



BLESSED

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# BLESSED

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The cities? They burned.

The people?

They scrape by, scavenging and hoarding, growing engineered plant-stock in the new urban soil.

The government? There is none. As many predicted, it was the corporation that had real strength. Certainly, not all withstood the tests they were subjected to. But while markets crumbled, new ones emerged, and only those with a command of resources and manpower could hope to keep faith with civilization.

The corps provide, and without them a person is powerless. In fact, with the new biotech, a human can achieve more than ever before: he can reshape the world and bring humanity forward—we know the current troubles must eventually end, though that future may be millennia away.

## CHARACTERS

Each player controls one of the blessed, who are so named because they showed promise, and have been selected as agents of change. A corporation has adopted them, and seen fit to elevate them. If they prove their courage, vision and loyalty, their grace will only grow.

Characters will wish to achieve things in the world.

What they can achieve is limited directly by their ability scores and a die roll: their actual performance may not always match what is possible.

Actions are classed into six types, which every character has an ability rank in:

**Travel** — The wastes of the world are vast and tangled. Low-level blessed may pilot a corporation vehicle, while those of great grace need never touch the ground with anything but their thoughts.

**Destroy** — Much will have to be torn down before humanity can flourish in a peaceful world. All manner of loosed creations may interfere with the blessed, as too may radical normals, like berserkers, driven to desperate madness by the gray slime of our world.

**Parse** — Even those who see best cannot always make sense of it. The crushing complexity of the new world—made heavier by the nanites, wild-machines, and neorganics—can be deadly. But to a blessed, it is an oyster waiting to be opened, bit by bit. A skilled parser knows no riddles, and even the words spoken by AI have meaning.

**Speak** — Although the blessed are giants among men, they must preserve the good will of the people, who should not stand in the way of our work: they can be

shown logic and vision, and convinced to help.

**Build** – The world needs rebuilding. It must be reshaped so that problems are solved and the people provided for. A blessed may move objects with his mind, reorder and combine them, even change their makeup.

**See** – The world is a complicated place, and its connections are myriad. A sharp normal sees details and patterns; a high-level blessed can see everything that happens for miles around, and prognosticate with low error.

Characters begin with all abilities at rank 1, plus another 5 points; no abilities may initially be higher than 3, however. Rank 1 corresponds to the ability of a skilled normal; 0 is more typical for them.

No one knows what the highest rank granted so far is, though the technology behind blessed grace is ever increasing. Practically, rank 7 follows great achievements by a blessed, and it is rumored that such people may be inducted into the corporate structure, if also of great intellect.

## CONFLICTS

When a blessed wants to change the world, his player calls for a conflict. He informs the GM what effect he wants. The GM decides what ability rank would nominally be required, and comes up with a consequence for failure--which should match the rank in severity.

The GM then chooses the most relevant ability and the player rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to his character's rank in it. Consider each die: a roll of 4 or higher indicates that one ability rank worth of performance was achieved.

If the character's performance matches or exceeds

the level required (as set by the GM), the character alters the world as proposed. Otherwise, he is unable to do so, and he feels GM's negative consequences.

## ADVANCEMENT

A blessed earns the respect of his corporation by performing certain deeds; in these, his character and promise is proven. As such trust is built, the corporation awards the blessed more ability, through its various sciences, so that he may better carry out the work of fixing the world.

Performance is recorded numerically.

At the end of a mission, a player may state that his character is making use of it to acquire more ability ranks: the cost of progressing to the next rank is given below:

Rank	Cost
2	20
3	24
4	28
5	34
6	42
7	50

The GM will award players points when they achieve appropriate goals:

- ▶ Directly aiding members of another corporation: 0, discouraged
- ▶ Killing agents or destroying property of another corporation: 0, discouraged
- ▶ Fulfilling a corporate mission: 2–20
- ▶ Eliminating dangerous normals, life, machines, pattern flows: 0, encouraged

## Missions

While the characters may be given general directives that allow some freedom, the GM should usually assign them missions to carry out, which originate from their corporation.

These missions may overlap in time, space, and purpose; a handful may be outstanding at a given time. Their purpose should be explained vaguely, with an approach sometimes ordained. When the GM assigns a mission, he can decide how many points it is worth, if accomplished. Common mission examples are given below:

- ▶ Berserkers are raiding corporate installations for supplies. Reappropriate the materials and prevent all future incursions by this group.
- ▶ Some normals have halted all productive work and now spread mental viruses to their neighbors. Convince them to reorient themselves.
- ▶ Corporate workers have gone rogue: they aim to create a polity, corporate pretender organization or cult. Reabsorb them into the fold or dispatch the traitors.
- ▶ Anarcho-terrorists have bombed corporate holdings: terminate them.
- ▶ An insane cult has decided to reestablish contact with the Artemis-1 orbiter, and the blind Demiurge AI it contains. These cannot become aware of our survival on earth: prevent the cult from firing any spacecraft and purge it.
- ▶ A community of normals has foolishly begun building a sentient Oasis complex; their corrupt ideas of civilization will doom us all by infecting the pattern flow. Destroy their efforts.

- ▶ Nanites have created an unaffiliated pseudo-blessed. His programmed solipsism will require him to destroy all civilization once he masters his powers. Terminate rapidly.
- ▶ A fragment of an AI has initiated cultural genesis in a remote location. Destroy this mimetic black hole, and its source, before it becomes established.