Xenogenesis, Edition 1.0

(novels written by Octavia Butler, also published under the omnibus title "Lilith's Brood")

A scuffle between the world's most powerful nations bled across borders and dragged all of Earth kicking and screaming into a world War that ended in a great blanket of ash and radiation. It is in this twilight that the Oankali first discovered our world, and for a time they were at a loss as to what to do.

You see, the Oankali are traders. They'll give you the runaround as to what their stock actually is because they want to describe it in terms of warm fuzzy feelings and senses Humans lack, but the simplest way to put it is that they are gene peddlers. With species advanced enough to understand this exchange, they offer their own adaptations- customized for the recipients, of course -for the trade partners' own. Worlds with decent habitat value but without clear peers present are seeded with life in the hopes that partners will eventually evolve and provide a return on this investment.

Earth was a tantalizing puzzle. There weren't many survivors statistically speaking, and many of them either had obvious ulterior motives or didn't really understand why the War happened in the first place. The Oankali almost wrote us off as another species-wide suicide, until they found something they could not ignore.

The mechanisms behind Human cancers could be modified to provide rapid healing, incredible longevity, and maybe free-form personal shapeshifting. To the Oankali, it would even be *easy*. We were intelligent (by galactic standards, I shit you not), we had something they wanted to trade for. Perfect partner material, if we weren't sitting in nuclear craters of our own making. Figures that the lesson we teach our first extra-terrestrial contacts was "the hot ones are always crazy."

This was the start of an incredibly dysfunctional relationship wherein the Oankali tried to make a respect-able suitor out of humanity. They took 250 years to repair the planet, and didn't bother with the buildings. Most of the survivors spent 99% of that time in stasis as the Oankali tried to figure out how to interact with us in a way that was safe for both parties. The best they could come up with left the Oankali diplomats looking a bit like eyeless bipedal nudibranchs, but at least they didn't have outrageous accents when they spoke our languages.

It was during this time that they identified what they like to call "the human contradiction." By their reckoning, it was our own hierarchical social structures that drove us to destroy ourselves even though our intelligence was high enough that we should've known better. Most humans find this claim to be a bit suspect, especially since even the Oankali have inequality baked into them. After all, only Ooloi can really participate in their species' main trade.

This explanation was good enough for most Oankali, though, so they decided to correct the problem as part of the trade. Those who agreed to have social evils corrected in their children were allowed to breed, and those who declined were sterilized and allowed to scrape together a living out of sight while they thought about what they'd done.

This doesn't sit right with a good number of Oankali, but that bloc doesn't have enough pull in the consensus to change policy. Until the Construct (what the Oankali call children born from their genetic trades) population is large enough and old enough to vote, the official Oankali position remains that leaving Humans to their own devices would be functionally and morally equivalent to killing them all deliberately. As a result, some resistance groups (though that name gives them a little too much credit) kidnap mostly-human-looking Constructs to fill the void. The stupidest ones try to hack off any sensory tentacles said children have, which results in reflexive venomous stings, dead resisters and thoroughly traumatized children. Skirmishes over land and resources (including people) also pop up from time to time between resisters.

It's kind of a mess, if you couldn't tell.

The resisters will eventually be granted the rights to a terraformed Mars, but only half a century after the re-settling of Earth begins. Until then, the world's a weird blend of American Western and Post-humanist Biopunk where everyone thinks their side is the right one, when it'd be more accurate to say they've all lost their minds. Have **1000cp**, Jumper. Something's gotta give, so it might as well be to you.

---Origin---

Outsider (free): You're outside the setting's messy web of interaction. You have no support, but you also have no obligations, new memories or other ties to this world. Perhaps your distance gives perspective? Could be, but that's about as likely as it serving only to stoke the fires of your arrogance.

Radical (free): You look towards the mingling of Human and Oankali and see the potential for gain. The Oankali Dinso want to stay and integrate with Humanity, while the Toaht plan on acquiring novel genetic sequences and moving on. Human collaborators also fall under this category, though their enthusiasm varies. Some truly believe the Oankali's contributions will be beneficial, while others have adopted a "learn and run" strategy which hinges on cooperating until an opportunity to turn the tables arises.

Traditionalist (free): Not everyone believes an Oankali/Human union will result in sunshine and rainbows, and you're amongst them. Many Human resisters exist who find the prospect of sullying their lines with alien genetics to be abhorrent, even refusing medical treatment on principle. The Akjai faction of Oankali abstain for a variety of reasons, ranging from acting as a control group in this dramatic experiment to a deep-seated disdain for Human nature. Somewhat paradoxically, it is the Akjai who'll be instrumental in forming the Martian Human Reservation; as Dehkiaht put it, "If I were Human, I'd be a resister myself."

---Species---

Human (free): About what you'd expect, with a little extra. While industry creeps back in fits and starts, this refurbished world remains largely untamed. In the interest of survival without medical support or specialized equipment, the Oankali have granted humanity an improved immune system and respiration efficiency. You've also learned to speak the Oankali's verbal language. Whether you bother to use this knowledge is up to you. A resister (but not a reservationist, if you start late enough for those to exist) must take the +0 version of the [Sterile] drawback, unless you take [Persistent Defect] (for which you will still gain CP) instead.

Oankali (100, free Radical or Traditionalist): As one would expect from a race of dedicated genetic traders, the Oankali have integrated a number of useful mechanisms into their physiology. First, their sensory tentacles. Protruding from Ambassadors' scalps like Medusa's tendrils, these organs perceive light, smell and sound equally well and in all directions. Oankali remember everything they sense perfectly, even while asleep. Though they still have a minimal stimulation threshold before activity around them will cause an awakening, if you perform an action within sensory range of a sleeping Oankali they will be able to recall it later.

Their senses are notably more acute than a human's, being able to perceive infrared and ultraviolet, sounds above and below the human range, and can pick faint scents out of the background well enough to track by. They have no need for eyes, ears or noses, though Ambassadors have been sculpted to give vague impressions of these structures to seem more personable. Despite this versatility, the sensory tentacle feature which looms largest in resisters' minds is their sting. A holdover from a predatory past, an injection will rapidly dissolve the nervous system of the victim causing painless death. Even careful microdoses will result in a limb becoming useless, and few have the finesse to hold back to that degree. Ooloi prefer to simply reformulate their venom to be less lethal, a luxury which males and females do not have. Oankali heal quickly and have a binary circulatory system with two hearts, but are not capable of regenerating lost limbs or severely damaged organs. Nerve damage similarly results in long-term disability. They are equally capable of breathing air as they are filtering oxygen out of a liquid medium. Ambassadors exhibit extreme polydactyly, some with as many as thirty-six digits on each hand and foot.

Most important to the Oankali themselves is their ability to link with other organisms, sharing their sensations and gaining awareness of their physiologies. Though they can speak (you know the Oankali verbal language and 1-4 Human ones), Oankali prefer to communicate through synesthetic nerve stimulation. These connections are not something to take lightly; what is felt by a linked partner is practically indistinguishable from the Oankali's own sensations, and this has engendered a deep empathy in them. Hurting others or allowing them to come to harm is just as distressing as being harmed yourself. Noble as that may sound, the Oankali are so preoccupied by the physical that less self-aware individuals often forget the values of others are different, which can lead to "help" which those helped find horrific. Another unpleasant element is that breaking the contact too quickly can rip or fray the tendrils mediating the connection, resulting in excruciating physical pain for both parties and possibly leading to reflexive stings. Well-trained males and females can emphasize or suppress the expression of sequences within their own or another's genome, while

Ooloi are naturally able to outright modify genetics using their sensory arms. These are a second pair of arms, attached below the ones used for general manipulation, each unfolding into an eight-tendrilled hand more sensitive than even the sensory tentacles. The aforementioned tweaks can be used to boost recovery or provide slight enhancements, but major changes will wait to manifest in the subjects' children.

Construct (200, discount Radical or Traditionalist): The fruit of the Oankali-Human trade, genetically engineered hybrids. Smaller than pure Oankali and with fewer digits on their feet and primary hands (but still more than humans), they otherwise share their abilities. Exactly how much they resemble each of their parent species depends on the individual, though they tend to have the strongest resemblance to their birth mother. Males and females of your strain can adjust skin color and texture for camouflage purposes, while Ooloi can adjust all of their body's features over the course of a few hours to take on almost any biologically sound shape. Hiding Oankali features is possible for all sexes, though it is very uncomfortable to do so for long periods. All Constructs can regenerate their own limbs, organs and nerves over the course of a week or two, and Ooloi can do so for others. *You may choose whether to count as Human **or** Oankali for each tier's discounts.*
Constructs who are Ooloi or who display sex-altering abilities (such as [Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better]) suffer the effects of the [Probation] drawback. If they already took that drawback for CP, they are instead placed under house arrest on Chkahichdahk and have very little freedom or personal contact; should they attempt to escape they will be sentenced to that drawback's full punishment. Ooloi power with a Human mindset, even a partial one, scares the daylights out of a significant fraction of the Oankali consensus. They're itching for an excuse to delay progress on that front, so try not to give it to them.

---Vitals/Era/Location---

All species may pick male or female for free. Alternatively, Oankali and Constructs may become Ooloi.
You are an adult unless you take the [Eka] drawback, but are free to chose your specific age (see Notes for details on Oankali/Construct maturation).

The jump begins at any point within the series and continues for 10 years (Book 1 starts after Earth is repaired, with its events and aftermath covering a few decades. Book 2 happens over about twenty years, culminating with the establishment of the Martian Human Reservation. Book 3 starts 50 years later and details the curious circumstances surrounding first Construct Ooloi).
Start Location: Free Choice on Earth, or Chkahichdahk (the main Oankali ship) residence, depending on Origin. Mars is also an option if you start after it's established.

---Perks---

Lean Genes (free): Your deoxyribonucleic acids are beautiful. As are the results thereof, I suppose. You will never suffer from genetic defects in this or any other world, and are conventionally attractive for your species, skewed somewhat by your own tastes. Further, you are not subject to biological rejection and allergies; only substances which actively harm you will draw an immune response.

Exciting Novelty (100, discount Outsider): That which is different can be very frightening, but also fascinating. You walk this line every day of your life. Those who witness you in an exotic form are not automatically frightened or damaged by the experience. They won't necessarily find your form attractive, but they won't run away screaming or go mad from the revelation unless you intend them harm.

Ship Husbandry (100, discount Oankali Traditionalist or Human Radical): Something about you is unaccountably comforting to engineered biological creatures. Even a little positive interaction can make great strides toward forming a rapport with them, though overturning existing loyalties won't come easily. With practice you can extend a portion of this effect to non-engineered biological organisms or engineered non-biological beings. Differences matter, but not so much as most think.

Eloquent Idealist (100, discount Oankali Radical or Human Traditionalist): You can succinctly communicate all the nuances of any ideal or creed you hold, and are acutely aware of whether an action you would take violates such. This functionally grants you a boost to persuasiveness and conviction so long as you practice what you preach.

Bloody-Mindfulness (100, free Human): Unchecked aggression is dangerous, and only the most foolish would argue otherwise. That said, animosity can also drive great things. Careful discipline has taught you to channel your hostility toward (more-)constructive ends, improving your results in any task you undertake to one-up or embarrass a hated enemy without directly harming them. Cold is the best climate for war.

Unadmitted Pain (100, free Oankali): While all Oankali are perceptive of the health and well-being of others, you take it to the next level. You may read general intent, emotive content and physical condition from the body language of anyone who has any voluntary muscle control at all. This breaks down when it comes to abstract concepts, but the physical is etched across one's entire body to your senses. This may inspire conflict if the subject doesn't want those details known, or is in denial of them.

Drifting Deferred (300, discount Outsider): You blew into town one day and just never left. Provided you don't rock the boat too much by introducing strange ideas contrary to local values, all but the most xenophobic groups will warm up to you in short order. If you instead exult said local values, even those will accept you as "one of the good ones." This rationalization only spreads among the local community, so there may be some friction if related external elements catch wind of your infiltration. Perceived betrayal will also throw a wrench in integration.

Contagious Experience (300, discount Oankali Traditionalist or Human Radical): You have a talent for giving personal accounts of events with flair. When you tell a true story, no one will be able to assume you are lying. Further, the factual and emotional content of such tales pierce bias and linger in the minds of listeners for days. At worst, some may believe you misunderstood your circumstances.

Family Matters (300, discount Oankali Radical or Human Traditionalist): They may or may not be related by blood, but your ingroup is important to you. To that end, you've trained in a plethora of conflict-mediation techniques to keep them from drifting apart or tearing at each others' throats. There can still be fights, but they won't spill over to the physical or result in a permanent split so long as you're around to mediate personally. This is markedly less effective on complete strangers, but outcomes will still be better with than without.

Frontiersman (300, discount Human): Whether it was before the War or after the resettling, you've logged a great deal of time in the wilds. You know how to find shelter and food (hunting and gathering), as well as how to prepare the latter with minimal tools, and how to test unfamiliar species for edibility with minimal danger. You also know how to fight, hand-to-hand and with bows or firearms, though your talents align more with guerrilla tactics than protracted engagements.

Truth of Omission (300, discount Oankali): Because Oankali primarily communicate by neural integration, it is incredibly difficult to tell an effective lie. Because the risks are so much greater than the rewards, falsehood as a concept has almost passed out of their culture entirely. *Almost*; some Ooloi keep the art alive in secret. You are able to clamp down on all of your physiological tells- which also makes you immune to cold reading -and can even defeat empathetic senses. Polygraphs and general brain scans find nothing amiss. You have the raw discipline necessary to never accidentally think of things you don't want known when you suspect your surface thoughts are being read, and not even your intent to deceive shows through. Only true, comprehensive memory-reading can catch you in a lie, though compulsion effects can force you to admit them. Some things help most by their apparent absence; don't attract scrutiny to start.

Jumperkind (600, discount Outsider): Perpetuation is the first goal of life. It may not be the most noble or important goal, but it is the one which all others depend on. Would it not be cruel to deny such to you, Jumper? Crueler still to deny your progeny advantages which you've come to identify with and rely on. No longer: you may hereditarily pass on your powers and knowledge to your biological offspring. Powers which are already biological in nature or which scale over time are available for use around puberty. All other powers come in slowly afterward, with the most potent taking a decade or more to manifest at all. Stacking more content results in a longer development time across the board, so you'll also be given the benefit of picking and choosing what is passed on at conception. Do be cautious of what you make instinctual; ingrained ideas are not fact-checked, and having hereditary thought proven wrong may cause identity crises.

With the Other as One (600, discount Oankali Traditionalist or Human Radical): Sometimes, the greatest barrier to understanding your problems is your own proximity to them. Bias is insidious because it often feels too natural to notice, let alone account for. But your background's a little more colorful than most, isn't it jumper? In any form, you may call upon past mindsets or alternate brains. This can involve a dialogue with the isolated personality of a previous Origin to provide a different take on a situation or drawing on the improved faculties of an alternate form, so long as they're purely mental.

Perpetual Precocity (600, discount Oankali Radical or Human Traditionalist): Your ability to pick up and assimilate new skills and concepts borders on the unsettling. You pick up the basics an order of magnitude faster than your peers, and gained information is always efficiently organized within your mind. For example, an otherwise normal human could learn a complex foreign language to a general conversational level within a few days, and never get stuck constantly translating to and from their native tongue rather than linking the new words directly to their related concepts. The speed boost has diminishing returns as you approach mastery in a subject, though it never fades completely. The organizational aid never falters in the slightest.

General Renaissance (600, discount Human): You know conflict like the back of your own hand; if you are a human with history here, you were likely a major player in the War. No, you didn't pull the trigger on the nuclear arsenal. That's a losing move, and losing is not something you're accustomed to. You have extensively studied military history and related philosophies, giving you a superior grasp of strategy, tactics and logistics. Even the points where those subjects overlap... *especially* those points. You're also adept at puzzling out the implications/repercussions of new tech, helping you to keep up with war as it changes. You are not particularly good at the theory behind said tech, though; leave the building to a subordinate.

Conscientious Covalence (600, discount Oankali): Trading genes is the occupation of the entire Oankali species, with all lesser talents feeding into it. You have an intimate understanding of organic chemistry that is second to none in this world, and are competent in the bevy of applied fields necessary for combining disparate biologies as well as creating organisms devoted to specific tasks. Plants which envelop animals on contact and put them into biological stasis, snail-like ground transports, that sort of thing. If you are an Oankali with history here, you are among Nikanji's peers and have had a role in planning and/or implementing Construct Ooloi.

---Advantages---

Made Them Equal (50, one free Human): When the resisters get the wheels of industry turning once again, simple weapons won't be far behind. But this? This is something special. A pre-War rifle. Pick a modern real-world standard infantry weapon, which you'll find in a non-biodegradable plastic case. Multiple purchase okay. Regenerates basic ammunition to the weapon's capacity daily, self-repairs once per week.

Extinction's Doorprize (50, one free Oankali): Genetic samples from pre-War Earth life thought lost. May be traded to an Ooloi for a favor (representation in the consensus, personalized modifications, etc). Alternatively, you can keep it for yourself. If you don't spend it during the jump, pick an organism that lived on Earth in the 21st century; you now have a complete, diverse mapping of that species' genetics and preserved samples thereof in your warehouse. Multiple purchase okay.

Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better (50, free Outsider): An Oankali's sex isn't determined by genetics, but instead by environment and circumstance; it's only upon metamorphosis that their biology becomes fixed. Even Construct Ooloi, who constantly tune their appearance to set those around them at ease, don't change their sexual functionality; that's too metabolically expensive to be worth reconfiguring regularly. You, however, can make that change if you have reason to. At your discretion, you may adjust your sex, sexuality and/or gender to any expressed by your species over the course of a few hours.

Kindest Mirror (50, free male and female, mutually exclusive Ooloi Oankali and Treasured Strangers): You have an opposite-sex sibling of roughly the same age, with the difference of a year or two at most. They are the same Species

and Origin as you, and have 600cp to spend. This may be an imported companion or an original, drafted one. If you are an Ooloi Construct, your sibling is opposite what your apparent sex prior to your metamorphosis was.

Beauteous Mankind (200, pure Human only, discount Radical): An Ooloi must really, *really* like you, because in the interest of keeping you alive even if your human peers can't see how wonderful you are, you've been generally boosted. Though you haven't had anything outright *added* to your genetics, you've been optimized by bringing the best in recent history and latent ability out; benefits cast by the wayside of evolution's mindless shuffle. Your strength has been brought more in line with the other Great Apes, changing the composition of your muscles to provide about twice the power they'd have for a human of similar fitness. Your speed has likewise increased to the limits of nerve response times and human leg-shape, capping out at about 40 miles (about 64.4km) per hour if you keep in shape. Thirdly, you have gained an eidetic memory. You still need to pay attention, but all that you notice will stick easily in your mind. If you become another species in another jump and that species' closest relatives are detailed by the setting, you will adopt some of their traits. Anything of similar magnitude to the above is fair game, with the exception of cosmetics and body type changes.

Once Removed (200, pure Oankali only, discount Traditionalist): The humanoid shape the Oankali sculpted themselves into to communicate with Humans is not the shape they arrived in, and most Akjai retain this old form. Oft compared to large long-bodied arthropods, these beings are deaf and have no vocal chords, but this is where the apparent disability ends. They are suited to a life in the great dark vacuum, with a segmented shell which can lock together to trap radiation (and reflect it), moisture and gases. Depressurization is a non-threat, so long as these plates are whole. Indeed, the only true risk space poses is starvation. This deficiency is tended to by the Oankalis' ships, and the Akjai are appropriately adapted to coexisting with them; they are predisposed to thinking in three dimensions and their neural links are more adroit, able to communicate several times the volume of information without any loss of accuracy. Ooloi in particular embody this, having six sensory arms to the Ambassadors' two. If you have history here, your acquaintances will expect you to be in this form (such changes only happen between generations), but as a Jumper you can swap between it and the Ambassadors' shape as you would any alternate forms.

Holdout (200, pure Human only, discount Traditionalist): Most of civilization was destroyed in the War, with only a few heavily fortified or particularly remote military installations surviving the nuclear volleys thrown about in the climax. Of those remaining, most were located by the Oankali and subsequently emptied… then dismantled. Chance has seen this one preserved; mothballed so many times it was forgotten, this empty subterranean shelter was left untouched by all but nature. Upon reclaiming it from the jungle, you'll find it boasts a non-perishable food supply and filters for air/water which would last one person 16 years with rationing, though larger groups deplete it proportionally faster. Space-wise, the shelter would be uncomfortable with more than four and maddening with more than eight. It's greatest feature is something more intangible: it retains its absurd luck. The complex will survive one catastrophe (and protect any inhabitants at the time) per jump, otherwise being as durable as a high-end 21st century shelter. This faithful, glorified concrete ditch will follow you between jumps, restocking and repairing itself in the process. It also keeps upgrades across jumps, and if bought personally by the Jumper, Warehouse utility and structure options apply to it.

Cultured Bridge (200, pure Oankali only, discount Radical): The first phase of a trade involves taking on a format that sets the partner species at ease. There is no true genetic swapping at this phase, only rough sculpting, but normally that still takes a generation or two to get right. But you're familiar with taking on a series of other shapes within your own lifetime, aren't you, Jumper? And half the reason they're so excited about Humanity's cancer talent is the potential to rebuild their shape within an organism rather than waiting for the next generation. At will you can create a patchwork of any organic, biological alternate forms you've picked up during your chain, resulting in a chimeric body which shares many of the traits of the component forms. Literally chimeric in the medical sense, mind; this is not a clean hybrid blend like the Constructs are, but a patchwork of cells genetically alien to each other. Good thing you're immune to biological rejection, but you probably shouldn't push your luck with a chimeric nervous system unless you have help from some other effect. Pick one and stick with it, in the meantime.

Rejuvenation Nodes (200, discount Outsider): Earth's visitors are head-over-heels for Humanity for one reason: Cancer. What is a deadly disease in a human body becomes an invaluable advantage when properly integrated with Oankali physiology. You have something that'll get them even more worked up: the perfected product. When subject to trauma, your body will roll back some cells to pluri- or even toti-potency and dispatch them to damaged areas to repair

or replace. Thus, any injury that does not kill you will eventually heal without permanent complications or disability. Perfect regeneration, albeit at your existing healing rate. This also replaces body parts that fall out or shut down without actual injury. Aging is also subject to this repair, though its automatic and reactive nature may cause your appearance to oscillate between your prime and late middle age as the years progress.

Makeshift Tribe (200, discount Human, mutually exclusive Treasured Strangers): Civilization's corpse is a treacherous peak to climb, and mankind will need teamwork to make it. Keep those you can trust and who can keep up close, and push away the rest. Those who aren't chosen… well, hopefully they'll shape up and organize amongst themselves. Import or draft up to 8 companions, each with 600cp to spend.

Treasured Strangers (200, discount Oankali): Typically, a mated triad of Oankali take on a pair of humans for the purposes of the genetic trade. Import or draft companions until you have (including you) one Ooloi and a group of 4 with equal representation between Human and Oankali, male and female. Each companion in this set receives 800cp. Constructs who are male or female may count as either Human or Oankali for this purpose. If you are a Construct Ooloi, you may take the Ooloi spot. Otherwise your Ooloi must be a pure Oankali.

Instant Industry Just Add Labor (400, discount Human): Building up a civilization from nothing isn't easy. There are stages you need to pass through, to build the tools you need to build the tools you need… et cetera. Modern experts often train only in the top level, and reenactment aficionados can only take you so far. You'd need to gather a large number of people with just the right skill sets to even have a chance, or you could get a helping hand from the written word. A specialized printing press is added to your Warehouse, which can churn out technical and theoretical manuals sufficient to take a Stone Age civilization straight to the Industrial Revolution, then slowly on to the beginnings of the Atomic Age. They come in snappy, well-bound, elements-resistant boxed sets and can be written in any language you speak. You don't even need to supply printing materials- they're included! For all your early uplift needs.

Ship Entity (400, discount Oankali): Slumped against the ground, this organism looks like a geographic feature; a hill the size of a small house. When engaged in it's primary task of ferrying Oankali about, it pops into a spherical shape. Generally referred to in English as a "shuttle," it is capable of recycling air and synthesizing food, though it only knows how to make Oankali dishes initially and may take a while to acclimate to human cuisine. Though intelligent, the shuttle doesn't count as a companion. It's mind is strangely passive, caring only for flying and observing people at work and play. You may import a ship already in your possession as an alternate form for your shuttle, and may use ship import options in subsequent jumps to add more. From there properties of the various forms can be mixed and matched, and it may pass traits mingled with its native form on to its offspring as biological equivalents (though any exotic material requirements are still present). The ability to transform is not hereditary; offspring are limited to the particular mishmash of specifications they're born with. (See Notes)

Yashi (400, discount Outsider): The "Yashi" is an Oankali organ, the one responsible for their finesse at genetic engineering. It is, in fact, derived from close symbiosis with another organism, similar to Humanity's relationship with mitochondria. When the Oankali find a world lacking in sapient life- and thus incapable of trade -they sometimes seed those symbionts upon the surface in hopes of accelerating the development of a trade partner. You have bonded with such free-roaming symbionts. At baseline, you are capable of choosing which traits your offspring inherit from their parents as well as making corrections and small improvements. You are also capable of emphasizing or suppressing the expression of sequences within your own genome. More complex uses will require additional preparation.

Other's Favor (special): If personally purchased by the Jumper, the advantages [Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better], [Beauteous Mankind], [Rejuvenation Nodes] and [Yashi] may be applied to others via a pitcher-plant-like growth which appears in the Warehouse. Just stick someone inside, chose one or more of the applicable advantages you've bought, and a few hours later they will emerge so enhanced. The experience is much like a sensory deprivation tank, but with intermittent paresthesia. Perhaps they'll see a prisoner's-cinema-style hallucination or two? In any case, the genetic-enhancement advantages applied in this manner count as equipment for the purpose of being affected by Warehouse-sealing effects.

---Drawbacks---

You may gain up to 600CP from taking drawbacks, after which you gain no further benefit. Drawbacks explicitly stated to not count against the limit can push your total beyond this.

Sterile (+0 or +50): Human resisters are sterilized until such time they join the collaborators or reservationists, at which time an Ooloi will restore them. As can any other actor with sufficient medical expertise, for the record. For +50cp, any Origin will have something much more involved wrong with their reproductive bits which cannot be repaired (or replaced) until Jump's end. Doesn't count against drawback limits.

To Watch the Future Grow (+0): Instead of staying for ten years, you'll be here from the beginning of Earth's recolonization until the proliferation of Construct Ooloi, a century and change later. In the off-chance you've avoided getting any sort of life-extension in a setting where the aliens are desperately trying to get you to accept some, you can also complete the jump by dying to age-related complications... provided you didn't cause them yourself via age-manipulation or some-such.

Eka (+100): Oankali are sexless- "eka" -prior to their metamorphosis. Constructs are as well, though they appear male or female from birth and usually metamorph to become truly such, barring special circumstances. But until that day, (eight years away for you) eka get no respect, and you are one so you'd better get used to it. If you are human, you are instead ten years old at the start of the jump and have similar difficulties being taken seriously. Either way, no alternate forms, age-adjusting or appearance-altering powers/items/etc function to disguise you during this jump, and any puppeteering will be seen through. At best you'll be considered adorably precocious for trying so hard to seem grown up.

So pretty... (+100): Looking damn fine isn't always helpful. You'll catch the eyes of the very worst sorts no matter where you go. It may be abusive lovers or jealous competitors, but you'll always find a hater of some stripe. If you look human and also took Eka, resister child-thieves flock for a shot at you. These sorts don't want you dead, but they're by no means gentle. They're seldom concerned about collateral damage, either.

Persistent Defect (+100): You have some manner of chronic muscle spasms or progressing deformity which cannot be truly healed, only suppressed. You need attention from an Ooloi (or any other actor with sufficient medical expertise) at least once a year to remain stable. You cannot treat yourself. This condition won't kill you directly, but it could lead to a situation which results in your death. Fail to dodge a raider's axe because your eye on that side is covered by tumors, squeeze an Oankali hard enough to trigger a reflexive sting during a spasm... something like that.

Back to Basics (+100): Humanity's folly has forced them to begin again. Perhaps you could stand to learn something from similar isolation from your toys, Jumper? Your Warehouse and properties are sealed away, along with any and all inventory abilities you may have. Any carried items beyond simple clothing and mundane prosthetics are placed within your Warehouse. You may, however, select up to two instances of personal equipment (designed to be carried on/in a single person) purchased with CP in previous jumps to sneak past this embargo. Multi-use items like swiss army knives and applicators like spray bottles are allowed, but general containers empty their contents into the Warehouse before appearing on you. This also disables any boosts the [Holdout] would get from Warehouse options.

Oblivious (+100): You are blissfully unaware of your own flaws. Any difficulties or arguments will be blamed on the deficiencies of others whenever possible, because *of course* you couldn't be the problem. This attitude grates on anyone who interacts with you, progressively eroding their opinion of you the longer they remain nearby.

Infamous (+100): Either during the War or the recolonization, you made a name for yourself. Now it is an epithet, used to encompass the essence of what is wrong with the world. The stories about your wickedness have long since out-stripped your actual deeds, and anyone who realizes who you are will react badly. It may be possible to convince an individual that the fabrications attached to your name are just that, but your first impressions will always be dismal. Outsiders instead cast a feeling of unease and fundamental wrongness over first meetings, pushing an instinctive fight or flight response. Those of the same species have a small amount of resistance, but are still put on guard.

Raider Magnet (+200): Hostile human groups will always find reason to hound you. If you're lucky it might be over something understandable like resource competition or a conflict of philosophy, but more likely it'll be over pettiness which can't be meaningfully resolved. At very least, you'll need to endure four major attacks per year. If you are well-known for one reason or another this rate will increase substantially.

Probation (+200): You've done some things. It's not quite enough to get the Oankali rounding you up just yet, but you're being watched. If you seriously injure someone- anyone -for any reason, they'll decide to sequester you, drug you out of your mind and poke around your genes and head to figure out what makes you do these bad things. You can run or fight back, but if they manage to capture you... well. Next Jump you'll be free and sober, but those memories aren't going anywhere in a hurry. Especially if they're eidetic.

Bereft (+200): In some cases, an outside observer is just what is needed to resolve an issue. In others, one who is alike, full of shared experience is best. You manage to rub everyone the wrong way- weird enough to distrust, familiar enough to be contemptible. Any social perks you have fail, and everyone but your companions looks upon you with thinly veiled dislike. Those predisposed to violence will look for excuses to partake, and those not will seek to block or disable. You'll find no friends here, Jumper.

Biochemical Castaway (+200): Your body violently rejects foreign materials. High concentrations of particulates in the air can send you into coughing and sneezing fits, while consuming indigestible matter may cause gagging, cramps and vomiting. Implants, transplants and other surgical adjustments to your body will prompt extreme immune responses, which may endanger your life. This includes Oankali and Construct links, though they will realize they are hurting you and withdraw before serious damage is done. CP purchases are exempt, but you won't be getting any further upgrades while you're here unless they're from a built-in function of your own physiology.

Ragged Parchment (+200): You define yourself by the company you keep. If not surrounded by allies, friends, family or lovers you rapidly spiral off into depression. While you are not compelled to agree with them, individuals who learn of your dependent nature can manipulate you by strategic shunning, which will force you to cave to their demands or take solace in another other. Oankali- and Construct-Ooloi are particularly vulnerable; the former can become physically ill as their mental state deteriorates, and the latter will reflexively lock their bodies into shapes they feel are representative of social failure. Aaor, for example, became an aquatic invertebrate after months of isolation and needed help to revert.

NOT. EVEN. ONCE. (+200): Prejudice runs strong in you. Choose Human, Other or Borderline; you can only stand to use powers from other jumps in which you took origins/species/etc which fall into that category. You are still able to use mismatched powers in life-or-death situations, but doing so will cause a dramatic hit to your self-esteem and motivation once the threat has passed. Similarly, you develop a boiling hatred for beings of the other two categories. How exactly you express these feelings depends on your nature and personality, but it frequently outstrips your better judgment and certainly won't make you any friends.
If you choose Human, only jumps where you were purely so qualify; this excludes mutants, offshoots, lab accidents, lab successes and hybrids. Human norms may be different from setting to setting, but you must fit neatly under that label whatever its local criteria are. Other is comprised of strictly non-Human origins, with the same exclusions. Borderline is the inverse, in that it only applies to those settings where you don't fit into such clean categories.
If you didn't have it already (or it was gained by a hated category), you receive the ability to voluntarily toggle your off-category powers on and off for the duration of this drawback. Just so you don't have a constantly-active or reflexive power sap your will by dint of existing. It would really suck to hate yourself over something you couldn't change. Doesn't count against drawback limits.

---End---

Now, your time is up. Whether it was a decade or a century, I hope you managed to come away from this culture clash with something. Peace of mind and satisfaction from mediating interspecies conflict, newfound purpose in the exultation of life throughout the multiverse… or the glory of loot? Whichever suits you best. One last choice remains for you, so let's clear away those drawbacks and let you get to it. Whichever you choose, your survival has earned this world's gifts.

Akjai (Return Home) **Dinso (Stay)** **Toaht (Move On)**

---Notes---

Companions can't take drawbacks for CP. Human resister companions are affected by the +0 version of [Sterile] like the rest, unless they trade it for Persistent Defect for no CP gain.

Metamorphosis happens some time after an individual's second decade, though exactly when varies widely. In some cases there can be a wait of a further decade. Ooloi actually metamorph twice, though these two tend to be within a year or two of each other. Genetic awareness comes with the first, sensory arms with the second. Unless you took [Eka], you've finished all of your metamorphoses. If you did, you have a period (or two) of paralytic semi-consciousness to look forward to, lasting weeks or months. Hopefully you'll have someone around to protect and feed you when that happens, but if not your changes will pause to allow you to relocate and search out food… starting up again immediately after you have eaten. In this way you won't transform yourself into starvation, but you *will* bump up against its borders repeatedly.

Sensory tentacles are possessed by all Oankali and Constructs. They are generally not large or dexterous enough to use as manipulators. Ooloi (both Ambassador Oankali and Constructs) also have two sensory *arms*, tipped by retractable sensory *hands*. These arms are strong enough to lift things, though not very dexterous. The tips open to reveal eight-tendrilled hands, which are extremely dexterous but too sensitive to use for manual labor. [Once Removed] Oankali have six sensory arms, but they are otherwise identical.

[Ship Husbandry] does not apply to non-engineered, non-biological entities. For the purposes of this perk in general, "engineered" refers to beings deliberately created for a specific purpose without relying on chance or proceduralized generation. AI which were purposefully made but who achieved sentience or sapience accidentally as an emergent property are not considered engineered, for example. AI intentionally built to think like humans (or whatever their creators' species is), on the other hand, are. Similarly, biotech which goes feral and strays from its original purpose/specs over generations ceases to be engineered.

Isolating a previous origin's personality via [With the Other as One] refers to framing a previous self outside of the amalgamation that is the Jumper, emphasizing that self's tastes and goals while retaining impersonal access to the knowledge and memories of the Jumper as a whole. The other half of the perk is a mental-only altform mixing effect, if such wasn't obvious. There may be a side-effect of making manipulating your mind more difficult, if some of your alternate selves have significantly different mentalities.

The difference between [Perpetual Precocity] and the eidetic memory available from a few options is the difference between truly understanding a subject and rote memorization. It's a force multiplier for intellectual endeavors.

[Once Removed] doesn't make you more or less "pure" Oankali than the base species; the difference is from how genes are expressed, not due to any mingling with Humans. The adjusted shape is *for* the Humans' benefit, but it is not *of* them. Constructs are genetically both Human and Oankali, making them *not* pure and unable to take pure-only advantages.

The more focused the assault on the [Holdout], the shorter the span of the immunity effect. A general nuclear apocalypse in its entirety is one catastrophe, but the first missile intentionally aimed at the holdout would expend the guaranteed defense on it's own.

Shuttles are male. Ships and towns (land-bound juvenile ships) are female. They follow the clownfish model of sequential hermaphrodism; many small males, one large female. In absence of a female, the largest male of a group switches over permanently. Females can produce males via parthenogenesis, though this leads to less than ideal situations due to the usual concerns of emphasizing recessive traits in subsequent generations. There are no Ooloi ships, so clearing up those problems falls to the Oankali. Neither ships nor shuttles are capable of FTL flight, and the Oankali aren't particularly worried about it because they live for centuries at the minimum. Chkahichdahk's size is not explicitly detailed in the novels, but she is a generational ship with enough room for simulated forests big enough that some reawakened humans (many separate groups of 40) didn't believe they were on a ship, all without cutting too much into Oankali living and working space. Larger ships, of course, require more food, so please fanwank responsibly; think of the poor shipgirls.

Shuttles manage in-atmosphere buoyancy with ammonia at various temperatures, and navigate in space as electro-magnetic sails. Adult ships are too heavy for this to be practical, and so avoid entering gravity wells whenever possible. They fly interstellar distances using techniques similar to Bussard ramjets.

The [Yashi] perk provides the baseline Oankali organelle which enables their innate genetic engineering, but it is not the only tool that has gone into making them what they are today. Sensory tentacles, sensory arms, and the results of modifying human cancers also have a part to play, and unless you have equivalents on hand you aren't going to be matching pure Oankali, let alone Constructs. The first grants a wide overview of another's biology, the second is necessary for fine detail work and the third provides the plasticity required to make large changes in a grown organism. For example, [Rejuvenation Nodes] satisfy the latter requirement; when combined with [Yashi] they will allow you to manually alter your own body by changing what your "whole" state is defined as and letting the regeneration do the work. You are still limited to structures and substances already produced by your body, though you can arrange them as you please. Without them you'd be largely limited to cellular and hormonal tweaks, with large structural changes being impossible.
Some manner of biological link, equivalent to sensory tentacles, is required for affecting other grown individuals. A sensory arm equivalent would allow you to modify existing or create new genetic sequences in yourself. With both, you could finely adjust others. Without a modified cancer equivalent, these changes would only manifest in the subject's later offspring.

- Jump by CortexAnon(!!qxNLNGjxqBi), with special thanks to ir_fane