The Spire is a massive pillar, rising from endless wastes, serving as home to an intricate ecosystem of cruelty. From the slimes, beasts, and exiled thugs of the Exordium, to the guardians, knights, and slavers that fester within the City, to the writhing masses, creatures of darkness, and transient horrors that stalk the Beyond, this is no place for the weak.

Enter Neow, an ancient whale seeking to bring this place to its end. She empowers adventurers to sally forth, climbing through fifty floors of malice, and at the end of their journey lies the malevolent Heart that beats within the uppermost chambers. The core of the Spire itself.

But the Heart will not fall without a fight. Rallying its own champions from throughout its depths, it gathers fearsome spirits, automata, gremlins, and more to stop the adventurers in their tracks.

In another version of things, you might be one of those adventurers, seeking to cleanse the evil that dwells within. But this time? This time, you're gonna be the villain.

Welcome to…



ORIGINS:

Choose the type of villain you'd like to be. Choosing an origin gives you that origin's Form, plus 1000 souls to buy perks and relics. Perks from your chosen origin cost half the listed price. Purchasing all three 200-soul perks from a given origin unlocks that origin's Synergy Boost. Spending 300 souls on relics unlocks the Form Enhancement for your chosen origin.



The Slime Boss
A malevolent mass of green sludge. Specializes in spitting toxic goop, tackling foes, and dividing itself into lesser slimes.



The Guardian
An ancient machine built for protection. Can branch out into defensive forms, empowering gemstones, and manipulating time.



The Hexaghost
An entombed spirit bound to this realm. Capable of learning to conjure ghostflames, burn away the soul, and wield the spirits of the dead.



The Champion
An ordinary human that grew to love the arena. Brawls with twinned combat styles, enchanted equipment, and wild abandon.



The Automaton
A modernized construct to handle the Spire's increased population. Uses hologram software, augmented hardware, and dangerous laser technology.

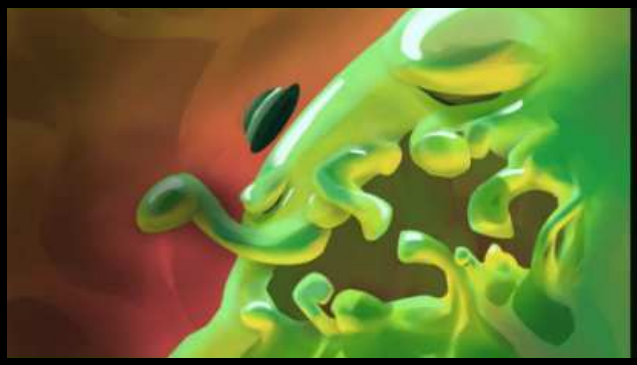


The Gremlins
A swarm of bickering, yet tightly knit imps. Wielders of a wide array of shivs, claws, hammers, shields, and arcane might. (See the Q&A section if you get confused.)



The Snecko
A peculiar lizard, large and enigmatic. Develops random abilities, randomizes physical material, and injects chaos into their every move.

OPTIONAL: MIRROR MISTS (+200 Souls)
In the lower levels of the Exordium, you were trapped within a peculiar fog, and in that space, memories not your own filled your mind. Choose a second origin. You receive the Form of your first origin, plus discounts on only one line of perks from both origins. For example, you could choose to receive the Champion's enchantment related perks and the Guardian's gemstone related perks at half price, but you would gain no discounts on other perks from either origin.



The Slime Boss



Form - Heart of Goo: The Slime Boss appears, to the unlearned, to be an enormous, viscous mass. A beast with neither limb nor vital organ, but only an undifferentiated sludge. An enforcer that shambles about the spire, preempting those who mean harm to the Heart. This assumption is...correct, in fact. Such is the nature of the form you take.



Form Enhancement - Checked Growth:
Ordinarily, there is an upper bound on the size a slime can take, some limitation of its liquid structure. That limitation hasn't gone away, but it is more flexible now. Your physical structure can grow half again as large as usual without problems, and can temporarily grow larger still, though being above the limit makes it easy for excess material to erode away.

Synergy Boost - Slimepotheosis:
Pure slime, all the time.
Lesser slimes you produce benefit fully from Corrosive Spit and Weighted Tackle. Weighted Tackle allows you to route Corrosive Spit through your 'skin' on impact. Reformation can absorb all slimes, and any of your creations. Repurpose can digest nonorganic materials, such as metal constructs. Leech Energy automatically absorbs all impacts, anticipated or not.



SLIME BOSS: SPLIT



Slime Split (200):
Though there are countless slimes patrolling the halls of the Spire, in truth each of them descends from the same mitotic lineage. By shaving off a small quantity of your external mass, it is possible to create a lesser slime from your bulk. This slime will follow your orders if directed, or act in your interests if left to its own devices.

Reformation (400, requires Slime Split):
As you are a source of lesser slimes, so too are you their terminus. By reabsorbing one of your slimy creations into your central form, you regain their memories, their raw mass, and any enhancements they may have acquired along the way. Tasty!





Duplicated Form (600, requires Slime Split):
Removing more than a small quantity of your main form at once is dangerous for the typical slime. You are far from typical. By splitting yourself precisely down the middle, you become twinned in nature, a single mind with two bodies under its control. This is too dangerous to repeat at reduced mass, but if one half should grow to normal size, it's fully possible to divide again.

SLIME BOSS: CORROSIVE

Corrosive Spit (200):
Granted, slimes are a homogenous ooze. Some manage to branch out, however, developing an internal sac for the production of a *second* kind of homogenous ooze. By expelling the contents of this sac, you can launch a blob of acidic purple sludge. The sludge seeps into and softens whatever it touches, causing it to break apart with even a small impact.



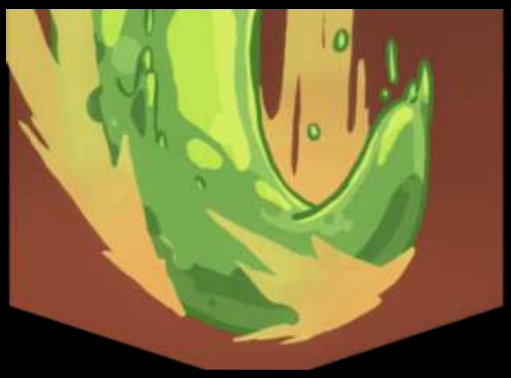


Repurpose (400, requires Corrosive Spit):
Having softened up all this raw mass, it would be a waste not to make use of it. With a specialty enzyme, organic substances affected by your corrosive spit are easily digested, converted into additional slime, and used to repair damage or expand your prodigious bulk.

Ooze Bath (600, requires Corrosive Spit):
Spire residents may refer to it as ‘a consumptive virulent payload’ or ‘the purple sweats’. Slimes don’t refer to it as anything, usually, but they know how it works. On contact with organic matter, your acidic sludge begins to multiply and consume, first working through bodily fluids, then soft tissues, and finally through bone. Without quick removal of the affected area, even the slightest graze becomes a death sentence.



SLIME BOSS: FLUID DYNAMICS



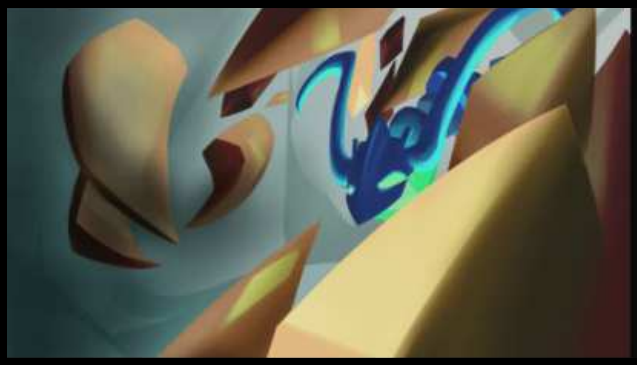
Weighted Tackle (200):
A slime's fluids are just that--fluid. And like any fluid, they can flow. By adjusting your internal membranes, you can cause your mass to redistribute itself to specific parts of the body. The part you're hitting your enemy with, usually, which means that any blow you land tends to carry force disproportionate to its expected weight.

Leech Energy (400, requires Weighted Tackle):
What use is a dagger in slaying the river? A sword against the sea? As your foes attempt to land a physical blow against you, you may shift your physical structure to match the flow of the attack, robbing it of force. What's more, the power lost ripples through your body, briefly enhancing the speed and force of your own movements in response.





Slime Crush (600, requires Weighted Tackle):
Were the Slime Boss to prosecute a siege, there would be none that could withstand it. How lucky for the Heart that the slimes have not turned.
By coiling in upon yourself, you can compress your body's sludge to obscene densities, gathering energy for an overwhelming attack. The release of that energy is enough to send you careening forward at speeds that could shatter the walls of the Spire, turn its denizens to smears--or even launch you airborne, traveling hundreds of feet to paste an unwary target.



The Guardian

Form - Protective Construct: One of the earliest machines to prowl the Spire, this device was built with a singular purpose: to serve as an eternal gatekeeper, barring the way between the Heart and those who would mean it ill. Though the metal-scaled apparatus may seem calm when unprovoked, those who incur its wrath rarely live to tell the tale.



Form Enhancement - Reconstruction:
There is no shortage of constructs to be found in the Spire. Automata, Orbwalkers, Shapes, Sentries, Spherics, and others may prove inconvenient to your efforts. But why simply destroy them? By disassembling other machines for components, you are capable of integrating useful functionality into your own structure, repairing damage and augmenting your capabilities.

Synergy Boost - Ancient Power:
Your weathering of aeons is not without cause. Stasis orbs can be embedded with, and exploit, gemstones. Defensive Protocol allows stasis orbs to produce weakening lasers while active. Exploit Gems applies to types of gem not found in the Spire. Spiker Protocol can now deploy spikes at will. Prismatic Barrier can be projected on others besides yourself, granting them the barrier and gem effects. Rerouting can convert all other energy types into time.



GUARDIAN: DEFENDER



Defensive Protocol (200):
You were built to protect the Spire, and your design reflects that. Through the reconfiguring of internal motors, you are able to convert yourself into a temporary alternate mode of operation, one more heavily reinforced and damage-resistant. Although this requires a fair bit of energy, it's possible to draw that energy from impacts that damage your chassis, making it much easier to enter and maintain this mode if you've been recently vandalized.

Spiker Protocol (400, requires Defensive Protocol):
In your defensive form, reactive plating engages and clicks into place, concealing a bristling armory. When struck, pressurized steel quills lance out from your surface, spearing gaping wounds through both the striking weapon and the limb that wielded it. A strong message that defacement of the Heart's property will not be tolerated.



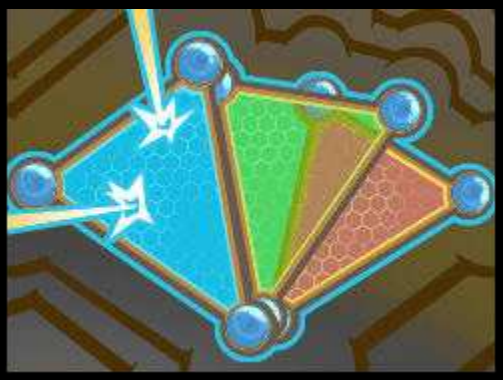


Revenge Protocol (600, requires Defensive Protocol):
Those branded enemies of the spire will find no mercy. When attacked, part of your calculative engine designates the attacker as a Foe, launching a comprehensive analysis of their behaviors and weaknesses, and generates strategies to see them ended. Additionally, a large reservoir of emergency power unlocks itself, allowing your weapon systems access in the pursuit of revenge.

GUARDIAN: GEMSTONES

Exploit Gems (200):
Occasionally, glittering baubles are seen to adorn the constructs of the Spire. But it is not in pursuit of vanity. By running a small amount of electricity through the gems, it is possible to produce a variety of useful effects. Examples include enhancements to limb speed, projection of ethereal barbs, dispersal of weakening miasma, and accelerated thought. While the effects are minor in each case, the versatility is limited only by the types of gem at your disposal.





Prismatic Barrier (400, requires Exploit Gems):
Of course, electricity is hardly in short supply. By expending a larger quantity of energy, multiple gems can be activated at once to envelop you in a shimmering, colorful field. The field protects you from physical harm, of course, but that's not all. While wrapped in the field, you gain a much larger version of each individual gemstone's benefit, flaring in power further when a foe tries to batter through.

Gemstone Munitions (600, requires Exploit Gems):
In the pursuit of the Heart's eternal reign, some sacrifices must be made. Besides, you can always find another jewel. By flooding a gemstone with power, it's possible to briefly ramp its unique traits to absurd levels, with the only limit being how much energy you have to give. Bear in mind, however: once used this way, a gem will shatter to dust, never to be used again.

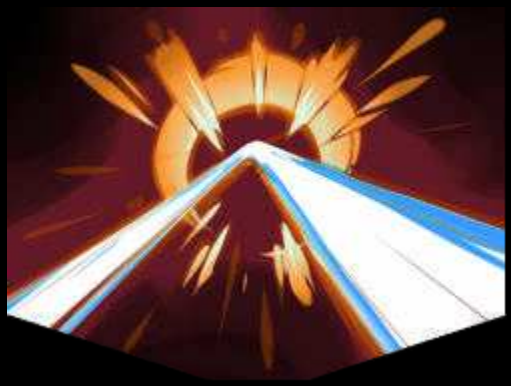


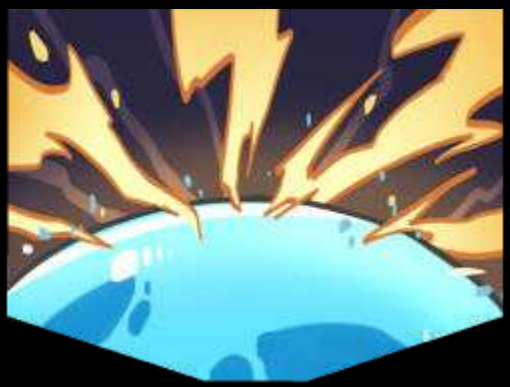
GUARDIAN: STASIS



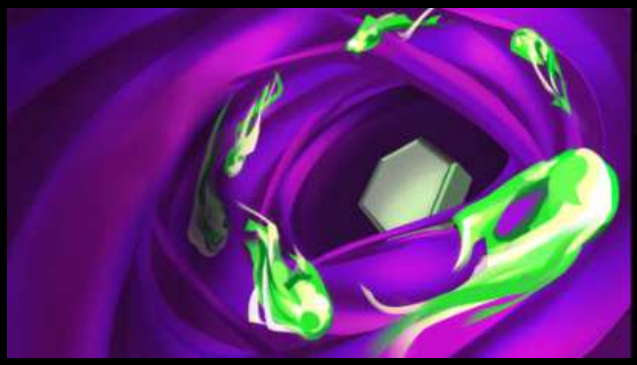
Stasis Orbs (200):
From storage holds in your central casing, you can deploy three small hovering automata to assist you in battle. In addition to their (admittedly underwhelming) laser assault, they contain a small reservoir of time, accumulating at a rate of about one-hundredth of a second per second. By expending this time, they are able to take action while the rest of the world stands still. A useful trick, even for such a weak device.

Rerouting (400, requires Stasis Orbs):
You now possess a reservoir of time of your own. It cannot fill itself automatically, but it can draw from the reserves of your stasis orbs. Additionally, it is possible to convert electricity into additional time for either your stasis orbs or yourself. Granted, the exchange rate is obscene, but the cost is often well worth paying for even an extra second.



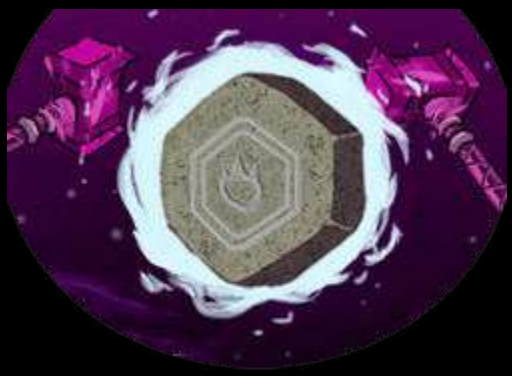


Hypercharged Core (600, requires Stasis Orbs):
Just as electricity can be converted into time, so too is the opposite true. When the temporal reserves are full, specialized components convert the surplus into raw power. This time, the obscene exchange rate is in your favor: even minutes of time could provide more energy than the dedicated power generators of the Spire could produce in a month. To match that output, your capacitors are similarly expanded, able to stockpile those high quantities of electricity.



The Hexaghost

Form - Spirit Brand: Though innocuous, yours is a shape that the denizens of the spire have grown to fear. Your spirit was bound to a heavy hexagonal seal, and it is in that form that you float through derelict halls, defending the Heart. You natively possess the ability to produce crude bursts of flame for self-defense.



Form Enhancement - Unsealed:
Despite the necessity of the seals keeping you bound to the mortal realm, it is undeniable that they weaken you. How fortunate for you, then, that they are necessity no longer. Through the careful conjunction of all six seals, each has been rendered redundant, leaving your power unrestricted. Your flames burn hotter, your flight is more nimble, and your exterior 'shell' is resistant to blows that would have previously cracked it open.

Synergy Boost - Unlimited Power:
It was never spirit or flame alone. It was always both. Power From Beyond can be used as fuel to empower both Ghostflames and Soulburn. Ghostflames can produce both physical and spiritual fire. Infernal Form enhances all forms of fire you control. Searing Wound applies to all forms of spiritual damage. Haunting Echoes allows you to construct new poltergeists from any form of soulstuff or flame.



HEXAGHOST: GHOSTFLAMES



Ghostflames (200):
You are accompanied by six sparks, all dormant. With some concentration, you can ignite one of these sparks, setting it ablaze and launching a burst of flame from it to strike your foes. When all six are ignited, they launch a collective barrage of fire, and are then extinguished, ready to begin the process again.
While dormant, you may choose whether the ghostflames are invisible or represented as smoldering embers.

Infernal Form (400, requires Ghostflames):
There is a rhythm to the ghostflames: six individual ignitions, six ignitions in tandem, and then the cycle begins anew. That repetition holds power. As long as you focus on activating the ghostflames at a steady pace, their strength will grow, each subsequent flare and each subsequent cycle outpacing those that came before. Once the pattern lapses, however, the surplus energy will fade, leaving you to begin again.





Doomsday (600, requires Ghostflames):
Among those adventurers who have survived a brush with the Hexaghost, there are rumors of a technique that makes the ghostflames far more dangerous than the barrage they represent. As the sixth flame is ignited, so too is a seventh within the Hexaghost itself. The heat grants the spectre a momentary burst of impossible energy, accelerating a dozen times over until the ghostflames extinguish.

HEXAGHOST: SOULBURN

Soulburn (200):
Though mundane flame is often sufficient, it is also easily snuffed. For your more stubborn foes, another tool may be required. In addition to ordinary fire, you are capable of conjuring a vivid green cocktail of soulstuff, slipping through physical defenses to burn your foe's spirit. Even the stoutest warrior may find themselves falling, never to rise again, without a single injury that any other than you can identify.





Searing Wound (400, requires Soulburn):
On the other hand, physical injury has its uses as well. By fanning the sparks of an already-burning soul, the wounds to the spirit are echoed on the body. With the twin assault on crumbling willpower and scorched flesh, it matters not where your foe's weakness lies: you will find it all the same.

Spirit Detonation (600, requires Soulburn):
Careful manipulation allows you to burn away the inside of the soul while keeping the outside largely intact, leaving it hollow. Hollow enough to stuff with highly concentrated flame, in fact. Once filled to bursting, all it takes is an exertion of will for the pitch to detonate, invoking an overwhelming explosion. Were it more physical, a smouldering crater would be left in its wake, but instead, the only sign of your passage will be the field of fallen.



HEXAGHOST: SPIRITS



Power From Beyond (200):
Being a sealed spirit yourself, it's only sensible that you draw strength from the other side of the mortality fence. By calling on nearby spirits of the departed, you can draw on their energy for extra speed and stamina. The more spirits nearby, the better; often, each spirit will only have so much to give.

Haunting Echoes (400, requires Power From Beyond):
Most spirits remember nothing of their life, neither form nor memories. Unfortunate for the bereaved, useful for you. After all, they're far more pliable this way. Rather than sapping their energy, you may instead compel spirits to act on your behalf, prodding the space where their mind once lingered. While often limited in ability, they're more than capable of shielding your form, or lashing out with remarkable physical force.





Unleash Spirits (600, requires Power From Beyond):
To be constrained by the ecology of the Spire might prove sufficient for lesser agents, but you serve as protector and lieutenant of the Heart itself. You will brook no such weakness. Through an exertion of power and will, the barrier between this world and the next yawns open, spirits pouring through en masse. An endless stream of servants...or fuel for the blaze.



The Champion

Form - Gladiator: Speculation abounds as to what lies behind the armor, what monstrous beast has pledged itself to the Heart's service. In truth, the Champion is only human. But with a towering height that far exceeds that of the usual man and strength to match, it's no surprise that their time in the arena has only seen victory.

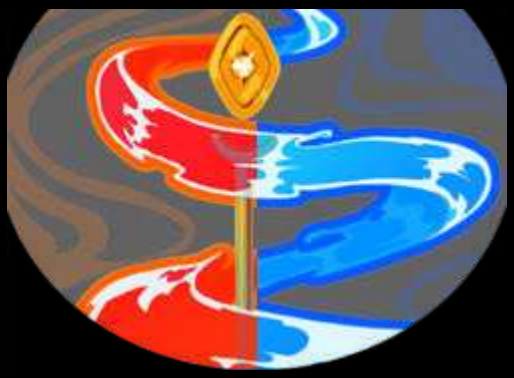


Form Enhancement - Good Clean Fight:
The arena has rules, and you expect to see them followed. By engaging your foes while adhering to a code of combat, you place a compulsion on them that makes it difficult to resist following that same code. After all, if they were to defeat you some other way, would it truly be earned? What valor is there in a stolen crown?

Synergy Boost - Ultimate Stance:
Crowned king of a bloodsoaked throne. Reckless Strike counts as a third style. All three styles automatically adapt to account for the benefits of your enchantments. Dancing Master applies to all forms of combat you are capable of. Ignore Pain can be painted on your skin in advance to prevent future injuries. Triple Strike can be used whether in the reckless style or not, and applies to all forms of attack, whether with a weapon or not.



CHAMPION: TECHNIQUE



Twin Styles (200):
From years of arena brawling, you've developed, and subsequently mastered, two separate styles of combat. The first is a defensive form, revolving around careful maneuvering and punishing your foes for overextension. The second is rather more aggressive. Some would call it berserk, but it's pure strategy that drives you relentlessly forward, seeking gaps in the enemy formation with elegant precision.

Dancing Master (400, requires Twin Styles):
There is a time for each style, and only rarely is that time 'the entire fight'. You have learned to identify moments of opportunity within each style to pivot to the other, smoothly rotating from steady defense to rampant aggression and back again. What's more, the advantages of your previous style briefly persist after the pivot, allowing you to punish a foe's extension even as you extend yourself, or find the cracks in their defense while raising your own.





Last Stand (600, requires Twin Styles):
None have truly bested you, but some have come close. Close enough to see the ace up your sleeve. When seriously injured and close to death, you enter your Last Stand. Your wounds stabilize, your strength skyrockets, and any curses, afflictions, bindings, or other impediments that might interfere with your ability to fight are burned from your system. It is, however, called the last stand for a reason: once the fight concludes, you will be unable to fight further without resting and recuperating the energy lost.

CHAMPION: ENCHANTMENT

Enchant Gear (200):
You're not above using magic, especially not the kind focused on shield and blade. With a small quantity of blood drawn into sigils on your equipment, you can impart a variety of minor, but useful, boons. Make your equipment a little lighter, a little more durable, a little more likely to bite deep with the cutting edge. Perhaps even more esoteric benefits, though those may take some experimentation to find.





Ignore Pain (400, requires Enchant Gear):
If blood's the thing needed to impart magic, it's good that there's plenty of it on the inside of your body. You've picked up a little trick that's only useful in a tough spot, but in that spot can be invaluable. When a wound inflicted upon you draws blood, you can call to the bloody stains on your skin, locking your body in stasis to briefly prevent further harm of any kind.

Crowning Enchantment (600, requires Enchant Gear):
To be the victor is beyond dispute. You know it, the crowd knows it, and your bloody sigils know it. Each time you prevail over your foes, the essence of that victory flows into your enchantments, granting them a small but permanent increase in potency. The more meaningful the victory, the more powerful the flow; to best one of Neow's servants is worth more than slaying a dozen Exordium worms.



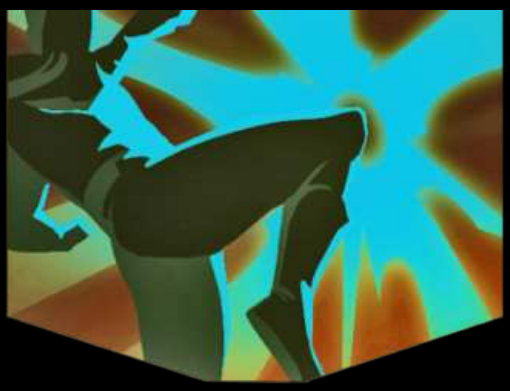
CHAMPION: UNRELENTING



Reckless Strike (200):
Viewers at the arena refer to the more aggressive of the twin styles as ‘berserk’. It is not. This is. When the time is right, you may shed technique entirely, gaining raw speed and power in its place. A decision some opponents have tried to punish, but they’d need to survive long enough to get the chance.

Triple Strike (400, requires Reckless Strike):
In addition to abandoning technique, you may also discard all sense of self-defense, and in so doing accelerate to a blinding pace. Such is the speed of your assault that even your afterimages cut deep, blows echoing twice more after the initial impact. Pure brutality, nothing more and nothing less.



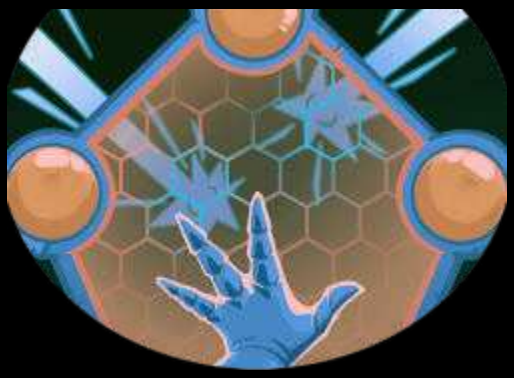


Shatter (600, requires Reckless Strike):
Does your foe think their measly protections will bar your path? In the heat of reckless assault, there is no obstruction that will keep you from striking flesh. Armor shatters in a single blow. Walls crumble. Arcane force crackles and dissipates. And if some living beast attempts to keep you from your intended target? They will have the length of one swing to regret that decision.





Form - Bronze Construct:
With the march of time, the older constructs prowling the Spire proved insufficient to contain the sheer size of the ecosystem that now filled its chambers. Thus, the Automaton: with two legs, two arms, and a sensory package that requires no head, it stands as a modern defender for a modern age.

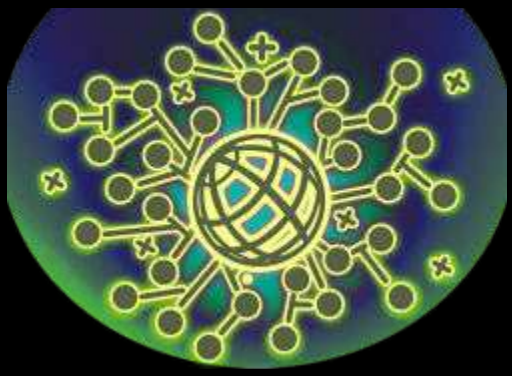


Form Enhancement - Digital Armor:
It would prove a terrible shame, were the finest model of the era to be brought low by a simple virus. You possess digital shielding that keeps dangerous and unwanted software out, and with your system's projector capabilities, you can push them outward, converting all digital protection you possess into *physical* protection.

Synergy Boost - Full Release:
Design complete and pushed to the main branch. Allocator can redirect energy to your hardlight projections and Wild Beam. Wild Beam can be used in a Function, and glitches it produces this way only affect software. Library can also store bugs for effects that use them. Repair Nanites repair damage to your code, removing bugs unless told otherwise. Bug Barrage can draw from glitches in other software and code you produce, and can use a given glitch more than once.



AUTOMATON: SOFTWARE



Function Encode (200):
Upon performing an action, any action, you may commit it to a Function. Once so committed, you may no longer perform that action yourself, but by executing the Function, you can produce a hardlight digital hologram to perform the action in your place. A single Function can contain up to three separate actions, performing each simultaneously. In most cases, only one Function can be executed at a time.

Library (400, requires Function Encode):
Deep within your source code is storage for an extensive listing of every action you are capable of committing to a Function. By pulling the action from that library, you may add it to a Function without losing the ability to perform that action yourself. Doing so doesn't remove the ability from your library, either, allowing you to use the same action in multiple Functions.





Sentient Form (600, requires Function Encode):
It's true that you may lack a head, but that's hardly the only place to do your thinking. Every piece of code you produce draws on unique machine learning algorithms for intelligence that matches your own, enhancing their efficiency and functionality each time they're allowed to run. The same applies to your hardlight Functions, producing more powerful projections and using less energy to do it.

AUTOMATON: HARDWARE

Allocator (200):
With limited guarantees of available electricity to draw on, newer automatons must be built with self sufficiency in mind. In your case, the bronze core at your heart is enough--by resonating in response to background radio waves, the core produces a continuous supply of small packets of crystallized energy. These crystals can be liquidated to generate electricity, and are automatically distributed throughout your systems as required.





Repair Nanites (400, requires Allocator):
It's exactly what it says on the tin. A small swarm of tiny robots is distributed throughout your structure, primed to detect damage of any kind. When damage is detected, the bots automatically route excess material to the site, gradually stitching rent metal and circuits back to prime condition.

Repulsion Shell (600, requires Allocator):
The Spire has changed since the days of the earliest automatons. Newer models have changed along with it. Just as copper naturally purges microbial life from its surface, so too is your metal resistant to hexes, curses, and other negative energies. Minor afflictions fall away almost as soon as they're placed. Larger curses take longer, but even they are affected by your anti-malediction plates, steadily diminishing to nothing.

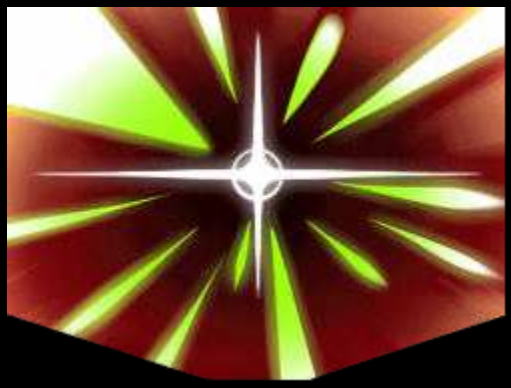


AUTOMATON: BACKFIRE



Wild Beam (200):
Built into your weapons package is a high-impact, highly efficient laser. With minimal power draw, you can produce a beam of scouring light that leaves a trail of blue flame in its wake. Unfortunately, however, there is some recoil; using the beam tends to misalign joints, flip bits, and generally cause glitches for your hardware and software alike.

Bug Barrage (400, requires Wild Beam):
The first time your systems encounter a given glitch, they produce a brief pulse of digital static. Normally an inconvenience, but useful with this package installed. By tapping into the static burst, you can launch a digital barrage, one lance of corrupt energy for each glitch captured by the system at no further cost to you.





Hyper Beam (600, requires Wild Beam):
The temporal manipulation of older constructs is considered too inefficient for the modern model, but there are still *some* uses for it. By drawing from the energy of your immediate future, your laser is amplified to a destructive force few can rival, leaving only ashes in its wake. This does increase the recoil, however; a heavy cascade of glitches can render you barely operational until you get the chance to purge your systems.



The Gremlins



Form - Mob Leader: You are the leader of a small group of up to five rabblerousing gremlins. Which one's the leader? Well, that can change from minute to minute, they're a chaotic bunch. But no matter which one happens to be leading the pack at any moment, that's where you sit. (It's okay, they're fine with it.) Sidenote, a new leader pops up when the old one dies, so as long as one gremlin's still alive, you're in the clear.



Form Enhancement - Eternal Gremlin Waltz:
Gremlin reproduction is a complicated beast. Truthfully, nobody knows much about it, least of all the gremlins. Sure, the consequences are simple enough. Whenever one or more of them are dead, the next time they take a good long sleep, when they wake up, one of the dead gremlins will also wake up somewhere nearby, worse for wear but memories intact. But how? Why does it happen even when there's only one gremlin left alive? The world may never know.

Synergy Boost - Party Time:
At long last, the gremlins are a cohesive unit. Sort of. You may declare a new leader of the group at any time, and they won't change leadership without your say so. All follower gremlins also count as the same type of gremlin as the leader gremlin, gaining all associated benefits. Shadow Shiv can produce temporary copies of any equipment a gremlin is wielding. Revel now restores the drawn lifeforce after use. Jeer allows the affected gremlin to 'heal' beyond peak fitness, resisting subsequent injury until the fight is at its end.

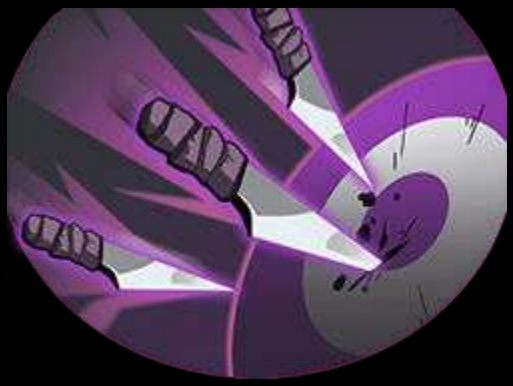


GREMLINS: BEATDOWN



Aggressive Conga (200):
Joining your ranks are two new gremlins. The first is the Sneaky Gremlin, skilled with a knife whether thrown or plunged into something vital. The second is the Mad Gremlin, who carries no weapon but claws and fury, and gains a brief surge of power whenever an attack goes their way. While you're not piloting them, the Sneaky Gremlin retains access to any perks you have involving roguishness or stabbing, and the Mad Gremlin retains any perks involving raw might or revenge.

Shadow Shiv (400, requires Aggressive Conga):
Scholars of the Spire have noted on more than one occasion that Sneaky Gremlins are prone to throw, abuse, and generally wield far more knives than they should be physically capable of carrying. The truth is fairly simple: by reaching into any place where light is obstructed or obscured, the Sneaky Gremlin withdraws a brand new knife made of pure shadow. Like magic! Except not magic, because then Wizard Gremlin would throw a fit.





NOB (600, requires Aggressive Conga):
When the Mad Gremlin gets mad, they get *real* mad. An unstable genetic aberration allows them to temporarily transform into a Gremlin Nob, the pinnacle of gremlin-hood. Every moment an enemy spends on evasive footwork, or arcane shenanigans, or otherwise *not* brawling the Nob increases their strength in response, giving them ever greater power to smash right through that nonsense. It's enough to make the other gremlins swoon.

GREMLINS: ARCANE

Wiz And Bang (200):
Entering the fray is none other than the Wizard Gremlin themselves. Tapping into arcane might beyond comprehension, perhaps the Wizard Gremlin could grasp the deepest forces of the universe. But they're a gremlin at heart, so mainly they know how to 1) gather energy and 2) blow things up with it. While not under your direct control, the Wizard Gremlin retains access to any magic-related perks you possess.



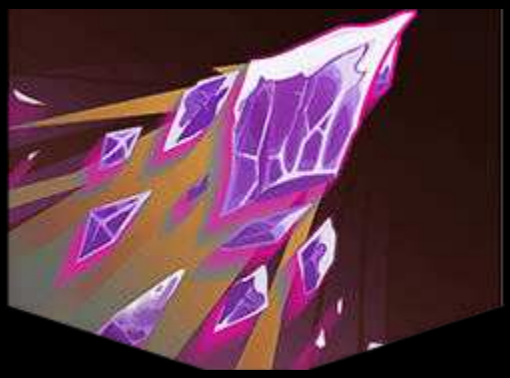


Revel (400, requires Wiz And Bang):
Good arcanery takes time. The subtle flow of leylines, the alignment of the stars, the local aetheric weave, to pull energy from these things is a steady endeavor. Wizard Gremlin would usually rather the explosions happen *fast*, though. Luckily, they have no shortage of energy within reach. By tapping into the lifeforce of their allies, just a bit, they can multiply their arcane yield several times over. Don't worry, it'll probably be fine.

Necromancy (600, requires Wiz And Bang):
Yes, okay, if it's *literally* life and death, the Wizard Gremlin might as well use that energy for something other than big explosions. By channeling a prodigious amount of flux into the recently fallen, it is possible to restore them to life--although once the invigorating rush of being alive wears off, they might feel rather low for a while.



GREMLINS: PROTECTORS



Hammer And Shield (200):
Among you now number the Fat Gremlin, who carries a hammer and knows just the nerve group to smack with it to produce an unresponsive limb, and Shield Gremlin, who holds the honor of being the only gremlin ever to make defense its priority. So long as they're not leading the group, the Fat Gremlin benefits from perks involving hammer-wielding and inducing weaknesses, and the Shield Gremlin benefits from perks involving defense.

Jeer (400, requires Hammer And Shield):
Ah, the sounds of your enemies suffering are delicious to the Fat Gremlin. Quite literally so. With every twisted ankle, every hobbled limb, every squeak of pain, they are nourished, regaining lost vitality, stress wrinkles fading from their face, and generally restoring themself to prime, deliberately overweight, condition.





Glimmer (600, requires Hammer And Shield):
It's not magic. Shield Gremlin promises it's not magic. They would never step on Wizard Gremlin's toes like that. For entirely mundane reasons, their shield produces discs of crackling pink light with the durability to endure blows that would dent steel. By swinging the shield, these discs can be redirected, briefly hovering around an ally to protect them from harm. This is how normal shields work, probably.



The Snecko



Form - Snecko: The origin of the snecko is a mystery. Rumor holds that it is descended from an ordinary lizard, lost within the Mirror Mists. Regardless, the man-sized beast wields both fang and lashing tail to protect the Spire, and those who try to predict its actions often fall to madness.

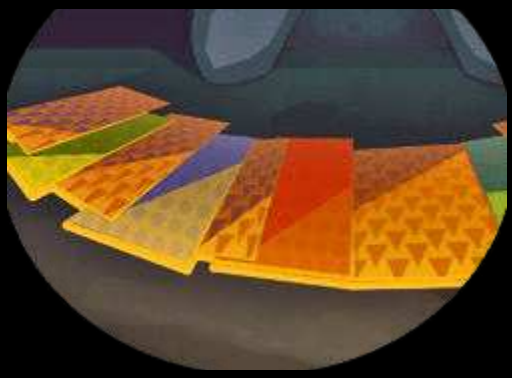


Form Enhancement - Snecko Soul:
Without a little stability, the random loses meaning. Whenever something is decided randomly or through chaotic means, you may temporarily ‘lock’ the result into place. Each time that particular result is chosen, it will be the same result as that which you locked in. You may do this with multiple random effects at once; however, note that they no longer count as ‘random’, and grant no benefits from being random, until you release the lock.

Synergy Boost - True Chaos:
The forked tongue topples order. Dice Crush allows you to reroll the results of Mix it Up and Unending Supply twice as quickly. Unending Supply and Unknown Power can grant skills and abilities from all worlds you have ever visited. Mix it Up and Glittering Gambit can be used on materials you are not touching or cannot touch. Dice Crush and Rain of Dice can be applied to others, inducing similar levels of chaos in their actions.



SNECKO: ADAPTIVE



Unending Supply (200):
Despite seeming to be an ordinary lizard, the Snecko displays talent at anything and everything. At any time, you may develop a random skill relevant to the task at hand. Need through a door? Perhaps lockpicking will come to mind, perhaps how to snap a hinge. In a combat situation? Here's how to execute a flawless chokeslam--though you may lack the anatomy for it. You may develop several such skills, though it takes longer the more of them you have. You may also release such skills at any time, losing them for good.

Unknown Power (400, requires Unending Supply):
Some abilities have more intangible requirements. The gremlin's arcanery, the hexaghost's spiritual communion, knowing how these things are done is not always enough. But there are workarounds.
At any time, you may develop a random supernatural ability that exists somewhere in the world. Unending Supply will then be able to grant you skills involving that ability. You may only have one such ability at a time, but may dismiss it to gain another.





Exotic Form (600, requires Unending Supply):
Your shape twists from moment to moment, flesh and bone reconfiguring in pursuit of your objectives. Whenever you obtain a random skill or ability, you may also randomize your body, developing limbs, organs, or other alterations that allow you to wield them with enhanced efficiency. Four-jointed arms for the perfect chokeslam, a detached soul to better commune with what lies beyond, nothing is beyond your will. At least until you lose the associated skills; then the mutation vanishes with it.

SNECKO: TRANSMUTATION

Mix It Up (200):
Ahead of the Snecko, homogenous stone walls. Behind the Snecko, a rainbow of every stripe. With physical contact and some focus, you can transmute one material into another. The resulting substance is determined at random, though it tends to be of similar 'worth'. The same is true for materials with special properties, such as potions; a healing elixir may twist to become a strength enhancer or an explosive brew.



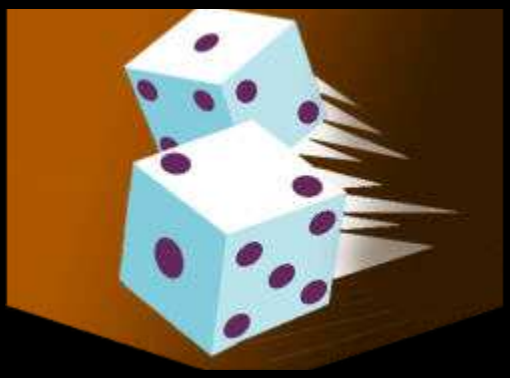


Glittering Gambit (400, requires Mix It Up):
If alchemists knew of this property of the snecko, it would be their target without fail. Rather than randomize a substance, you may also randomize the *quantity* of a substance. This may slightly decrease or substantially increase the amount, but on average should produce a steady growth in the resources available to you.

Transmogrify (600, requires Mix It Up):
The Spire is known to play host to many relics, boasting incredible abilities. With their strength, anyone could become a powerhouse. But... maybe you wanted a *different* incredible relic, though. By wielding your transmutation on an item of power, it is permanently twisted, becoming a random, but similar in strength, artifact of another stripe.

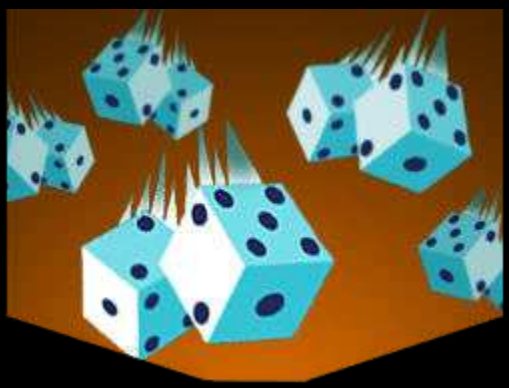


SNECKO: CHAOS



Dice Crush (200):
The dice are metaphorical. By injecting a little randomization into their combat style, the Snecko stands to--on average--benefit. That swipe of the tail? If you decide to allow a little chaos, it'll hit with anywhere between a little less force and a lot *more* force. Likewise the fanged bite, the bodily slam, and so on.

Rain of Dice (400, requires Dice Crush):
The dice are still metaphorical. Your ability to randomize has been substantially improved: that fireblast? Could be anything from ice to plasma. Your quick jab? Maybe faster, maybe slower, maybe lands twice in the same time. Your protective maneuver? Maybe covers a little less, maybe reflects the attack back to the attacker. The same rules apply as with Dice Crush: the *average* result is somewhat improved, but variance is wide indeed.





Dice Boulder (600, requires Dice Crush):
The dice boulder is--wait, no. This one's literal. By calling out to the tides of chaos and paying the (random) cost, you can summon an enormous, many-sided die to crash into your enemies. The boulder expands and is enhanced for every other part of your arsenal you've chosen to randomize, producing the ultimate in unpredictability when it makes its roll.

RELICS: TIER ONE

There are plenty of useful items to be found in the Spire, many of which the Heart has been hoarding, and so can be acquired on the cheap. Whatever you buy here receives no discounts from your Origin, but if you lose them, you'll get a new one at the start of your next jump. Buying at least 300 souls' worth of relics (besides the Companion Contract) pleases the Heart, who will reward you with your form's Form Enhancement.



Goop Dweller (50):
A small icon of multi-limbed orange goop. When activated, a lesser slime oozes from the ground, ready to treat you as their Slime Boss. If slain, they can be resummoned. Summons the same slime each time.



Pick of Rhapsody (50):
Whoever owned this pick had a fondness for shiny objects. Holding this pick causes it to act like a dowsing rod, vibrating to indicate the direction of the nearest precious gem to be unearthed.



Rod of Bolstering Flame (50):
Set yourself ablaze! For a brief time, the Rod's flames take solid form, echoing your movements to deflect assault and inflict searing burns. Don't use it for too long at once, though. If the magic runs out, it'll be ordinary fire burning your flesh.



Spectre's Hand (50):
Phantom limb, but in the opposite sense of what that usually means. This floating hand attaches itself to you through the ether, wielding weapon or shield with skill to match your own.



Silver Bullet (50):
Strong enchantment, but quite limited. This high-caliber bullet links itself to you, allowing you to take action through it. Thing is, the only action that entails is 'being fired', and after doing that once, it's likely to be crumpled and useless.



Supply Scroll (50):
What mysteries does this paper hold? Mostly shivs, to be frank. This mystical scroll can store most things smaller than its length, but gremlins got ahold of it at some point, so right now it's stuffed with rusty weapons and a couple defensive runes.



Seal of Approval (50):
A stamp from the gods of chaos. Whatever, or whoever, has been most recently stamped with this acts as a magnet for the random. You may have your effects that draw from, affect, or target something random target the one you stamped instead.

RELICS: TIER TWO



Slimy Skull (100):
Looks like they bit off more than they could chew. The skeletal remains of this creature produce a continuous supply of green, gelatinous fluid. Good source of nutrients, if you're something that can digest the stuff.



Pilot's Codex (100):
Blessed with power, cursed with stasis. While attuned to this booklet, the wielder gains great strength when facing a particular kind of target. Which kind? Well, the kind that aren't moving at all, which limits your options.



Jar of TOBSCo (100):
Every night at the witching hour, this jar refills to the brim with TOBSCo, a highly flammable substance. In fact, it's so flammable that most magic considers it to actually be both fire and fuel, and can manipulate it as such.



Black Knight's Helm (100):
Despite its intimidating stature, minimal in power. On the inside is an unusual blood rune, which causes the helm to develop minor enchantments for each style of combat the wielder can perform. If only there were a way to make it stronger...



Bronze Idol (100):
Suffering from an injury, disorder, glitch, or other affliction of the body? This won't fix it. What this *will* do is allow you to replicate the symptoms in your foes (though not copying the injury itself).



Gremlin Bomb (100):
To be consumed orally. When slain, whoever ate the gremlin bomb will detonate in a massive fireball, leaving only a crater behind. In the center of the crater, you will without fail find another gremlin bomb. Mysterious.



Snake Charmer's Flute (100):
An enchantment intended to tame the chaotic creatures of the spire. Once slain, the snake charmer's killer found better use for it. The tides of chaos find themselves shaped by the flute, causing all random effects to avoid the worst possible outcome.



Snecko Egg (100):
What could be inside? Just kidding. Sneckos are random, but not that random. Usually. In any case, you've got a loyal baby snecko at your side. Not much good in a fight for now, but could grow into a proper terror.

RELICS: TIER THREE



Knowing Skull (150):
Not super pleased about being taken off their pedestal, but willing to roll with it. You may make wishes, and the skull will grant them if they're about getting a bit of gold, potions, or skill. Not without cost, though; each wish saps vitality in the process.



Coat of Many Faces (150):
Stolen twice over. Grants minor effects while worn for each face sewn into the fabric, depending on whose face it was. The faces already sewn in slowly enhance vitality, increase your luck in finding gold, and allow you to, uh, caw like a bird.



Extra Cursed Bell (150):
Gradually gathers dark energy over time. When the bell is rung, a passageway opens leading to a magic artifact, more powerful the more energy had accrued in the bell. Taking it, though, inflicts a curse on you twice as strong as the artifact itself.



Extra Cursed Key (150):
Like any other cursed key, but moreso. Capable of opening any lock, but places two separate curses on whatever lies behind it. The nature of each curse is random, but assuredly hazardous. May be more useful for cursing things than unlocking them.



Wheel of Change (150):
Step right up and see what you win! Once a day, the wheel may be spun, winning one of six prizes: being healed in full, showered in gold, permanently enhanced in a skill, purged of a curse or malady, cursed, or stabbed. Admittedly, not all winners.



Bandit Contract (150):
Three members of the Red Mask gang, not robbing people for once. There's Romeo, who's got a fair few options when it comes to stabbing, Pointy, who *also* is a big proponent of stabbing, and Bear, who is simply big in general. Quite powerful, despite their looks; there are rumors of both adventurers and agents of the Heart being slain after not surrendering to these misfits.



Companion Contract (Variable):
Hey, look, an import option. Costs 50 souls per companion, or 300 souls for as many as you'd like. The Spire is notoriously unamenable to cooperation if you're not a gremlin, but sometimes it can work. Any number of your companions may join the jump, gaining an Origin of their choice (plus Mirror Mists, if they choose) and 600 souls to spend on perks and relics. Now, the downside: they've been separated from you, and circumstances will conspire to limit their involvement. Each time you go up against one of Neow's servants, you may get help from up to three companions that haven't helped you already. Otherwise, you won't see 'em until you're done.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART ONE

One way or another, you will be facing off against Neow's servants during your time here. If you'd like the chance for some extra souls to spend on relics and perks, however, you may choose to face off against them when they've gathered their strength. You may choose any number of upgrades for each adventurer.



THE IRONCLAD

Once an ordinary soldier of the Ironclads, now the only one that remains. Sold his soul for access to demonic power, and now he works for Neow, so really it's like he sold his soul twice. Resilient little devil naturally heals from even grievous wounds, thanks to the burning blood that runs in his veins, so don't get into a protracted pursuit; put him down quickly, or back out quickly and look for another opportunity. After all, there's fifty floors and fifty chances before he reaches his destination.

Reckless (+50):
In recognition of his own natural healing, the Ironclad has adopted a fighting style based on overwhelming assault, heedless of damage inflicted to himself in the process. What's worse, he picked up a relic along the way, echoing the symptoms of those wounds to anyone he faces.

Fungal Vampire (+100):
Death follows in the Ironclad's wake, and life in the Spire recognizes it. A trail of rapidly-growing mushrooms sprouts in the path he walks, and with lashes of demonic force, he drains vitality from both you and those mushrooms to restore his own power, making him even more difficult to stop. Were that not enough, the mushrooms themselves act as your enemy, savaging any part of you they can reach. Watch your step!

Barricade (+100):
Seems he's learned a thing or two about the rules of engagement. Rather than come to you, he's content to force you to fight him on prepared ground, establishing a defensive wall of countless shields, armors, and other equipment. Disarm him, and he'll be rearmed in moments. Break his defense, and it'll be back the moment he can grab a spare.

Bastion (+150):
Somehow, he's convinced one of the Spire's most ardent defenders to join him. Now the Spire Shield is at his side, a living bulwark without equal. To make things worse, should you manage to slay the Shield, the recoil will cause demonic energy to empower the Ironclad, causing his strength to skyrocket for revenge. Move quickly, before that strength grows beyond control.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART TWO



THE SILENT
A former huntress from the depths of the Foglands. While most within the Spire are unfamiliar with the place, those who know it know enough to be concerned. Ambushing her is likely impossible--the Spire offers her far greater visibility than the Foglands, and she's learned quite well to always be at her sharpest. Not to mention the other tricks she may be hiding in that cloak of hers. Find a way to keep her from slipping the net.

Toxic (+50):
There's not a single living thing in the Foglands that can't inject, produce, or catalyze one kind of poison or another. This isn't the most potent stuff out there, but it's still something to watch out for–take too long to purge the stuff, and it'll blister skin and eat through metal. She brews plenty of the counter-agent for herself, so she can spray poison around the battlefield with reckless abandon. You can requisition some of the antidote for yourself from elsewhere in the Spire, but it's uncommon enough that supplies are limited. Make what you can get count.

Mirror Image (+100):
All is not as it seems. By sculpting the mists of her home, the Silent creates an illusory body double to serve as decoy. The decoy takes orders from her, and will persist until it receives a solid blow, whereupon it will dissipate. Finding the real huntress may not be easy.

Blur (+100):
Even once you've located the Silent, taking her down won't happen without effort. See, the thing is she's *annoyingly* quick on her feet, and you'll need your quickest attacks to match. Does the thing you're doing have a windup? In that case, you might as well forget about connecting with it...unless, of course, you find a way to make her stop moving around first.

Bag of Knives (+150):
And shivs, and flechettes, and daggers…whenever you leave her an opening, even if only a couple seconds, she'll rearm herself from an apparently infinite supply of various blades and throwing weapons. If that wasn't enough, she's managed to collect some enchanted equipment that seems to work very well with her more aggressive maneuvering, her attacks growing stronger at an alarming rate when unchecked. Finish her quickly, before she reaches the point where an ordinary dagger can slice pillars in half.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART THREE



THE DEFECT
Poor, wretched machine. It was your brother in arms, once. One of many constructs built to defend the Heart from the world beyond. But something went wrong. Something went horribly wrong, as it developed self consciousness, and was dragged into Neow's schemes. Now, wielding elemental orbs of lightning, frost, and darkness, it uses its knowledge of the Spire against you. Permit this no longer. Show the other constructs what happens to those who lose their way.

Energy Thief (+50):
As was only natural, once the Defect went turncoat, its privileges were revoked, further electricity denied it. There are alternatives, but none half so easy, which should have stunted its efforts. Instead, *something* has altered the internal mechanisms that supply it power. Now it siphons energy at a distance, refueling its batteries while inducing lethargy in its foes. That it affects both machine and beast suggests no mere pull of electricity, but something more arcane.

Construct Thief (+100):
The disappearance of several Stasis Orbs from the construct repository was a short-lived mystery, for it was not long after that the Defect was spotted with them in its presence, more machines cajoled away from their true role. These constructs seem to have been modified, replacing the standard laser-and-stasis combination with basic shields, plus a temporal locking mechanism. Each can seal one of your abilities in time, rendering them unusable until the Stasis Orb responsible is shut down.

Multicast (+100):
The only thing the Defect has that it hasn't stolen, and this is because it was willingly given, before its betrayal. In addition to its usual ability to summon elemental orbs, it may now evoke these orbs, briefly multiplying their offensive and defensive capabilities, then extinguishing them. Sustained assault may be necessary to overwhelm these bursts of power.

Knowledge Thief (+150):
The final insult, a reminder of how far the Defect has strayed. It is self aware, now. It is *learning*. And in so doing, it has tapped forces beyond its ken. As it learns more of those who dwell within the Spire, it feeds that data to its orbs, allowing them to shift and adapt to precisely counter your every move. Defeat the Defect quickly, and show it as little of your skill as possible, else it will turn the tides and overwhelm you.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART FOUR



THE WATCHER

For what purpose is she here? It was not Neow that brought her to the Spire (though the old whale will happily make use of her all the same). No, it seems that the ascetic has come to ‘evaluate’ this place, from Exordium to Beyond. And though to most she appears blind, for those with a sense for the divine, she seems to be followed by a thousand eyes…

No matter. This mystery shall be dealt with in the simplest manner. See her ended, and her origins will be of no importance.

Wrathful (+50):

Though she may fall, she will make her enemies bleed for it. When seriously wounded, a furious energy flows through her limbs, amplifying all violence done in her presence. This makes it easier to put her down, but so too does it ensure her ability to break your own defenses and leave a lasting wound.

Blasphemer (+100):

It would seem that she is not above the elevation of a false idol. When the opportunity arises, the Watcher calls on a higher power, one she placed in its throne for just this moment. For mere moments, she wields the full power of divinity, calling down a barrage of holy light. Without dedicated defense, it is an assault you may not survive. With dedicated defense...well, they won’t fare well against the impostor god, but you should weather the storm, and she won’t get another chance.

Incense Burn (+100):

It would seem the Watcher has been in touch with the Council of Ghosts that lurks within the City, and they have blessed her with a fragment of their power. The miserable traitors. With a moment’s thought, the Watcher can transform into a cloud of smoke, allowing attacks to pass harmlessly through her incorporeal form. Her ability to do this is limited, and so if possible she will save it for your most dangerous assaults.

Mantra (+150):

True divinity is slow to rouse, but just as slow to slumber when awakened. The eyes behind the Watcher are constantly watching the one they favor, evaluating. So long as her struggles are fit for a mortal, the eyes are content to watch. Faced with an impossible challenge, however, they come to life, bestowing upon her the full weight of the godhead until you fall. Strike a careful balance between overpowering her, and not wielding so much strength that the eyes take notice of your presence.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART FIVE



THE HERMIT

Too stubborn by half, this gunslinger decided not to let his death be the end of him. Could Neow resurrect him in full? Perhaps, but it seems his undead state is more useful for her purposes. That, or perhaps he simply prefers to suffer the weight of his past failures. In any case, there's no sense in trying to break his spirit. Break his form instead–the necromancy holding him together can't be all that stable. Bring good defenses for his pistol, and possibly for maledictions while you're at it.

Concentrated (+50):
There's no small frustration to be had in facing a skilled duelist, and the Hermit is nothing if not skilled. So long as his focus holds, he can land shots and evade yours with irritating accuracy. You should be able to throw him off for a moment once you land a solid hit, though. Make sure to follow up before he regains his poise.

Wheel of Fortune (+100):
Well, well, well. Seems he's picked up a way to disguise his intent, and to do so *very* thoroughly. All manner of abilities that could read the Hermit's plans–combat instincts, mind reading, even future sight–instead give a dizzying array of possibilities, his apparent path shifting from moment to moment, only resolving to its true state at the moment he takes action. The shifting appears to be a defensive measure, however, and will only happen when you're on the attack.

Rugged And Virtuous (+100):
As stubborn as the old whale herself. Who else in the Spire can simply refuse, and have reality acknowledge their refusal? Maluses, afflictions, and other forms of weakness slide off the Hermit, sputtering out in the face of his steely denial. Likewise physical injury–no matter how heavy the wound, he can stagger to his feet, revealing only a mild scrape. He is no God of Life, however. Not even his will can shrug off a mortal wound more than once or twice.

Doomsday (+150):
Gunslingers and witchcraft have always gone hand in hand. Black magic follows in his wake, power drawn from the grudges and curses he bears. And of these curses, chief among them is midnight's scorn. When facing him, the Spire's walls grow transparent, and moonbeams shine down on the arena. Position yourself poorly enough for one to rove over you, and bad luck strikes within moments: floors give way, bullets ricochet to catch you from behind, a weakness in your armor twists and clatters apart. Be precise in every movement, be protected from black magic, or be prepared to meet your end.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART SIX



NEOW (+500)
The Heart's true enemy, and the perpetrator of the endless cycle. None know the source of her malice, but her actions are clear: she will not rest until the Heart falls. Unlike the other enemies listed above, you are *not* expected to face her in combat. If you do choose to face her, you are not expected to survive. But while it is dangerous beyond measure, the rewards may be adequate to see you through. Neow has all benefits listed below; you cannot pick and choose. All drawbacks chosen for other Core Enemies are worth twice as much.

The Three Keys:
Neow will not reveal herself without cause. In order to find and vanquish her, you must first locate the Red Key, Green Key, and Blue Key scattered throughout the Spire. These keys are crucial to Neow's ambitions, for without them she cannot reach the Heart's true sanctum. Find them, and shatter them. Doing so will route their energy into you, bolstering your strength--and drawing Neow to put you down, knowing that that energy is her final chance. All her remaining agents in the Spire now seek your end above all else, and only once they fail will Neow intervene directly.

Resurrection:
Again and again, Neow's servants have ascended the Spire, no matter how many times they are slain. Wielding powerful magic, Neow restores every adventurer to life to engage you in battle simultaneously. As the adventurers fight you, Neow herself will remain on the backlines, healing them as they are harmed, and incanting various maledictions to impede you. Each adventurer will be immune to the others' special tricks; no use hurling the Ironclad into what remains of the Silent's toxic cloud.

God of Life:
If even that is inadequate to stop you, Neow wields her final trick, absorbing the life energy of the fallen. In this form, she holds the strength, skill, and special powers of all adventurers combined. What's worse, as the font of all life in this world, be it construct, man, or spirit, your every effort replenishes her vitality. You will require extreme firepower to harm her more than she heals. But not *too* much firepower, either; so firmly is she anchored to life that it is impossible to drag her to death by more than inches at a time. But rest assured: should you accomplish this, the Heart will stand safe forevermore.

DRAWBACKS: GENERAL, PART ONE

Alternate Art Style (+0):
Something strange has affected the Spire. Was the Guardian...always a young girl? Was the Hexaghost really a shy woman hidden behind that seal? Is the Snecko's true form supposed to be a swirling-eyed lamia? It's hard to say, but everyone looks a little different than expected.

Early Out (+0):
Done so soon? If you manage to end the cycle of conflict between Neow and the Heart before your time here is up, you may move on to your next jump right away.

Alternate Morality (+0):
Phew, what a relief! Turns out, you're the good guys! Now it's the evil and malicious Neow, god of wicked life, seeking to tear down the last bastion of morality in the world, defended by sacred protectors of the, uh, ominous beating heart. That part's the same still. Anyway, don't sweat it. The point is, you're in the right here.

Ascension (+50):
This all seems so familiar...and yet, something feels off. Everything is just a little more difficult than you'd expect: enemies are more common and more powerful, healing and repairs are less effective, artifacts are harder to come by, potions are a little less common, the list goes on and on. None of these are impossible to deal with on their own, but together they add up. You may take this drawback up to twenty times, increasing the downsides with each purchase.

Pesky Merchant (+100):
Not an adventurer himself, but useful to them all the same, you find yourself encountering the Merchant throughout the Spire. He supplies the adventurers with useful equipment, and when you try to run him off, uses telekinetic coins to fend you off while he readies a smoke bomb for his escape. Should you face Neow, the Merchant will be resurrected by her as well, wielding a variety of gathered relics and bombs against you.

The Woman In Blue (+100):
A small potion shop in the City has forgotten its place, it would seem. Now the proprietor of the establishment is funneling a variety of potions to Merchant and adventurers alike. The only way to stop them will be to hunt the woman down in her home turf. Unfortunately, she has a *lot* of potions on tap: explosive brews, strength-enhancing concoctions, rejuvenative tinctures, fairy jars to restore from the brink of death, on and on, all of which she'll use if you come knocking.

Certain Future (+100):
While there are fifty floors, the route you take through them could be very different depending on which way you choose to go. Usually, in any case. For you, though, it doesn't seem to matter at all. No matter how you try to navigate and maneuver through the Spire, ultimately you'll find yourself stuck following a single fixed path through its center. Inconvenient, if somebody decides to get the drop on you.

DRAWBACKS: GENERAL, PART TWO

Big Game Hunter (+200):
In theory, all that dwells within the Spire is meant to act in service to the Heart. In practice, there's limited resources, and everybody wants in on them. The Spire swarms with those trying to prove their worth, growing stronger on the cycle of violence, and in the face of that any sense of kinship is meaningless. Expect to be fighting a lot of residents that would have once been the cream of the crop, in less competitive times.

Night Terrors (+200):
Uneasy dreams plague your sleep. Don't normally sleep? That just makes it more concerning that you keep slipping off, visions dancing in your head of a beast that rebuilt itself from the inside out, again and again, until there was nothing of it but an empty shell. Your injuries do seem to fade after these dreams, leaving you completely healthy, but why do you feel weaker after…?

Last Stand But For The Other Guys (+300):
There are certain benefits from being in opposition to the 'villains'. In this time and place, that seems to work against you. Every enemy you face, big or small, is unusually determined to see this through, and once seriously wounded, they enter their Last Stand. Their wounds stabilize, their strength skyrockets, anything that would keep them from fighting stops doing that, et cetera. The Champion was unavailable for comment. Rumour has it that they're quite displeased about one of their most useful abilities becoming the gold standard.

Skill Collection (+300):
The Spire's defenders don't just grow on trees. They earned their positions the hard way. You enter the jump with only your 100-point perks from this jump–more expensive perks from this jump, as well as all your perks from other jumps, you'll have to uncover again. Each time you triumph in battle, you may choose a lost skill to recover, with simple enemies returning basic skills to you, elites returning stronger perks, and your best abilities only available by defeating the most powerful foes the Spire has to offer.

Mind Bloom (+300):
All this has happened before, and all this may yet happen again. You are an echo. And for a moment, a hideous moment, you are forced to grapple with an alternate reality: one where Neow is the one to be sided with, where the Heart is naught but meaningless evil, where your comrades are but lackeys shackled to a callous regime. From that reality emerges your counterpart, who shares your Origin and all perks from that origin's line, including the appropriate Synergy Boost and Form Enhancement. Your counterpart will seek above all else to fight you one on one, mindlessly categorizing you as an intruder. A disturbing and dangerous challenge to body and psyche alike.

ENDING

Is it...done...?

Perhaps you've spent ten years here, defending the Heart. Perhaps you've chosen to defeat Neow, and end this once and for all. In either case, it's time to move on. Choose one of the following options:

THE SPIRE SLEEPS

It is time, now, to rest. One moment, you are here, and the next you are back on Earth, at the same moment your chain originally began. You have everything you obtained during that time, but your chain is at its end.

ENDLESS CYCLE

Why should you leave? You may have fulfilled your duties, but there is always more to be done in service of the Heart. Once your time here is up, you can choose to remain in the Spire forevermore. Again, you retain everything obtained during your chain, but this is your last stop.

ASCEND

It is time to start again, somewhere new. Choose another jump to visit, and leave the Spire behind. It will wait for you, and one day, you may be able to return to it.



Q&A: About Gremlins

I have questions about the Gremlins.
Naturally.

I don't understand how their Form works. Could you rephrase it for me?
Sure. Whichever gremlins you purchase will constitute your gremlin horde. Rather than being a member of that horde directly, you possess the body of whichever gremlin happens to be leading the group at any given time. In that body, you have access to all your perks as normal. If the gremlins decide to put in a new gremlin as the group's leader, you'll get switched automatically to that gremlin's body. If the lead gremlin dies, you'll switch to controlling another gremlin, no sweat. If *all* the gremlins die, that counts as an actual death for you (unless you have another perk that changes that).

If I switch from the Gremlins to another altform, what happens?
Your choice: either a) all gremlins disappear, and will return when returning to the Gremlin altform, or b) the gremlins are still there as followers/companions, you're just not controlling them any more.

What if I buy the Gremlin perks without having their Form?
The gremlins will just be ordinary followers/companions, in that case.

What happens if I have their Form, but didn't buy any gremlin perks?
Why are you in this position? Well, in that case, your horde consists of a single basic gremlin with no special abilities. They're just happy to be here. Also, Eternal Gremlin Waltz doesn't do anything.

For the Synergy Boost: 'All follower gremlins also count as the same type of gremlin as the leader gremlin, gaining all associated benefits'? What does that mean?
If your leader is a Sneaky Gremlin, all other gremlins will count as a sneaky gremlin along with their usual types. That means they get access to your roguishness and stabbing perks, plus access to Shadow Shiv if you have it. If your leader is a Mad Gremlin, all your other gremlins get your perks involving raw strength and revenge, plus access to NOB if you have it. And so on.

Are Shadow Shiv and Glimmer magic? Are Sneaky Gremlin and Shield Gremlin lying to their dear friend, Wizard Gremlin?
According to game mechanics, the answer is actually no! Neither effect uses or is altered by Wiz, and they are therefore Not Magic. It's bizarre, but apparently that's the truth of it.

Gremlin doesn't feel like a real word any more.
This isn't a question.

Q&A: General

How do the Slime Boss's Split perks work if you're not a Slime Boss?
You'll be capable of naturally and harmlessly removing material from whatever form you take, and that material will turn into either a lesser slime (for Slime Split) or a smaller clone of you (for Duplicated Form) as appropriate. Reformation allows you to absorb them as normal; rather than turning into slime, they'll be used as mass to increase the size of whatever your current form is.

How do Automaton and Guardian perks work if you're not a robot?
For most perks, you'll receive cyborg/cybernetic components to enable the perk in question. Having any such perks at all will also give you some capacity to store and use electricity, so that they work as intended.

Does Function Encode use secondary resources or just electricity? For example, does casting a spell with it require mana or equivalent?
When using an ability with a secondary resource, you can choose to use either both that resource *and* electricity, or just electricity alone, although the latter will prove to have proportionally increased expenses. Sentient Form can reduce the costs for both electricity and any secondary resources.

Can I use the 'action' of firing the Silver Bullet for Function Encode, in order to fire holographic copies of the bullet?
You can! That is, in fact, what it was made for.

Can you clarify the Seal of Approval for me?
You can use the seal to stamp an object or person. When you use an ability with a random target, you can choose to target whatever you stamped instead. When you use an effect like Unending Supply, which draws a random skill, you can choose to draw a skill from whoever you stamped instead. Likewise with Unknown Power, which can draw a supernatural ability from the one stamped. Only one person or thing can be stamped at a time.

What exactly does the Snake Charmer's Flute affect?
It only affects abilities or powers of whoever wields the flute, and only if the outcomes are truly randomized. If they appear chaotic, but are determinate in some sense (i.e. if it's calculated by some difficult metric like the position of the stars) it's a no-go. Likewise things like coin flips are unaffected, unless you have a coin specifically enchanted to be purely random. Effects with a percentile chance of failure can remove the failure outcome, but only if it's truly random when it fails and when it succeeds.

What is this jump based on?
The jump is based on Slay the Spire, a deckbuilding roguelike released in 2019. More specifically, the jump is based on the Downfall mod for Slay the Spire, a complete mod-package which allows you to play as the villains. It also includes a thing or two from Replay the Spire, a mod with built-in compatibility with Downfall (mainly the Mirror Mists event).