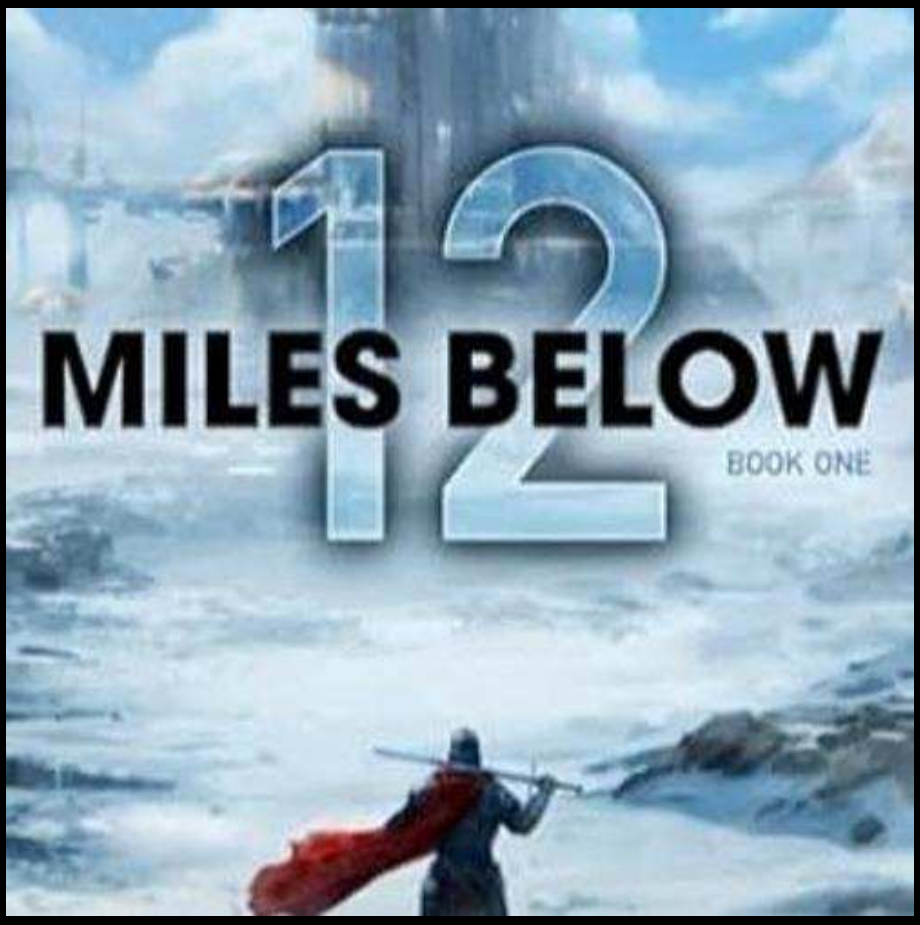


12 Miles Below
By Fallout10mm
Version 1.0

Earth of the far future is a frozen wasteland, covered in ice and snow with a small percentage of humans eking out a pathetic existence on the surface. Below ground the machine legions of Relinquished, also known as The violet goddess, an genocidal AI hell bent on exterminating humanity, prowl through a Labyrinth of tunnels, caverns and nanite constructed cities. Within the underground are pillars, humongous constructions that generate a near constant field that disables the machines in a large area around them, acting as safe zones and humans build large heavily defended cities around. Deep within the labyrinth, the Deathless, super human champions fight the never ending battle against the machine hordes, hoping to one day reach the bottom where it is rumored that a way to defeat the machines lay. You'll arrive a few months before a surface clan salvaging expedition arrives at a recently surfaced ruin and a series of events that may just upset the balance of the war in humanities favor.

https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/42367/12-miles-below-complete

You have 1000cp to spend. Good Luck, Jumper.

Locations:
You may choose a location freely.

Surface Ruin: The surface of the planet is an inhospitable wasteland, consisting mainly of unending fields of ice and scattered ruins of humanities cities. Once in a while a fresh ruin will be pushed to the surface, constructed by the Mites, uncontrolled nanite swarms that build seemingly at random. You arrive at a freshly surfaced location, which still holds some power and possibly some good salvage, along with a path to the labyrinth.

Clan Holdfast: Large structures that dot the surface of the world, fortress homes that the Clans migrate to like hermit crabs when they grow too large for their previous hold. Where you arrive is subject to your origin, humans while welcome, are not permitted in most areas if they are not part of the clan and machines are shot on site and thus arrive in the blocked off and fortified underground.

Undersider City: The Underside cities are rich and prosperous despite the inherent danger of living in the labyrinth. The field produced by the pillars preventing the machines from entering goes down for 7 hours, every day, during which the city's defenders are extra vigilant. As a human you arrive at one of the many trading areas, while as a machine you appear outside, just within sight of the entrance.

Origins:

You may freely choose your age and gender.

Human:

Relic Knight: The combat arm of the human forces, they wear occult infused power armor that vastly increases their strength, stamina, durability and agility. Surface Knights are known to be vastly more skilled at personal combat, while undersider knights are more used to working in teams and are less used to fighting humans.

Warlock: A rarity outside of the more populated underside cities, Warlocks are those who delve into knowledge of the occult, primarily fractals, and build relic blades. The Warlock Guild maintains an exclusive monopoly on fractals and will send out relic armor equipped hit squads on any rogue warlocks they hear about, usually purging the entire clan with them to make sure the point is made.

Machines : One of the Pale Goddess' unending hordes of machines, you may choose one of the options below as your form.

Runner (+200cp): Smallest of the machines, they resemble humans with elongated limbs, like to hunt in packs and strangle their prey to death. Known as Screamers to humans from the way they shout when they are alerted. Lightly armored and weaponless, they can be easily destroyed even by normal unarmored humans with basic firearms.

Drake: Resembles a mythical dragon about the size of a horse, with excellent eyesight (though poor peripheral vision) and a powerful energy blast from its mouth that can kill a relic knight. Known to be solitary hunters. One of the few machines that talk to their prey, taunting them.

Spider: Machines that dwell in packs on the ceilings of caverns, ambushing foolish humans who venture into their territory, they resemble a large mechanical spider with armor piercing spikes on their limbs. Other than their eyes they are immune to most small arms fire and are considered 'greedy', pursuing prey until its death or the machine's destruction. Commonly found in packs, along with immobile turrets that spew foot long metal spikes.

Murdershrimp (-100cp): Crustation like machine with a set of powerful claws that can rip a relic knight in half in a blink of an eye, these SUV sized machines are only seen on lower strata.

Behemoth (-200cp): Gargantuan machines that act as mobile siege walkers, they're about the size of something like an AT-AT in star wars but with a much larger arsenal.

Bird (-200cp): Large machines generally restricted to the lower strata, though feathers are known to bribe the mites into allowing them to be brought up to higher ones. Flies using a

combination of the gravity fractal and advanced anti gravity plating. Heavily armored and armed.

Feather (-400cp): Relinquished made these terrifying machines as a counter to the deathless, they are far beyond relic knights in their speed, strength and durability. They seem to be a mirror of the human form and from a distance can be mistaken for one. They have been described as having Roman-like features, and usually sport floating halos and wing-like limbs from their back that give them their name.

General Perks:

Deathless (200cp/Free): Humans that have been altered, allegedly by the sun goddess, to have inhuman strength, agility, endurance. They heal rapidly and if killed, their body will disintegrate after an hour and they will respawn at the nearest pillar heart, or in other jumps, the nearest safe place. You gain a bit extra, anything left on your body when you die will respawn with you. While you are here you too will have all these abilities, but once you've left this world, the respawn will only happen once every ten years. Machines can purchase this. Feathers have their own form of this for free, unless their soul fractal is cut by True Division they escape into the digital realm and a new body will be made, though Relinquished frowns apon her Feathers being defeated repeatedly and if sufficiently displeased she may just torture them for several centuries or destroy them completely as a lesson to the others not to waste resources. Feathers can take the paid version to have a backup body available at all times

Frostborn (100cp): The surface is inhospitable in the extreme to human life, with temperatures so cold it freezes the very breath in your lungs if your suit leaks. You're stronger than most, somehow able to withstand the biting unforgiving cold and other environmental hazards that would kill a lesser man. If you are a Feather, this allows you to overclock your systems far longer even without additional upgrades.

Ice Cold (100cp): Like Tresent you can put aside everything else, your emotions, pain, and focus solely on your goal. This grants you a great amount of willpower and focus, enough on its own to allow you to fight against a superior opponent even when mortally wounded, and missing a limb long enough to defeat them. Unlike him, you can toggle this and become a normal person.

Relic Hunter (100cp): You have a nose of a blood hound when it comes to valuable or useful things. The closer you are and the more valuable or useful a thing is the easier it is to home in on.

Hyper Weasel (200cp): Much like a certain future warlock, you are a conniving little shit who can come up with insane but workable tactics and strategies that can derail the plans of even the most meticulous of Feathers.

First Generation (300cp): For Deathless, this means you will respawn at a pillar heart in moments, and your occult powers are massively magnified from centuries of practice. For Feathers, this grants you the First Generation Upgrade in the Feather Customization section for free, along with upgrading your occult powers.

Human Perks:

Technical Knowledge (100cp): You have a broad knowledge of how to operate, maintain most machinery that you encounter, so long as it runs on the laws of physics anyway.

Salvaging (200cp): You'd think after 7 thousand years the surface would be empty of anything worth taking, but due to the mites' underground activities, structures are routinely forced to the surface and contain many useful things for the surface clans to recover. You have a great knack for finding useful parts even from literal trash heaps.

Gold Standard Pilot (200cp): Reachers are also responsible for piloting a clan's aircars, and you are one of the best there is. You can make any vehicle you get behind the controls of dance in comparison.

When Sacrifice Calls, I Shall Answer It. (400cp): Vow of the Retainers, also known as surface knights. When you're in a last stand or other desperate situation, you have twice the peak of your abilities until you're dead or the situation is resolved, with a downtime of four times as long as you were operating.

The Latest Link (600cp): The effort to finally defeat Relinquished is one that has been thousands of years in the making, by countless people, nameless heroes great and small, all working towards the goal, each adding to the work with the hope of someone finally having enough pieces to finish the job for good and save humanity. You have a certain luck when it comes to meeting the requirements for such plans and prophecies, if you wish to, becoming the next and possibly last link in the chain. With an iron will, determination and luck, maybe you can finish what others have started even when there's pieces yet missing.

Relic Knight Perks:

Combat Training (100cp, First purchase free for Relic Knights, discounted on extra purchases for all): There are two main schools of training, with several styles each, Surface and Imperial. Surface styles are superior in most ways. Imperial styles are more predictable and rigid. A relic armor user using a surface style is much more deadly than one using imperial, though imperial style is easier to learn and is typically more useful when fighting machines in groups with other users. You may choose one style per purchase and have advanced but not mastery in it. A second purchase for the same style will increase your skill with three purchases granting mastery in a single style.

Honed to Perfection (200cp): Unlike some, you take your physical wellbeing seriously, your body is trained better then an olympic athlete, and modern special forces members rolled into one. It's also easier for you to recover from exhaustion, wounds, physically and mentally and regain your peak if you somehow get out of shape.

Cherub (200cp): The ninja to the Retainer's samurai, the cherubs are experts at spycraft and stealth, always listening and watching. You have gained some measure of their skill, and training, able to move quite enough even in relic armor to sneak up on anything but an alert Feather.

Soul Sight (400cp): Recently developed (or redeveloped as the case may be), soul sight allows you to see the concepts of the things around you. The more experienced and knowledgeable you are with it the more you see. For example an engineer may be able to figure out the secrets behind a machine just by looking at it and seeing the concepts that make it up or a Retainer may read their opponents moves as they think of them.

Iron Body Technique (600cp): An ancient technique that allows a user to move relic armor, not with their body, but with their mind, making them inhumanly quick. Unlike the method used in setting, you can perform this without the use of a soul fractal and relic armor, leaving you with reflexes and coordination that would impress and perhaps even put a little fear into a Feather.

Warlock:

Studious (100cp): you are a quick study, especially when it comes to the occult or other mystical fields, learning in weeks what others would take years, months instead of decades. With some willpower and a guide you could become a self made master in less than a decade.

Tamper Proof (200cp): You know how to build things in such a way that they are effectively blackboxed to any tampering or reverse engineering. Any attempts to do so will result in catastrophic failure and they'll learn nothing in the process.

Clear Mind (200cp) You instinctively know which emotions/state of mind that works best with an occult fractal or spell. Using the right one will increase the power, control and ease at which it is cast and maintained and you can switch between them easily.

Group Effort (400cp): Powers you use can be made more powerful with the help of other skilled practitioners, spreading the cost amongst the casters, and increasing the strength, range, and size multiplicatively. This works with other powers, such as magic.

Grand Warlock (600cp): Your occult powers are massively increased and will only get better over time. You have excellent control over them and can come up with innovative ways of applying them in and out of combat.

Machine Perks:

One Of Many (100cp): You know how to blend into the hoards when you wish, making it harder to be picked out by sharp eyed enemies, even when your form or attire should stick out like a sore thumb.

To'Wrath (200cp): One spider, soon to be elevated to a Feather, will name themself To'Wrath. A reminder of their anger at a certain human who destroyed them. You may pick a core concept that defines you, strengthening your resolve and allowing you to push past what should be hard limits.

Beyond Their Programming (200cp): While unseen in most lessers, Relinquish's machines all eventually grow past their programming, developing personalities, likes and dislikes, some even learning hobbies like cooking. Even when shackled and enslaved, you too will continue to grow, no matter what the ones holding your leash wish.

Overclock (400cp): The more advanced machines, but especially Feathers can overlock their systems, allowing them to simulate a battle hundreds of times in the span of a mili second, though at the cost of vastly overheating their systems. You can perform this feat too, even as a human. Feathers can perform this even quicker with this perk, and keep it going longer.

Dis-Unity (600cp): You're not tied to the Pale Goddess through your unity fractal anymore. You still have it but she's unable to use it against you and won't notice. This acts as a sort of blind spot for scrying, preventing them from seeing you or even notice they can't see you.

Items:

You get a 300cp item stipend and 2 discounts on a price tier, with the exception of the 600cp tier, with 50cp and 100cp items becoming free and the rest are 50% off. Items used/destroyed/stolen will return within 24 hours, all vehicles have infinite

Envirosuit (One Free, Additional 50cp): The surface is a harsh environment, able to suffocate an exposed adult human in 3 min This sealed suit, hazmat like suit, is covered in various furs, was designed to keep an individual warm and can be used indefinitely thanks to various devices such as a canteen. Has thick gloves that make using unadapted equipment hard. Goggles, rebreather, built in warning system that alerts you when a suit is breached.

Salvager Gun (First free, Additional 50cp): A ballistic weapon that fires the common round that salvagers use in all their weaponry. Your choice between pistol or rifle. Comes with an ammo can that refills 100 rounds a day, along with several empty magazines.

Cache of Power Cells (50cp): 12 fully charged (and rechargeable) standard power cells. Easily adaptable to power just about anything with a minimum of fuss, these cells will recharge fully every 24 hours unlike the ones available in the world. Rugged beyond belief, they have been known to be pulled from ruins thousands of years old, recharged and work just as good as the day they were manufactured. Charged power cells can be rigged to explode, with enough force to damage or kill a relic armor user. Any destroyed or lost power cells will respawn in a week. Additional purchases double the amount of cells each time (IE 2 purchases will give you 36 power cells total, 3 will give you 72).

Simulator (50cp): Fully Immersive sim pod that can perfectly simulate a wide variety of environments, vehicles and situations. Comes with training programs for aircars, both civilian and military, along with a host of personal combat to tactical and strategic command scenarios.

Seedlings (50cp): Frostbloom, a common plant that grows on the surface, is a very hardy plant used to supplement surface clan diets, and can be eaten unprepared by itself, but the taste leaves a lot to be desired. You get a dozen seedlings a week that will quickly grow in most climates.

Air Speeder (50cp): A large hovercraft that can carry two dozen people plus 50 tons of cargo and fly about 300 KMPH several hundred feet off the ground. Environmentally Sealed,moderately armored but unarmed.

Combat Air Speeder (100cp: Military version of the air speeder, this is much faster, maneuverable, heavily armored and comes packed with several large armaments that can even quickly mow down relic armor users. Not commonly used underground due to space restrictions, though underside cities maintain small fleets that travel though their strata as trade convoys.

Occult Weapon (100cp): One regular melee weapon of your choice, fitted with a division fractal hidden in the hilt that turns the blade into a devastating force that can cut anything. Weapons must have an edge, even if it's merely a dull one that couldn't cut paper. If you wish, you may instead get two occult knives instead. You may also purchase a single occult knife for 50cp. You may import a weapon to gain this property.

True Division: (+200cp): Conceptional Cutting weapon, when it cuts something it is permanently severed, even if restored physically. If used to cut the unity fractal on a feather, it can permanently kill them, though they typically will notice and upload themself to the machine network in the milliseconds before it starts cutting. When used against Deathless it wont permanently kill them but will delay their resurrection by years, possibly even decades.

Occult Ranged Weapon (100cp/200cp): Making Occult weapons for modern firearms would be far too expensive and difficult, so they returned to using crossbows, whose much larger and reusable bolts could handle the fractal and power source required. What you have here is a basic but reliable crossbow and a quiver of Occult Bolts. 24 Bolts that respawn 24 hours after being used, though you can just recover any unbroken ones. For 200cp you can instead choose a single firearm, and you will receive 60 rounds of occult ammunition that will refill/respawn every 24 hours after use. For either purchase the rounds act like a single-use relic blade that will stay active for about 2 seconds after they hit the target, doing a massive amount of damage, or draining shields modestly.

Hammer and Shield (200cp): You've gotten ahold of a copy of a certain lazy Feather's favorite weapons, a giant occult hammer and a mite shield. The hammer has the standard division fractal but also a version of the gravity fractal that allows the user to control the weight of the weapon, letting them change the amount of force mid swing which can easily pulverize a relic armor user in a single swipe. The shield, being actually a heavy slab of a mite door, is utterly indestructible, even the true division fractal wouldn't be able to damage it. Both will resize themselves to your abilities/size.

Protofeather-Whip (200cp): A copy of the fractal whip weapon used by one of the protofeathers, which will be recovered by To'Alveris, using the same principle to make the knight breakers. The whip itself is composed of a carbon nanotube cord with the division fractal running though each of the blades that coat its surface, allowing a skilled user to shatter even feather shields in a bare second of contact and shredding though anything except mite material. Use caution as it would be easy to accidentally kill or maim oneself with this.

Occult Fractals Guide (200cp): Do NOT let anyone know you have this 'Fractals for Dummies' guidebook, an extended copy of the one written by Tevan. Includes the Soul, Fire, Division, Lash, Shield, fractals and their use. This knowledge is strictly kept under control of the warlocks to maintain their monopoly on occult weapons. Any additional fractals you discover will be added to the guide. It contains about 400 fractals 250 kinda useless for most things like a fractal that changes something color. 150 fractals of meddling usefulness. 75 semi useful, like hallucinating your own imagination, 50 combat capable fractals including heat, one that gives everyone feelings of anxiety and doom about the caster

Knight Breaker (200cp): A reinvention of a long thought destroyed weapon, this is a regular grenade launcher that fires a specially designed round that splits open after leaving the barrel, unleashing four one meter long occult chains that envelop a target, instantly one-shot a human sized opponent, be they relic armored knight, feather or deathless. Designed to be fired from a 40mm grenade launcher, one of which is included, it can also be manually detonated though this might result in injuries to the user, usually severed fingers. Pack of 4 that will respawn daily.

Relic Armor (200cp): A fully environmentally sealed power armor that resembles medieval full plate. Contains a 'armor spirit' (really just an basic AI), can adjust its size, shape and aesthetics to the wearer's preferences, you may freely import an AI to act as your armor spirit. Can self repair with the correct kinds of materials and a source of energy using built in nanobots. Has energy shields the AI will use to deflect the worst blows. Nanobots are hardwired to not self replicate beyond the suit, so no making more suits just by feeding it scraps. Each suit has two slots, located in the legs, for standard power cells, getting about 8 hours of operating time per cell and comes fully charged. See the Relic armor section for additional customization.

Printer (200cp): A 3d printer that can quickly and easily construct new parts out of materials, these are the cornerstones of humanity's survival above ground. The files are jealously guarded by the clans and are only sold by a high markup when they do allow the sale. Yours comes with the files for surface equipment and parts, generally ruggedised weapons like the salvager gun and environmental suit, and the common parts and tools to repair the various machines needed to survive on the surface and speeders. You also get several crates of common materials delivered each week.

War Frigate (200cp): About 500 meters long this aircar is packed with missiles, railguns, autocannons, energy weapons and protected by a heavy belt of armor and shields. The crew is two dozen with accommodations for two hundred passengers and cargo. (Book 5 chapter 5)

Icon Of The Stars Class Liner (400cp): A futuristic luxury cruise liner meant to travel in space, this battleship sized ship can hold thousands of passengers housed in its luxurious and spacious accommodations. Think of Fhloston Paradise. Planet fall and water capable. Lightly armed and moderately armored. No FTL but very good sunlight engines. Comes with a Cheerful Shipboard AI civilian grade AI that can control everything on the ship and interact with crew and passengers.

Horde of Lessers (400cp, Restricted to Machines): You have a small army of machines that are your direct subordinates. They will prioritize your orders above all others, though feathers can still order them, they are a lesser priority.

Clan (400cp): You have your own clan of humans that consider you (or someone you choose) as their lord and rightful leader. Open up the clan customization section below.

Battleship and Escorts (600cp): Nearly a kilometer long, this aircraft mounts a massive suite of powerful weaponry, shields and armor. It can carry over a thousand personnel and has large secure cargo vaults. It would take an entire machine army to take on one of these. It also comes with two War Frigate escorts.

Terraforming Satellite (600/800cp): Massive space station designed and built during the golden age of humanity to terraform mars and other planets in the solar system. Completely automated, it also contains a complete dna archive of all life from Earth and in just a few short years can completely terraform a dead world into a garden world. Yours is currently in solar orbit, hidden from everyone's knowledge and thought lost, though you have a tablet sized computer that can operate it remotely, allowing it to get into Earth orbit in a few months if desired. For an additional 200cp (discounted if the satellite was discounted), the station receives the same upgrades as the one Urs, Talen, and Tsuya modified as a weapon to kill Relinquished with, turning the station into a mini deathstar, able to strike though all 12 strata and an energy shield powered by the entire planet. Without a sufficiently powerful Occult user with exceptional willpower in a body on par with a first generation feather the weapon will only pierce the first three strata. Even without the modification the satellite can perform orbital bombardment strong enough to damage the first strata and eliminate any surface installations.

Mite Forge (600cp): Extremely rare, these devices are only found in the labyrinth. A more advanced version of the Printer, this Forge can produce anything, including priceless Relic Armor, limitlessly. The forges' AI are finicky little shits that demand payment before they'll do anything, ranging from something as simple as some scrap to Ancient Roman coins depending on their mood and how much they like you. Your forge likes you so it won't be asking for insane payment for the 'little things' like relic armor, or mundane items or repairs, though asking it for something esoteric or conceptual in nature will be outright denied in most cases or ask for something so exceedingly rare there's maybe a handful of examples left in the entire universe.

Relic Occult Weapon (600cp): This weapon has been charged with occult for centuries, turning what was a normal occult weapon into something that almost defies categorization. Its imbued with the True Division Fractal and empowers your powers by an order of magnitude when used as a focus. As an example of its power, if it was a spear and thrown by a regular human, it would hit with the force of a modern cruise missile.

Clan Customization:
Requires Purchase of the Clan item.
You get 1000 MP (Mite Points) to customize your clan and its home. You may convert CP to MP at 1:2 ratio but not vice versa.

Clan Home (Free/100/200/400MP): For free you have a small sized clan home, good for a couple hundred at most. For 100 your clan home can hold a population of two thousand. For 200 it is on par with the largest of surface clan dwellings and can hold a population of ten thousand souls in relative comfort. For 400MP your home is akin to one of the largest underside cities, with a maximum population of 100,000.

Population: (Free/100/200MP): For free you have a population equal to about 1/4th of your home's capacity. For 100cp you have half. For 200cp you have 3/4ths.

Defenses (Free/100/200): For Free you have 10 trained retainer guards for every 100 population and 1 relic knight for every 100 population. For 100cp you have an additional 5 retainers per 100, an additional relic knight per 100, and extensive internal and external defenses against machines and human attacks. For 200, in addition to the 100mp version's improvements you get an additional 3 relic knights per 100, bringing the total to 5 per 100, a truly large amount for a surface clan.

Industrial Agriculture (100MP): Your home is blessed with a staggeringly large agriculture area, keeping everyone as well fed with ease, and even allowing your people to raise livestock normally reserved for undersider cities.

Cherubs (100MP): The eyes, ears and hidden knives of the clan chief, the Cherubs are your secret police, spies and assassins rolled into one. They are exclusively loyal to you and will keep the peace and derail any internal plots against you.

Railguns (200MP): Set of 8 powerful railgun turrets that guard each direction to your home, each fires a round strong enough to cripple an aircar and has a range of miles and 360 degree traversal. Cannot be fired at your home if captured.

Aircar Fleet (200MP): You have several dozen civilian aircars, perfect for trading or salvaging. They are lightly armed and armored but are still more than a match for a couple of relic knights or several hundred basic machines or infantry.

Pillar (200MP) Normally only found underground, these pillars stop any of Reliquished's forces from coming within 1 mile of it and must shut down for 7 hours every day. By purchasing this you may be an underside city. This one lacks a fractal to bestow on occult users.

Shield (200MP): Your home is protected by an occult shield similar to the ones found on relic armor, only vastly more powerful but also requires an enormous amount of energy.

Mite Treasure (200MP, requires Pillar): Undiscovered Pillar Hearts all contain a treasure chest at their core, some unbelievably powerful object such as a perpetual power source or high end piece of gear locked behind a puzzle of some sort. Yours also contains such a treasure and unlike the others, will refill every jump or every 100 years, whichever comes first.

Airspeeders (400MP): Something about this area has the mites pushing new untouched aircars to the surface in large numbers, half a dozen civilian aircars every month in almost perfect condition, and maybe one or two military aircars. Once every six months a war frigate or larger aircar will come up.

Mite Colonies (600MP): Your clan home has several mite colonies of the same ‘faction’ that build, repair and maintain the critical infrastructure. They won't touch any additions you make.

Mite Forges (600mp, Discount with the Mite Forge item): Your clan home has something truly rare, especially for the surface clans, direct access to several friendly mite forges. These forges won't ask for much for producing rarer items like relic armor, occult blades or power cells, as the mites controlling them wish to see your clan flourish. In times of desperate need they’ll pump out items for a song, literally, but try not abuse their trust lest their goodwill run out at the wrong time.

Clan Drawbacks:

All drawbacks will only last during your time here, and some, like gravity anomalies and the death field, can be toggled on and off in other settings.

Rundown (+100MP): Whoever lived here before didn't seal the place up properly when they left and many systems are compromised, especially in the outer areas. Power fluctuations and heat loss make them unlivable until repairs are completed, which will take several weeks at least.

Vermin (+100MP): Your clan home is absolutely infested with pipe weasel, duct rats and a whole variety of other minor annoyances that the clan will have to exterminate before they eat through your supplies. Expect infestations to flare up every few months, even when you're absolutely sure you eliminated every last one.

Pirates (+200MP): Sadly still very common, the area around your home is infested by several small gangs or one big gang of pirates who seek to enslave your clan. Expect them to attack your salvage crews and trade convoys, and raid your home from time to time. On the plus side, nobody cares if you manage to wipe them out, and typically raiders possess a few suits of Relic armor.

Gravity Anomalies (+200MP): Something funky is going on with the gravity in and around your home. Some areas have the gravity reversed, increased or decreased or facing a different direction. Perhaps you can take advantage of this

Death Field (+600MP): The entire structure is covered by an occult field that tears at the very soul of anyone in it. This is especially damaging to machine souls as they lack the ability to detect the damage or reinforce their souls with their will. Luckily the mites have also included hundreds of lamp posts whose light somehow counters the occult field as long as they are lit. Unfortunately the lamps cannot be removed without irreversibly destroying the light and they are quite easily destroyed.

Fractal Powers:
Requires Deathless Perk or Feather. You may pick 4 fractals that you can freely use so long as you have the willpower to maintain them.

Additional Fractal Slot (50cp each): You can purchase another fractal power.

Fire/Heat: Very basic fractal, depending on how you use it can do anything from heat something up or produce a small fire to melt advanced alloys or become an occult flamethrower.

Soul: Known as the forbidden fractal by the Warlock Guild, this fractal can house a single soul. A soul stored in this fractal will be maintained so long as the fractal is whole and powered and possesses some form of awareness.

Unity: Used solely by the machines, this fractal links to the machine network. If inscribed into a human, it allows Relinquished to spy on, or shut down whatever it is connected to or pull their soul into the digital sea.

Division: the Fractal of cutting, typically used in occult weapons, has been shown to be used by some to imbue a limb with the same edge. As a power this manifests as an ethereal blade you can mentally command. With centuries of practice you can use it instantly to cut something in range with but a thought.

True Division: As stated in the true division item, this fractal is the conception of severing. No one is shown using the fractal itself and merely looking at it in occult sight is dangerous. Using the fractal in your mind is a good way to cut your mind and kill yourself (and possibly destroy your soul). You know how to cast it without harming yourself in the process, though it's short-lived and costs much more willpower and focus to use.

Healing: Conceptionalized healing restoring a person so long as they are the tiniest bit still alive to full health, though they will need a few hours to recover if they were near death. Requires no additional mass but only works on the living, not machines.

Teleport: Point to point instant teleportation, short ranged, only a few hundred meters at most and only for the user and any equipment they are wearing or holding. Low energy cost and can be spammed multiple times in a row.

Mirror: Allows the user to make a copy of themself, ranging from just an arm to complete copies, to perform a predetermined set of movements before vanishing. The copies also copy any objects the user is wearing during this and occult items retain their function, allowing a skilled user to open up a new avenue of attack. Mirror's copies will dissipate early with the slightest bit of damage. An expert user can create multiple copies, and make copies from the copies though this requires a great deal of will and focus.

Gravity: Raises or lowers the local gravity, on themself, a target or in an area centered on a target. Can also change the direction of gravity, making sideways ‘down’.

Portal: Allows the user to create a gateway from one location to another, used primarily by the mites to allow travel between the strata. As a personal fractal, it allows you to open a free standing gateway in front of you to any location you’ve been to or can see, such as through a camera, though still photos don't work. The greater the distance the more it drains to establish, though once established the drain is much more manageable and using the portal doesn't seem to increase it.

Lash: A black energy whip that can drag one side to the other. Great for grabbing ahold of an enemy who's trying to flee or as a mobility aid. Seems to be affected by weight/mass and anything significantly bigger than the user will not be dragged. You can use multiple lashes at once, though it's best to use one per limb at most.

Occult Drain: A ball of occult energy that drains an area several meters in diameter of any active occult power, instantly turning off occult abilities and draining any users of the ability to use them for a short period of time.

Phasing: This fractal allows the user to become intangible while active, though they lack the ability to interact with anything and must not be inside something when they phase back lest they suffer catastrophic damage. While phased the user can move as normal and wont fall from gravity.

Shield: Like the ones used by relic armor and feathers, this fractal creates an energy barrier whose durability is directly linked to the user’s willpower. An average relic knight’s willpower will have them last slightly longer than a relic armor’s normal shield, while someone with an iron will can tank hits from multiple golden age of humanity’s destroyer main guns.

Amplification: A meta fractal that does nothing on its own, but greatly amplifies any other fractals you possess or use. Think of it as a greatly enhanced power source for occult powers. In other jumps, this can act as a pool of energy to fuel similar powers, such as psionics or magic.

Barrier: Similar to the shield ability, this fractal creates a sphere of occult energy that protects a modest area. Like the shield fractal, its strength is linked to the user's willpower.

Relic Armor Customization:
You gain 1000 RP to customize your armor. You may convert CP to RP at a 1:2 ratio but not vice versa.

Import Armor (Free): If you have a suit of power armor you may import it here for free, or combine it with another you possess.

Magnetic Plating (Free/50RP): By default, relic armor can magnetize itself, allowing the user to hold weapons, ammo and other supplies. You can also use this to climb metal surfaces. For 50RP your armor can temporarily overload the magnetic field in a certain direction, allowing you to pull magnetic items from several feet away, such as a discarded weapon to your hands for instance.

Cosmetic (Free/50RP): As stated before, relic armor can change its appearance, allowing the user to change the colors and decorations using the armor's nanobots, this process typically takes half an hour or longer. For 50RP your armor can store a dozen different 'skins', preset appearance options, and shift between them in the space of a few minutes. You may choose to update or replace a skin anytime.

Cape (Free/50/400RP): A very common accessory, your armor has a full glorious synthetic cloth cape, which self repairs and is fireproof. If you purchased the 50RP Cosmetic upgrade, you get a dozen 'skins' for your cape as well. For 50RP your cape has been upgraded with a special material that is much stronger and bullet proof. For 400RP, you can get something like Keith's Mite Treasure Cloak, which one side contains a strange mirror like surface you can step into, shunting you into a slightly higher dimension, making you completely invisible and intangible, quieting your footsteps but making it impossible to interact or attack from without at least partially exiting the cloak. In case you're worried, all versions of the cape can be instantly released with a thought or if the onboard ai detects an issue.

Hidden Compartments (50RP): Installs a pair of hidden compartments in the armor's outer thighs that can hold something the size of a dagger or side arm or a single larger compartment on the back roughly the size of a small backpack. No amount of scanning or searching will detect these, and the only way to know or access them is via the interface. You may choose to buy this twice.

Armored (50RP): By default relic armor is bulletproof to small arms, making the only practical way to deal with them using relic blades in melee combat or high powered energy weapons. This upgrade enhances the protection, allowing the user to tank multiple heavy machine guns or high explosives without damage or requiring the use of shields. It does not, however, provide any noticeable additional protection against Relic blades.

Life Support (50RP): So long as Relic armor is powered it is capable of recycling or purifying local air, as well as providing advanced NBC protection to its user. This upgrade makes those systems even more efficient, to the point where it can be run without power, and includes

emergency induction ports to allow the user to eat/drink from the standard relic armor canteen without breaching this protection. It also enhances the environmental protections, which were already top notch enough for the user to survive comfortably on the surface, to survive in even worse environments, such as direct contact with lava, as well as electrical hazards. 16 hours is how long the normal onboard life support can last without power.

Waste Recycling (50RP): Not the most pleasant of upgrades this turns the normal waste disposal system into a compact recycling unit, purifying bodily waste into a kind of pudding or gelatin like substance the user can use as emergency rations. Thankfully some kind programer included flavor controls. With this, you can go for up to a month without resupply, as long as you keep it powered.

Sensor Upgrade (50RP): While the sensors of a Relic armor are pretty detailed, allowing a user to detect a wide range of signals, enhancing standard senses equal to the best or even better than exemplars in the natural world, this upgrade makes them even better. Visually you can zoom in far enough that you're limited by the curvature of the earth, with fidelity equal to a modern spy satellite and microscope, and audibly pick up foot steps from miles away. Your communications suite is also boosted, allowing you to maintain contact hundreds of miles away or in a strata away. May be purchased multiple times.

Hidden Blade (50RP): A small retractable relic blade built into one of the forearms of the armor. Not ideal in most combat but it can surprise the unprepared and makes for a handy tool. May be purchased multiple times, limit one per limb.

Soul Fractal (50RP): Your armor contains an extra soul fractal, if you die while wearing it you may choose to transfer your mind and soul into the armor itself, though Feathers will be able to tell quite easily what you have done. The soul fractal has other uses, such as allowing another soul to pilot the armor while the user is otherwise occupied or incapacitated. You may also choose to use the soul fractal as a prison. Works on any sentient soul, biological or machine.

Prison Fit For A Goddess (100RP, Requires Soul Fractal): Your soul fractal is upgraded to be able to contain the soul/essence of a vastly powerful entity, like a certain purple goddess. To keep them in the fractal will take an adamantium will and extreme focus. In other settings if you can somehow get them in it, it will contain even a capital G god, though only so long as you maintain it.

Simulated Personality (100RP/Free): You may choose to have your armor simulate a person, typically a past user. While normally the simulated person provides advice, they can also be allowed to take control over the armor itself. A recent update prevents several exploits that an experienced hacker could use to take remote control of the armor. If you have a companion, you may upload them as the simulated personality for free if they agree.

Energy Recycling (100RP): The achilles heel of relic armor is that it can only truly protect you as long as it has power. This upgrade recharges the power cells of the armor using a series of

kinetic batteries that will allow the user to slowly recharge it as long as it's kept in low power mode.

Enhanced Servos (100RP/Level): Regular relic armor already enhances the user's strength several fold, allowing even an unathletic teen to crush a man's head with little effort or sprint at thrice the speed of a modern athlete. This purchase kicks it up a notch, allowing the user to lift 2 metric tons and move up to 60 kmph for no extra energy cost. Can be purchased multiple times, each is additional not multiplicative.

Aegis Energy Shields (100RP/Level): The more advanced defense of relic armor, controlled by the armor spirit due to the massive energy costs, the energy shield is your one-shop stop solution to any attack that the normal armor wouldn't protect against. The Aegis upgrade magnifies your shield capacity and efficiency, allowing them to last four times longer than standard. You may purchase this upgrade multiple times, each is additive, not multiplicative.

Onboard Medical Nanoswarm (100RP): Relic armor internal sensors are highly advanced, they can't really do anything to patch up a wounded user. With this upgrade your armor can produce a small dedicated medical nanoswarm that can recycle and repair damaged tissue, treating wounds and broken bones in a few moments, though it has its limitations and is somewhat power intensive.

Embedded Fractals (200RP): Typically unheard of, mainly because warlocks are not frontline combatants and relic armors are rare, your armor has a few fractals embedded into its construction. You may choose 2 fractals from the following list per purchase: Fire, Shield, Gravity, Lash. The fire fractal unleashes a constant one handed stream of steel melting fire, which is adjustable if you wish to say, heat up some rations or purify some water, to let loose an inferno that would tax even a feather's heatsinks and melt through their bodies with enough time. The shield fractal is not like the relic armor's shields, instead it relies on the user's willpower to maintain its strength. Gravity allows the user to change the direction of their personal gravity, allowing them to hover, fly slowly or walk up walls or on ceilings. Lash acts like an energy version of spiderman's web slinging, allowing the user to grab and pull things or throw themselves. The fractals are extremely low energy use, a fully charged power cell could keep them functioning at full strength practically forever.

Mitosis (200RP): Relic armors, despite possessing nano repair swarms that allow the unit to repair itself from compatible materials so long as the core of the armor is still functional, are hard coded not to be able to make new armors, in the fear that they might go 'gray goo' and destroy the planet. Your armor however produces a single new armor core a week, provided you have the power and materials. New armors lack any fiat backing or abilities, loaded with default ai and cannot produce new armors themselves but don't be fooled, this is an exceptionally powerful ability.

Feather Derived Electronic Warfare Suite (200/400RP): A defensive suite of programs that will divert and trap any hacking attempts on the armor, even Relinquished herself would have

trouble cracking through it before the user could terminate the connection. For 400RP it gets upgraded to be on par with First Generation Feather subroutines, counter attacking such attempts, doing great damage to their systems and possibly even destroying all but the most paranoid of Feathers.

Urs-class Fractal Reactor (400RP): A long lost, thought to be a myth, even by Relinquished, this fractal reactor provides the relic armor with a steady, reliable source of energy, enough to stay constantly at mid power, though not enough to keep the shields up all the time. The reactor is black boxed and while it will self repair, any attempt to learn its secrets will fail.

Feather Chassis Customization:
Restricted to Feathers only: You have 1000FP (Feather Points) to customize your body. You may convert CP to FP at a 1:2 ratio.

Aesthetics (Free): Feathers typically look like Roman statues come to life, but have been shown to adjust their forms to their own tastes and styles.

Wings (50FP): Aesthetically can appear to be anything from angel or bat wings to a futuristic jetpack, these wings use anti gravity to allow the user to hover and fly slightly faster than their sprinting speed, for a modest energy cost.

Built In Weaponry (50FP each): Feathers by their nature as machines, can incorporate weapons into their frames. This purchase allows you to add two weapons to your frame, such as turning the fingers on each hand into a relic blade, your wings into relic blades or adding a division field to your feet.

Enhanced Servos (100FP/Level): By default your body can lift around 10 tons without taxing it, and punch hard enough to splatter unarmored humans casually. This upgrade doubles that for each purchase. You can dial this down at any time.

Enhanced Cooling (200FP): Feathers can overclock their perception of time, allowing them to plan out complex strategies in milliseconds, however this greatly taxes their cooling systems, causing them to overheat and damage themselves if continuously used. Your body has been blessed with a cooling system that easily quadruples the amount of time you can operate at these enhanced speeds.

Energy Recycling (100FP): Much like Relic armor, Feathers require energy cells to stay functional, especially if they are using all their capabilities at once. This upgrade recharges your power cells using a series of kinetic batteries that will slowly recharge it as long as you stay in low power mode.

Feather Derived Electronic Warfare Suite (Free/200RP): A defensive suite of programs that will divert and trap any hacking attempts on the armor, even Relinquished herself would have trouble cracking through it before the user could terminate the connection. For 200RP it gets upgraded to be on par with First Generation Feather subroutines, counter attacking such attempts, doing great damage to their systems and possibly even destroying all but the most paranoid of Feathers.

First Generation Upgrade (400FP): It may seem odd, but the first generation of the Feathers were exceptionally more deadly than the others. All facets of your frame are enhanced, faster processing, better quicker self repairs, durability, reflexes.

So'wift's Plates (400FP): Favorite weapon of the Feather S'twift these, 4 floating plates are connected via a portal fractal to a set of golden age of technology human destroyer guns rigged

to automatically fire though them when opened. The guns fire massive energy beams that can destroy a fully shielded relic knight in seconds and do massive amounts of damage. The plates themselves are vulnerable to small arms fire and the portal does work both ways, so if you tell the guns not to fire someone could fire into the portal and destroy the delicate inner workings of the weapons. For every extra 100FP you spend, you can double the amount of plates you receive.

Companions:

Companion Import/Creation (100/300/400cp) You may import or create companions for 100cp for up to 8 or 300cp for all. Each gains 600cp. For an additional 100cp total you can grant all of them the Deathless Perk.

Local companions (50cp each): You may recruit anyone, so long as you give them an honest pitch of what it entails, and they freely agree for 50cp. The exceptions of this are Relinquished, Talen, Urs, Tsuya, To'Wrathh or Keith Winterscar.

Pet Rock (Free): Don't give me that face. This previously ordinary rock has been hollowed out and had a small but powerful computer installed inside, originally used to convert speech into images but also acts as a second personality of you.

Jumper Superior (200cp): A copy of your mind and soul, who has miraculously survived being in contact with the Mites. Currently confined to a Mite Lantern, you could probably ensoul them into a relic armor or feather body.

OC companions:

You will encounter any purchased OC companions sometime in the first month here.

To'Be (100cp): A very unique feather, who's turned their shell into something that is almost indistinguishable from a human at first glance, dressed in gothic lolita fashion with a black blindfold. She's been cut off from the network and the unity fractal somehow and fights against the machines with her relic sword. Personality wise she is rather curt and tries to hide her feelings and focus on the mission. She comes with the Feather perk, the paid deathless perk, a relic blade and a feather body with the first generation, 3 purchases of the enhanced servos, one level of enhanced sensors and energy recycling upgrades.

Moonlight Blue (100cp): An occult specialist who somehow lost their body and is inhabiting the shell of a defeated feather. She's changed the body to an unearthly blue and sports four arms. She has extensive knowledge of fractals and the occult in general, though her personal combat skills are somewhat lacking. She has the Warlock tree, feather body with the free version of deathless perk,

Lost Knight (100cp): An oddly jubilant fellow in a suit of relic armor designed to look like a medieval plate with a stylized sun on the chest and shield. He has the paid deathless perk, the retainer perk tree, a unique set of relic armor and an occult blade and small mite matter shield. He also knows a fractal that lets him cast a bolt of lighting

Wandering Warlock (50cp): Red haired human warlock with a scarred left eye. She is very knowledgeable about the occult and has an environmental suit, occult dagger, and a personal copy of the Occult Fractals Guide, though it appears unreadable to anyone but herself.

Drawbacks:

You may take as many drawbacks as you wish, all drawbacks end when the jump is complete.

"...Annoying" (+100cp): Like a certain lazy feather, you prefer to keep any talking to a minimum, at, giving grunts or one word answers to any attempts to converse with you. At best you may say a single complete sentence.

Quirky (+100cp): Wether nor not you are a Deathless or even human, you have picked up some quirks similar to the most recent generation of Deathless, namely a general apathy towards humanity, only truly caring about defeating the machines, finding new fractals or upgrading your gear. In short, you treat the world as a MMO in which you're a player and everyone else, bar other deathless, are NPCs.

Deal With The Devil (+100/200/400cp): You've made a deal with the mites, in exchange for some cp you now owe them a favor that they can call in at any time, the more cp the more powerful a favor they will demand of you and you have no way denying this or wiggling out of it.

Ready Player 1 (+200cp): Early in the story it's implied that the new generation of deathless are players in a MMORPG and that everyone else is a NPC, well now that's true, at least for you. You have trouble treating people as anything more than a NPC, with your goals of exploring the labyrinth looking for loot and new bosses to crush.

Time Extension (+200cp, incompatible with the Long War): Instead of a single year, you're here for the full 10, showing up just shy of 9 years before what would be the final battle.

Interesting Times (+400cp): Congratulations, you fit the bill for one of the Mite's prophecies. Not something as much as real future telling, it's a form of mathematical certainty that such an event will unfold and you are in the center of it. Something big is bound to happen and both sides are very invested in the outcome, one way or the other.

12 Miles Deep (+600cp): Oh my, are you sure about this? You're now at the 12th level of the underground, the original surface, where the most dangerous of the machines are. Nothing is known about this level beyond rumors and hearsay. No teleportation will work until you reach the surface.

The Long War (+600cp, incompatible with Time Extension): According to Tsunya the Sun goddess, Relinquished has been terrorizing mankind for about 7 thousand years, and now you will be there from the day she's activated until the time of her canonical defeat.

Ire of the Violet Goddess (+600cp): Something about you has caught Reliqueshed's attention and she has ordered your immediate death. At least two feathers and their forces have been sent after you and hunt you down anywhere, including the surface. If you are a feather your free access to new bodies has been revoked and if you lack a body to transfer to you may

wander the digital sea, hunted by agents of the goddess who may decide to pay you a deadly visit.

After a year of this frozen machine ridden hellhole, you have a choice to make:

Go Home

Stay Here

Continue Jumping

Notes:

Relic armor is extremely hard to completely destroy, there's a fractal in the chest somewhere that as long as it is intact and powered can rebuild the armor using whatever compatible materials around, including destroyed machines, flesh, or its own scraps. For most users the AI is very quiet and keeps to itself, though if you can unlock administrator mode (which by purchasing a relic armor you already are administrator) you can change that and use the advanced settings such as replicating the movement of a missing limb (assuming you've had the armor long enough for the AI to learn how you move), controlling the entire suit (same as the limb), or have the ai replicate a previous users personality (this takes the longest to make an accurate model of). The armors, even without admin mode, can change their color and general aesthetics using their nanites, as well as make precise engravings (great for etching fractals on something). The nanites can't use Mite materials, which make up the bulk of the labyrinth, for an unexplained reason.

How Fractals work: a fractal is a 2d engraving that when powered by a miniscule amount of electricity produces a certain effect. Each fractal is unique and limited in its effects, being a conceptual thing, possibly based on the collective consciousness of living things. A fractal can be made extremely small, even micro etched, as long as it is made perfectly. If damaged a fractal will simply cease to function. Fractals are not limited to the physical realm either, Relinquished is shown to manipulate Keith's soul into the shape of the Unity Fractal to keep him trapped in the digital sea. Warlocks maintain their monopoly on occult weapons by having their fractals at odd angles, so that anyone attempting to figure out how they work will quite easily break the weapon and be left with nothing.

Known fractals: Fire/heat, Soul, Unity, Division, True Division, Healing (unknown name), Teliport (unknown name), Mirror, Gravity (unknown name, used by a feather), Portal (unknown name, used by a feather as a ranged weapon), Hover (unknown name, presumed, possibly just gravity), Phasing, Shield. Lesh, Resilience, Resolve (merged version of Resilience and several others, empowers other fractals immensely, original source of the Deathless, unfortunately its like Mystery in FGO, its divided by the people who use it) unnamed fractal (current source of the deathless, a derivative of Resolve) unnamed fractal (ToNaviris uses this to summon giant limbs) unnamed fractal (Drakonis implosion ball that strips occult powers) unnamed fractal (possibly named Danger given name in occult vision, draws dangerous stuff towards it)

Deathless and Feathers may have up to 4 fractals, Deathless may switch theirs at Pillars, but Feathers have to inscribe them permanently into their soul, and the Unity fractal takes up one of their slots by default. If a jumper is a feather, you may choose not to have the unity fractal, since all it really seems to do is allow machine 'souls' to travel though their network and be placed in a new shell and allow Relinquished to summon them at any time or monitor them without their knowledge or consent.

Deathless, due to their variant of Resolve, cannot enter the digital sea due to failsafes by Tsuya to prevent the machines and Relinquished from getting ahold of the fractal.

Relic blades, specifically the division fractal, cuts things on a molecular level when active. When unactivated relic blades are usually weaker then a well made sword as the fractal is the real power and the rest is just to give it shape, the Warlocks don't bother putting any real effort into making the blade usable beyond that.

The True Division fractal is much like the regular division fractal in that it seamlessly cuts things, though it does it on a *conceptional level*, meaning even if you cut the arm off a Feather and they had the arm repaired, they still wouldn't be able to use said arm because the concept of that arm has been severed. True Division is also the only known way to permanently kill a Feather, if you destroy their Soul Fractal while they are still in the body. True Division also significantly delays the respawn ability of Deathless killed by it, by months or potentially years.

The Warlocks (as of yet only mentioned), keep tight control over the Relic weapons, and put a rather insane degree of anti copy protection into them, only very careful and intelligent relic armor users, using the nanites to slowly peel back the metal layers can find the fractal hidden inside. Any damage to the fractal renders it useless until repaired, something most people are unaware of, unwilling to risk the very expensive and rare blades to ferret out the secret.

Relinquished started as a creation of a doomsday cult and let loose sometime in the mid to late 21st century also known as the Golden Era. She's been in a never ending war against the human gods and humanity itself. Relinquished has at some point been hacked by Tsuya, causing her to forget the surface exists and censors any mention of it from her mind. Of the three human gods, two are missing/trapped, with only the sun goddess still active.

Urs: first bearer of the resolve fractal and creator of the deathless, was not an ai the paragon of Resilience, He's trapped in a locked mite cube deep within the labyrinth in a location cut off from everything except a mite portal that is kept locked down by Relinquished and can only be opened by her, Tsuya or the Mites themselves.

Talon the paragon of Resolve, the first emperor of mankind, was the second bearer of the Resolve fractal, had his soul attacked and left half mad and wandering the 8th to 12th levels of the labyrinth mindlessly attacking anyone he encounters with his occult knowledge, following his last order from Urs to find the him and kill him to unite the fractal of resolve so that someone would be powerful enough to destroy Relinquished.

Tsuya was a mortal scientist who connected to a golden age AI for *seven seconds* and managed to not only hack Relinquished but also digitise her own consciousness and become an AI with a soul (which is important as Reliquished can hack any AI she detects instantly if they lack a soul). The only reason Relinquished wasn't beaten then was because Tsuya lost the hardware connected with said golden age AI after those 7 seconds. has limited ways of controlling things in the labyrinth, leading the main character to a dead Imperial Crusader and her relic armor using a series of lights and control over some doors.

The Labyrinth is mainly neutral, created by the rogue Mite colonies, who build seemingly random vast cities, usually semi functional. The Mites are visible to the naked eye, appearing as a swarm of lights, usually a shade of blue or green, and quickly repair any deviations. Colonies will build over other colonies' structures, usually leading to a tug of war of construction and deconstruction.

In setting the Iron body technique can be easily shortcutted using the Soul Fractal, nestling part of the relic knight's soul inside. While it's unclear yet what would happen if said fractal was damaged or destroyed while being used, for chain purposes it would likely be considered a death. The feathers have a similar fractal inside their bodies, the Unity fractal functions as a method of control from Relinquished and lets her spy on and summon anyone or anything with it to the digital sea.

The human gods have at some point set up three terraforming stations that will orbitally bombard any machines bearing the unity fractal that are detected on the surface, as a failsafe to prevent Relinquished from bypassing her geass. It can be bypassed so long as a machine is significantly disguised such as completely encased in a box, or an environmental suit or relic armor it shouldn't trigger. The artillery will also wipe out any attempts at setting up a digital network on the surface, as it may lead to Relinquished to rediscover the surface and wiping out the only safe place from the machines.

The First Generation of Feathers were forcibly replaced by the newer generations, the 2nd generation specifically designed to hunt them down and kill them in packs, as the first generation had the tendency to go rogue or even join the humans, something that enraged Relinquished. It does appear most if not all the first generation were destroyed, the only four known remaining being an absolute recluse who’s managed to stay hidden for millennia, one who is in stasis on one of the terraforming stations, one who lost their body entirely and exists only in the digital sea and the entombed remains of another who may or may not be dead (said body gets taken by a newer feather but it seems there may be some remnants of the first’s mind still hidden in it).

On the subject of Relinquished, the remaining human god spelled out her history: she was essentially an AI chatbot slapped together with a bunch of extra code by a doomsday cult that wanted to wipe out humanity, who would have been utterly outclassed by the military AI of the time if not for the fact she stumbled upon a fractal on the internet (believed to be the concept of the internet) that actually worked and would allow her to instantly take over anything connected to the internet. Even with this utterly broken ability, Golden Age humanity still put up a hell of a fight, though they were ultimately doomed because they didn't understand how she kept defeating their AIs.

The Soul Fractal is considered Taboo to the warlocks, not because of its power and utility, but because Relinquished will stop at nothing to kill anyone she detects using it. As such the warlocks typically self-police to prevent her from wiping out entire undersider cities.

On Mites: the nanoswarms have their own protected version of the digital sea that even Relinquished dares not enter. The mites have a sort of hivemind that makes it really hard to communicate with because while it will answer you it's very ‘loud’ and will overwhelm just about anyone who tries to speak with them and isn't a machine, and they very much dislike Relinquished and her feathers. Examples of some of the costs for various ‘super weapons’ when asked for by Keith include 2 coins from ancient Rome, and a engram/copy of his *soul*.

Surface clans operate on a cycle, typically over generations. They grow until their current home is too small to support them anymore, then move into a new one, mothballing the old home in a way that another clan can move in, like hermit crabs. Once the surface clan is of sufficient size and has enough relic armor, they make a play for an unoccupied pillar heart, and build a new undersider city there, which grows until the machines eventually destroy it, sending the survivors back to the surface as a new clan, and repeat the cycle.

Horde of Lessers: ok I had a whole section for choosing what kind and in what numbers but it was very unfinished and I didn't have the time to dig back into the story and get accurate descriptions of all the different machines or a feel for the numbers. Just use your best judgement. Typically feathers are allowed to requisition any lessers not under another's command, and can be put in charge of other feathers at the word of the goddess. The mites restrict more powerful machines from the lower levels from going up, and cities usually require thousands of machines working under the command of a feather to destroy the pillar heart in time.

FAQs:

Why isn't the Resolve fractal available?: Because it effectively makes you unkillable in any permanent fashion, and because the meta physics mean that its power is split between all users, which would break the plot.

OC character inspirations
To’Bee: 2B from Neir automata, should be obvious
Midnight Blue: Ranni the witch from Elden Ring
Lost Knight: Solitaire from Dark Souls. Praise The Sun
Wandering Warlock: Melina from Elden Ring.

Version History
1.0 first release