardian spirits to roam about within the dreamscape. It's possible for your companions to fit in as a guardian spirit, but if they do so they cannot be imported into the same world, and they'll effectively become an "inactive" companion, only active within the dreamscape itself.

#### VIRTUAL FANTASY 200 CP

Like the DC device and current psychotherapy machines, it's possible for the Navigator to interface with technological devices as well. The transfer of dreams in the format of video files is simple enough, and the base Navigator can do this without a problem. This additional module however, establishes a bridge between the dreamscape and an available virtual domain.

This additional gateway allows for the translation of data packets into dream manifestations – in a similar fashion to how dreams were initially translated from waves and signals into graphic images. To effect, it's possible for the Navigator to slowly expand the dreamscape into a virtual domain as long as the connection is maintained.

#### SAMHAIN 300 CP

With a normally configured DC device, the boundaries between reality and fantasy are very clearly defined and the entire process of dream extraction doesn't have any side effects on either the patient's psyche or their physical health. But a DC device with access configurations can cause very troubling behaviour to occur, breaking down the line between reality and fantasy for some. With the Navigator, this troublesome phenomenon can manifest in the form of the dreamscape crossing into the real world.

It takes a fair bit of time for the Navigator to properly infringe upon reality and if the Navigator is disrupted, the dreamscape will immediately retract back, so if you need to utilize this function, it is best if you keep the Navigator somewhere safe while the process occurs. Within the area affected by the Navigator, the laws of reality don't have such a strong hold.

#### STANDARD ITEMS

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*Paprika runs about the small convenience store, running three full rings around the sleeping shopkeeper before stopping and glancing at everything on the shelves. Perhaps she didn't find what she was looking for, or perhaps she's here to play the shopkeeper's role just like before. When she rests herself on top of the sleeping shopkeeper, it becomes evident that it's the latter.*

*Well, rules are rules, she says wryly as she twirls a small headset in her hand, and if you need anything from this shop, I'm going to have to ask that you pay for it. These people are fun folks, and I wouldn't want to get on their bad side, especially not when they're having such a good nap.*

*She pats the shopkeeper's head for emphasis, but the young girl only nods in her sleep. Whatever dream she's seeing, by the smile on her face it seems like it should be a good one. In any case, the items here can be purchased by anyone – and are generally here to help you survive against potential hazards and challenges the world may toss at you.*

#### **Credit Card 50 CP**

*Credit cards are a girl's best friend in this day and age – especially if you don't have to pay the bill afterwards. The credit card you'll receive is prepaid to a sum which should be sufficient for two people to live comfortably every month. Oddly enough, even in places that generally don't accept credit cards, they'll make an exception and deduct an equivalent amount from the card.*

#### **DC Mini 50 CP**

*I really wonder how the Survey Team got their hands on these, but this is the handheld model that the Institute had been testing, as a field alternative to the original DC machine, which was too*

large to carry around conveniently. Essentially a headset that is attached to the back of a patient's head, the DC Mini works on the same principle as the original DC device, by capturing the waves within the patient's head during their sleep, and transmitting it to a local station.

If you happen to have a Navigator unit, the DC Minis can act like remote transmitters. Purchasing this gives you a set of four units, and well, what you do with them is your business. Just be wary of the Institute's Chairman, that old grouch really hates seeing people use the Institute's tech...

### **The USB Stick 100 CP**

Oh that? That was my own addition; the shopkeeper and I were going over it just before I saw her off to sleep. Uhh... that's probably too much information. But I run a pretty low down establishment you see, all stored here inside this little USB. The establishment serves a very simple purpose, it lets people have a place to relax, and catch up with old friends from time to time.

As simple as Paprika's explanation might be, the USB's functions are a little bit more complex than its purpose may suggest. The USB links to a site – radioclub.jp – which upon being accessed draws you in to a virtual realm of sorts. This function however – doesn't require internet access.

The virtual domain, a bar of sorts, has all of the amenities you might expect from a bar – but it also has a “messaging” service which allows you to receive messages from people you've met in the past – even if they might not be of this world anymore. Of course, nothing stops you from using it as it was intended – as a bar for you and your friends.

### **9mm Handgun 100 CP**

Hrm... this handgun doesn't come from the real world, it seems like the survey team took these from somebody's dream and made it “real” somehow. That's... odd and slightly disconcerting too.

But as you might expect from a weapon that came from the dream world, it doesn't fire conventional rounds, and it also doesn't cause conventional wounds.

A target struck by this gun takes equivalent damage to their psyche and mentality, rather than wounds on their physical body. It doesn't quite matter where you shoot them, but at the same time, it's generally harder to heal mental wounds than physical ones. Without needing conventional ammo however, each shot does drain a bit from your own mental reserves.

### **Dream Eater 100 CP**

Well, this animal looks pretty odd... cute, but cute in an odd way. I think they called them Tapirs?

It's just a baby, but I have a feeling that it's not really going to get much bigger than this really. Judging by how it acts, it's probably not the smartest creature ever, but it has a really keen nose for detecting dreams – and also a really big appetite for eating them. It doesn't seem to have any problem with eating nightmares – and the more dreams that it consumes, the happier it seems to be... along with everybody around it. If you're ever in a pinch inside a dream, this little fellah can probably help you pull yourself out.



### **Toy Robot 100 CP**

What a cute little toy robot, it's just like something a young boy might like... I have a friend who still hasn't outgrown that part of him. Bit of a nuisance sometimes really, but I digress! With a touch from her hand, the toy robot comes to life, and it will happily wander about, though it generally stays within your vicinity.

The robot seems rather harmless at first, but if it possesses sufficient mental energies, and it happens to face a threat to its owner, it can release a barrage of missiles – enough to take down even towering titans. Of course, the strength of this is largely dependent on the amount of energy that this little fellow possesses – but you can infuse more energy into it... which can also increase its actual size.

Each time you purchase this, it doubles the amount of robots you have, but what are you trying to do, build an army out of toy robots? Judging by the look on Paprika's face, she doesn't necessarily approve.

### **The Dolls 100 CP**

Paprika doesn't seem too keen to comment on these dolls, but there's a place card describing them anyways, so perhaps her... slightly biased explanations are unnecessary.

A set of ornate Japanese dolls, made for decoration, but used for all manners of deception. Within the set, some of them are actually "alive" in the sense that they can project themselves out as apparitions. These apparitions can in turn haunt locales, watching over them and reporting what goes on as they see fit. The others within the set however, are used for a more sinister purpose, as they can infiltrate into the minds of sleeping individuals.

While these dolls are more suitable for dream observation purposes, it's possible for them to interfere with dreams, turning them into nightmares as necessary. One of the researchers in the Institute team, a Mister Kei Himuro, was known to be a very avid procurer of dolls such as these, though what exactly he did with them remains largely unknown. With a set of ten, half and half, surely you can put them to good use?

### **The Butterfly Device 200 CP**

You find Paprika fiddling with one of these music boxes, evidently interested in how it works and what it is supposed to do. After a little bit more fiddling, the box opens up, and butterflies spill out into the shop. With a smile, Paprika turns towards you and points to the butterflies. "Even long ago in the past, butterflies have been associated with dreams. Just as the ancient Chinese philosopher Master Zhuang said."

The box, as Paprika demonstrated, releases a swarm of butterflies into the vicinity. Being creatures of a spectral nature, they can't be dispersed with conventional means, and can act as a very handy tool to escape by otherwise getting in the way of all possible pursuers. However, that isn't what the butterflies are specialized in.

### **DC Mini – Anaphylaxis Module 200 CP**

*This thing... that's weird – these were supposed to be all destroyed. The Institute had initial trial models for the DC Minis, but because the access privileges on them were set improperly, there was a critical flaw when they were used. When used, these DC Minis left a residual signal within the patient's head, and over time, they would develop a strange sort of “allergic reaction” to the waves emitted by the device.*

*If all it did was introduce strange waves though, the Institute would not have seen it as a problem. Unfortunately, whenever the waves were broadcasted nearby, the patients who had developed the reaction would immediately have their minds tossed into a dream – essentially forcing people to sleep like flicking a switch.*

*Well, I'm sure you'll use it responsibly if you do take this. This DC Mini comes as a single unit, but unlike normal DC Minis, it can forcefully implant itself on an individual – burrowing underneath their skin if need be to plant the signal. Like all DC Minis, it's compatible with the Navigator.*

### **A Jar of Black Goo 200 CP**

*Oh boy this doesn't look like good stuff at all. It's not anything that you'll normally find in the real world anyways. There are some dreams that are so distorted, so corrupted, that this material starts to show up – like a mental equivalent to icky mold if you would. Naturally, it's bad stuff, and if a person is exposed to too much of it, it can cause both their mind and body to degrade. Its presence isn't any good for the world either, as it can corrupt and spread throughout the world, creating a “living nightmare” as it were.*

*This kind of stuff is the sort that you really want to keep under wraps. I mean, I can understand that the survey team might have wanted to figure out how it works, but these people really let their curiosity get ahead of them sometimes...*

## [NIGHTMARES]

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*Nightmares? Nightmares can be fun too you know, it all comes down to a matter of taking everything into stride, and embracing the changes as they come. But of course, there aren't many who like to embrace nightmares head on... if there's a bit of a challenge, there should be a bit of a reward as well right?*

*This funny CP stuff that they were playing with, let's make a trade with that. You take on your nightmares, and in return I'll give you a certain amount of this CP stuff. Oh, and those friends of yours? Why don't we let them join in as well?*

**As far as how much Nightmares can give you in terms of CP, your personal CP limit is 600 CP. Your companions' CP limit is 300 CP each.**

### **Malevolent Tulpa 50 (Can be taken multiple times)**

Most people possess a rather consistent personality when they're conscious and sound of mind, but there are plenty of cases in which individuals seem to suffer from personality schisms – some cases severe enough that multiple distinct personalities seem to show up. These “auxiliary” personalities aren't always intrusive, and they aren't always easy to perceive except to somebody aware of their existence. At least, that's for most people who encounter this phenomenon – you aren't so lucky.

The schism that you suffer from embodies some of the worst traits you possess, and possesses the intimate knowledge to twist your own experiences against you. You might be unfortunate enough to encounter one that preys on your fears, or instead they may bring up and hammer home all of your past failures. But inevitably, they're a part of you – so attempting to prune them will likely cause a fair bit of damage to your mentality. The question then is – how long can you ignore their increasingly hostile behaviour towards you?

You may choose to fragment yourself as many times as you like – but be wary that each of these fragments will work alongside one another to take your mind and break it apart, each in their own unique fashion. Fears, doubts, worries, stresses... just how many secrets do you have that you're suppressing?

### **Dying Literacy 100**

Nonsensical scenes inspire bizarre thoughts, and words cannot express the movies playing in your head. How do you explain to the ignorant third grade class that the governor is leading the five court ladies to a new Oceania? If the mailbox and the refrigerator lead the way, then perhaps there is no longer a need for expiry dates, but instead prophecies of the dancing dolls

will bring with them news of jubilation. Even awake, the dreams play on and on, and with the dreams comes a disturbingly possessive desire to broadcast the scene out to the world at large.

The dreams that you see will directly affect your ability to comprehend and express yourself.

These dreams, imprinted into your subconscious, will render you incapable of speaking properly, as the words that come out are meshed with your attempts to describe the dreams that won't stop coming.

Night dreams of day, light dreams of darkness, and when you start seeing the marching frogs out of the corner of your eye – maybe all of the nonsense will begin to make sense.

### **Parody of Utopia 100**

If everyone and everything share the same dream, then isn't all life in total accord? Being able to share your thoughts, being able to share the world in your head seems good and all at first – but very quickly you'll realize how alien things can become, and then perhaps the ability to share everything becomes... not so good.

At first, the sharing range and coherence of the dreams meshed together is rather low. Only individuals and beings in the same room might see their dreams interact, and even then only when they're all sleeping simultaneously. But with time, both the range and the coherence will increase – and dreams will become disturbingly real before the boundary between fantasy and reality breaks down.

Hopefully you have a very firm mental foundation to begin with, because there will be many things looking to turn the boat over.

### **The Guardian's Ire 100**

Possessing the technology to intrude and tamper with dreams is an amazing advancement as far as science goes – but whether it should be used to its full extent is fiercely debated by many, and this individual in particular seems adamant that anybody entering the dream – willingly or not, should be subjugated and controlled. Unfortunately, this will likely include you... especially if certain events come to pass...

The Guardian's efforts towards instilling "order" as far as dreams go is relatively simple: he invades your dreams and overwrites the dreams that you have, turning them all into very realistic nightmares. From psychotic and nonsensical scenes of madness to repeated flashbacks of trauma, the Guardian has a wide variety of dreams at his disposal, ready to be used against you. Be sure that you don't succumb to him, because he'll tear away a part of you given any opportunity, and you might not be able to get that part back...

### **REM Atonia 100**

REM Atonia refers to a phenomenon which occurs during the first phases of entering REM sleep – where the majority of the individual's body is temporarily paralyzed. To some extent, this behaviour protects the sleeper, by inhibiting movements which might otherwise occur. It would otherwise be completely normal behaviour... if it wasn't for the fact that the phenomenon visits you when you aren't asleep.

From time to time, as if you entered a state of deep slumber, your entire body will cease any movement, freezing up in whatever posture you happen to be in at the time. It goes without saying that this can prove to be extremely dangerous depending on the circumstance. Each time the paralysis hits, it can last from a matter of seconds to minutes, but it generally seems to be related to the activity occurring prior to the paralysis setting in. The more frenetic the activity, the shorter the paralysis duration seems to be. On the other hand however, the more fatigued you become the more frequent the paralysis seems to occur.

Hopefully it doesn't strike you while you're crossing the road.

### **Parade of Terror 100 (Can be taken multiple times)**

A parade is a wonderful thing, full of lively fun and opportunities for mania. Who doesn't like to see a parade come down the street, marching band and all? But there's something a bit off about this parade specifically... for one thing, those frogs look a little bit too lively... and that car seems to bend a little bit too well.

At first they seem to only be hallucinations, tricks that your mind plays on you. In the dreams that you have, the parades will always be present no matter where you go or how you attempt to manipulate the dream. But thankfully the hallucinations don't affect you so often in reality... at first anyways. As time passes though, you'll find the strange jingle a familiar sound... a familiar warning of the parade that's about to pass through regardless of what stands in the way.

If you get caught in the parade's flow, you run the risk of damaging your psyche, and that risk increases dramatically each time this nightmare is taken again. With each instance, a new nightmare takes hold, heralding the arrival of another parade on top of the existing one. Each parade tends to follow a theme very personal to you – the elements and members of the parade often include things dug up from your memory.

But a parade is composed of many different components working in concert. Be very wary of one thing – others will be able to see your parades and you'll be able to see the parades of others as well. Too many of them and the cacophony alone might drive you mad.

### **Pleasure is On Sale 100 (Can be taken multiple times)**

In our daily lives, our minds constantly balance a wide assortment of emotions and opinions, and that balancing act keeps a person from diving headfirst into obsession. But in dreams that restraint tends to be absent, resulting in very vivid experiences which often sees a single emotion running dominant over everything else. The problem occurs when what runs rampant in a dream carries over to real life.

If it was strictly you that was affected, perhaps it wouldn't be so bad – after all, what's one person who can't control their emotions going to harm? The problem is that you don't merely exhibit the symptoms of this emotional rampancy, you act as a vector, spreading it to all those who spend long periods of time around you. At first obsession can be tolerated, even resisted, but with time, the obsession turns into its own special brand of madness. This madness is a dangerous one, because rather than simply blinding your senses, it fills you with an undeniable sense of satisfaction and pleasure. The more you indulge, the further you let yourself fall, the more attractive the whole cycle becomes, until the time arrives when you won't be able to stop yourself from committing ridiculous acts in the name of obsession.

Each time you take this option – a different emotion surges forward, and your manic periods shift between these different emotions. You may have periods of obsessive anger followed by periods of compulsive indulgence, and all the while, you'll be enjoying every single moment of it, oblivious to everything else that happens around you.

## [A MOMENTARY AWAKENING]

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The old man waves a hand back and forth in front of your face – presumably to check if you're awake. His accomplices seem to still be asleep, though there's no trace of the mysterious girl who initially hijacked everything...what was her name again?

A card rests in your lap, the back of which is signed with a name and a kiss mark. Paprika? Isn't that a spice of some sort? You might as well toss it aside.

The old man, satisfied that you're awake, is strangely confused with the entire situation. It would appear that your allotted time has come and gone – he has the records, as messed up as they are. With a long sigh, he sets the records aside – he'll have plenty of time to review them later and select the choice clips for the Lady.

Before that however, there's the matter of your departure to deal with. You have three choices at hand, though the details might be a little off.

### WAKE UP IN BED AGAIN

Preparations for your return to your home world are complete...but there's a bit of a complication. Traces of the DC phenomenon seem to be lingering about, if you're willing to wait, we can patch up the problems with the data that you collected. If not, don't be too surprised if from time to time, you hear about bizarre dreamlike activity in your world.

### SUBMERGING INTO THE DREAM

Going right back to sleep again? Well, it's all the same to us. We'll prepare for your return...but whether you want to return to the world within the dream or the real world – well that's for you to decide.

### A DREAM OF ELSEWHERE

Continuing on elsewhere? Everything necessary for your departure is already prepared, good luck as you continue on ahead. And take that weird business card with you.

# Notes

## PERK NOTES

<u>The Outsider</u>	
<b>Tabula Rasa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Allows yourself to “wipe” your mind clean of abnormalities and deficiencies, temporarily forgetting things like phobias and mental stigmas.</li> <li>*It doesn’t actually destroy your phobias or mental scars; it merely weakens the effect that they have on your psyche.</li> </ul>
<b>Hyperarousal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Grants you flexible control over the standard fight/flight responses in your mind, heightening your mental response rate, as well as your body’s capabilities.</li> <li>*This switching process decreases in effectiveness if it is rapidly abused.</li> </ul>
<b>Shadow Complex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Within context of the dream, allows you to manipulate and control an individual subconsciously – affixing yourself to them like a shadow would. You can meld with their body so long as you remain within the dream.</li> <li>*Outside the dream, you can still hide within another individual, but the period of your stay is severely limited. As long as there’s a shadow around however, staying within it keeps you out of sight from prying eyes.</li> </ul>
<b>Duality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Within context of the dream, manifests a “second” individual based upon your own subconscious – while the individual can act autonomously and develop its own personality, its primary intention is to serve as a first line of defence against mental intrusions, via a dream or not.</li> <li>*With time multiple aspects can be created, but the creation of each aspect comes with a mental burden coming from the fragmentation process.</li> <li>*Unlike some other abilities interacting with the dream, this functions in the same fashion when outside of the dream world context.</li> </ul>
<u>The Psychiatrist</u>	
<b>Cold Reader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Visual cues and habits of an individual become immediately apparent, even if you aren’t particularly familiar with their personality, or they are of an unfamiliar race</li> <li>*In particular, you have a knack for pointing out flaws that people might be trying to hide or ignore.</li> </ul>
<b>Gentle Coercion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Shifts the way you speak to such a manner that people generally find it hard to resist your suggestions or advice. You can choose when this should be active, as appropriate for the circumstances.</li> <li>*The more you talk to a person, the more they’ll trust you, in what generally becomes a cyclic loop (as long as you don’t do anything to break this trust) – This spreads to individuals related to them.</li> </ul>
<b>Slip of the Mind</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Within context of the dream, allows you to slowly shift parts of an individual’s personality by interacting with their persona within the dream. The act of manipulation performed in such a manner is not retained within the individual – such that they won’t remember it when they wake, but the changes take time to appear.</li> </ul>



	<p>*Outside the dream, it functions differently, dependent on individuals which you've previously had a spoken interaction with. It allows you to plant subconscious cues – it seals memories based on trauma – which will be released if the cue is activated.</p> <p>*Can be resisted by creatures with a sufficiently strong psyche, or naturally, if they can't hear the cue at all – but understanding the cue isn't necessary.</p>
<b>Unconscious Phantasy</b>	<p>*Within context of the dream, makes it possible for you to change the entire landscape of the dream world at will. The shift in the mental landscape introduces changes within those who witness it, with particularly strong effects on the individual who happens to be dreaming. Turning the environment turbulent for instance, can disrupt the individual and wrack their mind/psyche.</p> <p>*The effect and scope of this ability decreases significantly once outside of the dream environment, but you can still manipulate the surroundings in a strange fashion – like slipping into a painting to elude capture, or hopping through a screen to appear a medium distance away elsewhere. Excessive use of this however, can destabilize the mentality of those who witness this ability and cannot otherwise comprehend it.</p>
<u><a href="#">The Scientist</a></u>	
<b>Proof of Concept</b>	<p>*Allows you to quickly whip up drafts and proposals for tools and procedures necessary to serve a purpose, as long as the purpose is clearly defined. There's no guarantee that you can actually build it as far as tools go, but the intricacies required to make the design achieve the purpose will all be laid out in a manner that can be understood by individuals without technical expertise otherwise.</p>
<b>Unnecessary Distractions</b>	<p>*Places you into a state of hyper focus, though it can otherwise be described as tunnel vision. As long as you remain in this state however, your mind cannot be otherwise disturbed by external sources.</p> <p>*The pace at which you learn and process information, regardless of the media it is conveyed in, is greatly accelerated for as long as you remain within this trance state.</p> <p>*This similarly applies to simple repetitive actions, like repetitive manual labour or repetitive body movements.</p>
<b>Creating the Dream</b>	<p>*Within context of the dream, this allows one to create items within a dream as necessary, even if the usual reagents are absent or otherwise impossible. The effects however, may not be as substantial as they would be in real life should necessary reagents be lacking. However the process will strain you mentally (to lesser degree in comparison to <b>Duality</b> or wide applications of <b>Unconscious Phantasy</b>) each time you create something.</p> <p>*Naturally if you have no clue what an object is, or what it's supposed to do, creating it will likely lead to a major mess.</p> <p>*Outside of the dream, the ability can function in the same fashion, but you'll find that the item will quickly degrade, and items will prove to be</p>

	<p>even weaker than they are in a dream. However, you can use this to temporarily “warp” an item in reality, shifting its properties (like turning a metal guard rail into plush foam) until you leave the vicinity. Any damage done will linger however.</p> <p>*This functions well on things that do not possess any sort of psyche to defend themselves, but anything with a psyche can put up a level of resistance.</p>
<b>Intermesh Capacity</b>	<p>*Within context of the dream, links individuals from one person to another, even without the use of a Mini DC device. As long as there is an individual to instigate the dream, others can enter into the same dream as long as you, the facilitator, is nearby. All participants can modify the shared dream world – as long as it remains within your toleration.</p> <p>*Outside of the dream however, this instead functions more efficiently on machines, networking them even if the existing hardware is unavailable.</p> <p>*To a very limited extent, it can function on living beings, but the thought transmission range isn’t much farther than several city blocks.</p> <p>*It’s possible however, to daisy chain humans and machines together and therefore increase the absolute range. Precautions should be taken to ensure that the humans have a strong enough psyche to endure the integration process.</p>
<u><a href="#">The Investigator</a></u>	
<b>CSA</b>	<p>*Allows you to immediately point out oddities with an area upon entry – from finding necessary evidence to determining things hidden away. This will work better if you’ve seen the place before – but prior experience isn’t entirely necessary.</p> <p>*This naturally allows you to tell if a dream or an illusion is in effect and the point of penetration if it exists.</p>
<b>Aggressive Interrogation</b>	<p>*Allows you to corner an individual by twisting their words and action against them, as long as you remain present about them, their mental state will become increasingly strained.</p> <p>*Their ability to lie becomes increasingly weak the longer they remain around you and whether they are lying by omission or simply fabricating a story; it becomes evident when they do lie.</p>
<b>Forceful Entry</b>	<p>*Regardless of the context, forcefully allows you to intrude into the mind of another as long as excessive force (this is mental force so please don’t think you can get into their head by punching them) is exerted, but can lead to damaging the individual’s mind through a direct link.</p> <p>*Anything done to the dreamer within their dream is reflected upon their mental state and to a degree upon their physical state as well, with the full consequences depending on the strength of their psyche. But while they can break mentally, they won’t suffer fatal incidents as a result of this.</p> <p>*Attempts to block you out via mental methods can be forcefully destroyed, further harming the individual’s psyche.</p>
<b>Guilt Trip</b>	<p>*Regardless of the context, forcefully manifests elements of fear and</p>

	<p>loathing that the subjects have – and can manifest them into reality, as long as the elements are ingrained within the individual.</p> <p>*Manifested within a dream, it can trap the dreamer within a night terror situation – one that rapidly eats away at their mental endurance as well as their psyche to an extent.</p> <p>*Manifested outside of the dream, the phenomenon tends to induce hallucinations and manic behaviour within the affected individual. It becomes more effective if you know elements which can be used against them.</p>
<u>Hypnos Variations</u>	
<b>Gently Down the Stream</b>	<p>*Eases people directly into a dream even if they were previously awake, and thereby makes them fall asleep in reality – you can then enter into their dream.</p> <p>*Can be resisted if the individual is aware of this occurring (they can recognize it's a dream quick enough) and has a sufficiently strong psyche.</p>
<b>Fantastic Vision</b>	<p>* Using vivid images based upon what is regularly shown to the individual, corrupts their memory and self of “stability” in what is real by twisting the images and replaying them.</p> <p>*Works more effectively if you know specific scenes that hold emotional significance to the target, like memories of trauma or bliss.</p>
<b>The One Eyed Man</b>	<p>*Manipulates individuals such that their bodies respond to their perception of reality within the context of the dream, as in their body's capabilities are unlocked based upon the dream that they see – but also things that happen to them within the dream will affect their real bodies similarly.</p> <p>*Excessive use of this on an individual however can induce significant delusions, but you can decide what it is that they'll see as the line between reality and fantasy blurs.</p>
<b>Mandala – Yggdrasil</b>	<p>*Plants a “seed” within an individual, from which a collective dream begins to grow, shaped by the individual's whims and wishes, but otherwise hidden from him, underneath the surface layer of their natural dreams.</p> <p>*With time and the growth of the dream, it becomes possible to harvest mental energy from that individual, draining on them spiritually as it were, note that the process causes a bit of degradation of the dream created by the seed.</p> <p>*When the dream “matures”, it stops growing, but it becomes possible for the dreamer to leave “roots”, places in reality where people can fall into the dreamscape created by the seed. Black goo can be used to accelerate the growth of the dream, but this can place undue stress on the dreaming individual. The amount of roots that they can leave is generally small, and roots don't thrive in places where many people venture.</p> <p>*People caught within the dreamscape can also be drained of their mental energy while they remain inside, but if left alone, they'll eventually find their way back out.</p>

<b>Mandala - Morpheus</b>	<p>*Plants a “seed” within an individual, which in turn affects the individual much more directly than <b>Yggdrasil</b>.</p> <p>*Allows the individual to manifest elements of their dreams into reality – but what is chosen happens to be random, leaning towards elements of greater significance to their individual selves. Unlike other manifestation abilities, this is strictly subconscious, and the manifestations are accepted as normal in the world – even if they would be otherwise bizarre in nature. Manifestations can be dangerous, both to the individual manifesting it, as well as any bystanders (including you).</p> <p>*How long these manifestations last however, is largely dependent on the psyche of the individual. An individual with a strong psyche will be able to maintain a large amount of these random elements for a moderate period of time, but weaker individuals will likely struggle to manifest more than a few things.</p> <p>*Paradoxically, those with weak psyches can transmit this quicker like a viral outbreak, whereas those with strong psyches will likely not transmit this at all. If you have black goo available, you can use it as a transmission vector as well.</p> <p>*If the individual manifesting the elements dies, the elements will fade away, and memory of them is purged from all witnesses, though the potential devastation caused remains.</p>
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