Aberrant

Jumpchain v2.2

Baptized in quantum fire, reborn as incarnate gods.
Drunk with fame, sacrificed on the altar of power.
We are your heroes, your legends, your icons.
Beware, your legacy is our future.

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In 1998, the explosion of the space station Galatea released a cloud of exotic radiation to spread across the planet. Freak phenomena across the world follows, and less than a month later the world pauses in awe as the first Nova publicly Erupts. More quickly follow, each displaying abilities once limited to the stories of modern fiction and ancient mythology.

A beleaguered United Nations turns to the Aeon Society, a well-respected organization with decades of philanthropic and diplomatic experience behind them. Together they create Utopia, a special branch of the UN dedicated to harnessing and regulating the abilities of 'Novas' to make the world a better place.

The golden age of Novas begins.

In 2005, a Nova named Divis Mal took over the world's communication systems to broadcast the Null Manifesto, declaring that Novas are a new species who must pursue their evolution apart from baseline laws and interests. Nova mercenaries prop up or tear down third-world dictators, while Nova scientists develop new inventions at a breakneck pace. Human law and society strains to keep up with each new issue created by the mere existence of Novas. An entirely new multi-national intelligence agency, The Directive, is secretly formed to keep a closer watch on Utopia which is becoming bloated with power and influence, taking increasingly suspect actions far outside of its charter and stated goals.

The year is now 2008, and you will stay in this world for 10 years. You've arrived a week after the murder of Utopian Nova Jennifer 'Slider' Landers in Calcutta by parties unknown. The world reels at the death of a beloved figure. Soon conspiracies will be pulled into the light, Novas become increasingly factionalized and baseline society becomes a battleground of competing ideologies.

The golden age of Novas is over.

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There is at least one known case of Eruption changing a person's biological sex, and the M-R node has manifested across a broad range of ages. You may choose either for no cost.

You begin with a budget of 1000cp.

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Location

You may start anywhere in the world you wish, excluding restricted or secret areas not appropriate to your background and position within any organization you may belong to.

1 – New York, New York
A major metropolitan center, home to sizable offices of the UN, Utopia, and N!, the newest and largest Nova-centric media empire. Rare is the Nova or business who does not own a stake in this city.

2 – Mumbai, India
India's largest and most cosmopolitan city, the booming economy and growing media output has recently eclipsed Los Angeles's film industry. But Bollywood's wealth is matched by the sheer destitution of much of the city's poorer districts. India is also the world's center of Nova worship, where they are openly and publicly acknowledged by many as divine beings.

3 – Venice, Italy
Hosting the headquarters of T2M Europe, the city's infrastructure and ecosystem has been revitalized by Utopian intervention. Though Utopia thinks their position secure, a Teragen outpost lies under the city's waterways and just out of sight.

4 – Karachi, Pakistan
A poor city turned into an economic powerhouse by a single Nova's brilliant mind. He seeks to recruit others to help rebuild the area, even while old religious traditions clash with the new ideas that follow in prosperity's wake. So far the only Novas attracted to this area are involved in the continuing instability in the nearby Kashmir region, and not for peaceful reasons.

5 – Tokyo, Japan
Japan's 'Saisho' (New beginning) is an economic program fuelled by Nova involvement. It has made the country incredibly wealthy and the world's leading producer of cutting-edge Nova-designed technology. Most of which is deemed illegal by Utopia, of course. It is also the birthplace of the Kamisama Buddhist cult, which venerates Novas as enlightened beings. Japan has no love of Utopia, and maintains their own team of Nova protectors, the Nippontai.

6 – Amp Room, Ibiza
The undisputed party capital of the world, the Amp Room is off-limits to almost all baselines. A never-ending stream of the newly-wealthy and the who's who of Nova-dom pass through here. The Amp Room is also quite discrete regarding what goes on within its walls, and insists that Novas leave political and philosophical conflicts at the door.

7 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Using land granted to them in thanks for turning the local deserts into Africa's breadbasket, Utopia has constructed the world's first true arcology here. The megastructure also houses the headquarters of T2M Africa/Middle-East and one of Utopia's largest tech centres.

8 - Devries branch office
The DeVries Agency is a sort of super-powered temp agency that provides various services to both Novas and baselines. Always on the lookout for new talent, there are very few barriers to being hired. Novas can bring in five-figure paychecks just by attending an event and looking pretty, while baselines could find themselves working with world-class talents and those at the highest levels of government and industry. With offices world-wide, you are free to choose your starting location.

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Background

Cipher (Drop-in)
You arrive in this world as you are, with no memories of a life here and no one will recognize you in turn. It would be easy for a Nova to leverage their powers into starting a new life, or become just another face in the crowd and attempt to avoid the coming chaos.

Project Utopia
When the first Novas began to Erupt, the UN and WHO accepted the aid of the well-respected philanthropic group the Aeon Society to study the phenomena. Aeon accepted the challenge and soon bought their way onto the UN security council, creating Project Utopia to ostensibly gather, study, and turn the power of Novas towards creating a better future for the world. In many ways it has succeeded beyond anyone's expectations, but Aeon has secrets it has killed to keep and is perfectly willing to commit atrocities for the sake of a better tomorrow. While many in Utopia do truly seek to uphold its ideals, the coming years will see the organization's unassailable image shattered.

The Teragen
Marvels, monsters, and portents, the Teragen is composed of those Novas who refuse to let baseline humanity define how novas must live. Created by Divis Mal and guided by Teras, a creed of personal evolution, the Teragen sees Novas as a new species and desires for them to find their own identity. Social structures, modes of thought, and even moral codes may be left behind in the transformation, but for all of Mal's philosophical posturing Novas are still very human at their core. Many proclaimed Terats are nothing more than aimless rebels for whom power is an excuse for pointless cruelty and lives of self-indulgence. The Teragen are not in any way unified, and the movement is divided into many groups which each have their own goals and methods.

The Directive
Beginning in Russia, and with the aid of Great Britain, Japan, the United States, and (unofficially) Germany, a new organization was formed to monitor Novas and act as a counterbalance to the growing power of Utopia. At first ignored, then derided, the Directive has never quite attained the level of infamy and reputation of other intelligence services...which is exactly how they like it. With only a few low-powered Novas in their employ, the Directive is distrustful of Novas in general and Tainted Novas specifically, but this is out of pragmatic concern for the power that they wield and not a question of ideology. In the few years since the beginning of the Nova Age, there have been too many incidents of even lone Novas re-shaping the world on a selfish whim. Countermeasures must be in place.

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Perks

Each background receives its 100cp perk for free and the others at a 50% discount.

Undiscounted

Free - Eruption

The latent power within your genes has been activated and formed a Mazarin-Rashoud Node within your brain. This tiny gland gathers and stores the quantum energies that a Nova uses to fuel a potentially huge range of powers. The circumstance of your 'Eruption' likely influenced what kinds of powers you now have, if only subconsciously, and whether you like it or not are now a member of a group whose actions will decide the course of humanity's future. All Novas can improve their powers with time and practice, or even gain entirely new abilities, but everything has a price.

For you, that price is Taint. Little understood but manifesting as exotic radiation, it arises as the result of the imperfect transmutation of ambient quantum energies used to fuel the powers manifested by Novas. If the M-R Node is an engine, Taint is smog. Its existence is known only to a very few, and most assume the effects of Taint buildup to be a normal part of Nova-dom. Left unchecked, it can cause mutation, insanity, and will help drive the world to the brink of ruin in the decades to come.

The effects of Taint are further explained in the drawback section.

100cp – Registered alter-ego

More than one fight has erupted over a particular name or costume design. One forward-thinking man stepped up and formed Appellate Lexington Enterprises to create a worldwide codename registry, and with this perk your identity will be similarly protected in future jumps. Any original persona you present yourself as will always be considered copyrighted, and a modest percentage of any profits made off your image will be automatically transferred to you. Appellate Lexington does not support persona-squatting, and you may only profit from a single registered identity which may be changed once every ten years, and you may not usurp the identity of an already-established individual.

200cp – 10th Instar

Over time a nova's node grows in size and power but also puts pressure on other parts of the brain which can cause any number of neurological problems. Your node has matured far past that point and is now dispersed throughout your entire nervous system in a natural process that would've otherwise taken years. As a result your stores of power are vastly larger and you can safely exert your powers to a higher degree with less concern for generating taint.

300cp – NovaTech

Nova powers can fill technological gaps, allowing for devices to be constructed that are decades ahead of the curve...even if those devices won't work for anyone but the Nova that made them. Mainly the domain of Mega-intelligent scientists, you've made great strides into the field of using technology that interacts with a Nova's innate powers. Perhaps this is as simple as a gauntlet that helps amplify the power of Quantum Bolts, or as complex as the large structures that allowed Warp-capable Novas to send thousands of people and the resources needed to create a new civilization to distant star systems. Post-jump, you'll have an equal knack for creating technology designed to interact with or be powered by exotic power sources and unusual biologies.

600cp – Second generation
You are one of the extremely few 2nd-generation novas in the world. For a start this means you're far more powerful than the average Nova and will continue to develop your abilities faster and easier than 1st generation novas. Being born a nova also means your mind and body is well-adapted to the strain of your powers and it is very difficult, but not impossible, for you to gain taint.

If you take this perk, you must take the 'Sordid Past' drawback as there are several groups who wish to kill or control 2nd-gens for fear of the power they will inevitably gain in time.

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Cipher

100cp – Filthy Lucre
A newly-erupted Nova can become obscenely rich practically overnight. Most are encouraged to employ Nova-powered financial services or get an education in the field for themselves to ensure they don't lose their new fortunes to scams, fiscal inexperience, or money-grubbing bureaucrats. Besides getting a crash course in how to handle becoming a millionaire, you and your funds are very difficult to part from each other. Be it from a court-ordered asset freeze, robbery, or waking up on the wrong continent after a bender at the Amp Room, there's always at least one account they missed, a safe that went uncracked, or a roll of hundreds in your jacket you forgot about.

100cp – Worth every penny
People have great expectations for you. So much so that there will never be any doubts regarding your qualifications or work ethic, and you will never be required to prove your skills or present a resume to a prospective employer. This impression of competency won't last if you can't actually perform the job you were hired for.

200cp – Herding flying cats
There are more leaders than followers among Novas, and after formal training and exhaustive experience 'in the field' you've gotten used to dealing with the mega-arrogant. Even with your private Lear jet getting waved over your head you've got good odds of calming, placating, or at least convincing quantum-powered egos to dial it back before anything serious happens. Only so long as your intentions are pure, through. While Novas can easily be nudged to fulfill their contract or talked out of anything that'll embarrass the agency, the smarter ones are still more than capable of picking up any attempts to be sabotaged or set up.

200cp – Soldier of fortune
Even if you aren't taking military contracts with DVNTS, your services go to the highest bidder and that means getting paid one way or another. All but the most deranged of employers will feel averse to trying to cheat you out of your paycheck, and if something unusual does happen you'll somehow be compensated anyways. Maybe someone ends up owing you a favor or you learned some valuable information. Whatever it is you'll never come away from a job completely empty-handed.

400cp – Too useful to be illegal
Many countries have strict rules about the use of mercenaries, rules which have been further revised after the employment of Elites in civil wars, wars of conquest, or even to support criminals against Utopian forces. While you cannot flatly ignore those or other laws, you can dance around them on the narrowest of margins. So long as there is some kind of grey area for you to work within you'll never suffer any serious legal consequences. You'll certainly draw attention and scrutiny, and the slightest slip-up will surely see your detractors come after you with everything they have.

400cp – Superimposed
Acquiring a mask and a new identity is a central facet of the Elite subculture. By adopting a new persona, your real identity becomes harder to discern. Beyond simply hiding your face, the more effort you put into this new persona the more protection it offers. A cheap balaclava might leave people disagreeing on the details of your voice or build, but with a full costume and the close adherence to a carefully-crafted stage persona, you and your masked identity are effectively two different people. Even when precogs, telepaths, or out-of-jump means are concerned, your new persona doesn't even exist when you aren't 'in-costume.'

600cp – Leader in the field
Every Nova thinks they're hot shit, and powers can take a person far, but you? You have more than party tricks and a colorful costume. You are a once-in-a-generation savant in a scientific field of your choice. Even if you aren't a Nova you could compete with them through sheer insight, but if you were? Showing off your ability could see you quickly become a household name and give Utopia nightmares at the thought of how transformative your creations could be for the world if distributed.

600cp – DVNTS Elite
DeVries National Tactical Solutions has trained you for Nova-grade warfare. You are familiar with almost every vehicle, tool, and weapon in modern use, and there is no role, generalist or specialist, that you cannot take up with anything less than expert skill. Alone, this would still leave you as just one among many. Where you truly excel is understanding how powers change the face of warfare, from mega-strength to teleportation. You can see uses for them beyond the obvious, consider ways to nullify unusual advantages your enemies have over you, and even anticipate how the enemy and their outdated preconceptions of warfare might inform their reactions on scales large and small when powers enter the equation. You are a student of Nova warfare, and your talents will be needed in the years ahead.

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Project Utopia

100cp – Professional superhero
Even if you aren't a member of Team Tomorrow it's likely you'll run into questions of legality where powers are concerned. As part of standard training you've received a crash course in the laws surrounding novas and power use, which naturally includes knowing how to twist those laws to the breaking point without giving anything away. In future jumps this knowledge will update along with tricks and tips needed to get as much use out of them as legally possible, or just giving mundane explanations for what you accomplish in settings where powers are unknown to the public.

100cp – Smile for the camera
As a Nova you are one of Utopia's most visible representatives, and you are expected to handle yourself appropriately in view of the world. Besides whatever natural beauty or charm your eruption gifted you with, you have been carefully trained to make the most out of what you have. You know how to use fashion, body language, and rhetoric to get the desired response out of your audience, and how to roll with the unexpected and avoid being wrong-footed by trick questions from nosy reporters.

200cp – If you would deceive your enemies…
For a better tomorrow, hidden elements within Utopia undertake actions that must remain secret. When situations don't allow for a quiet resolution with deniable assets, lies are spun and 'sensitive' missions are assigned to the unwitting. More than just manipulation and lying with a straight face you know how to plan around the need for information control in both the short and long term. It's fair to say that barring unforeseen variables or superhuman levels of investigation, you could spend years in a double life without allowing your divided duties to interfere with each other.

200cp – Quantum teamwork
Team Tomorrow serves as Utopias' poster children for Novas who use their powers to make the world a better place. But PR aside, they are often outclassed by Novas with far more combat experience and fewer scruples in combat. T2M members are rigorously trained to make up for any deficiencies by working as a team, both with squad tactics and a firm understanding of how powers interact with each other. As you train and work with allies, your teamwork skills will go beyond knowing how to fight as a group, giving you insight into how your powers and abilities interact with each other for better or worse. Some powers just don't agree with each other, while others can become stronger with a little outside help. A few rounds of super-sparring is all it takes to learn the difference, and to avoid getting blindsided by the consequences of crossing the streams.

400cp – Mega-heroic
People are always grateful for a hero's assistance, and will never turn down an honest offer of help from you. Even while not actively engaged in heroic activities, you seem more trustworthy and reliable than most, and your words can carry great weight. Your reputation won't be tarnished by the actions of even a close associate, and if you were the last person to see someone before their untimely demise it would be considered coincidence first and suspicious second. Of course, this good reputation depends on never personally getting caught doing anything nefarious.

400cp – Paraphysician
Rashoud facilities around the world are ready to take in newly-erupted Novas and teach them how to use their powers. Training typically involves biofeedback exercises, practical lessons within shielded labs, and a crash course in quantum physics. After joining Utopia you continued your studies and eventually became a licensed Paraphysician. Through observation and testing you can develop ways to quantify and categorize the mechanics of how individuals access superhuman powers. While it will still take time and effort to discover the hows and whys behind a power, it's easy for you to develop methods to help train people in the use of their powers and find ways to mitigate any side-effects that those powers may have. As a side note, you've mastered the skills of Dormancy and Attunement to a degree that most Novas never will and can easily teach these skills to others. Post-jump all of these services and skills can be adapted and taught to the users of biology-based powers in other settings.

600cp – A better tomorrow
The Aeon Society has been manipulating the world for a very long time, hiding the existence of the Inspired and the first proto-novas from the public consciousness. You have that same talent for shaping society, easily predicting how things such as new technology, media trends, and shifting politics will influence the human condition and how it can be nudged to suit your goals. You'll need the tools to work these changes, of course, but it's only a matter of time before you reach the point that the U.N. would come to your door and give you the authority to work even greater influence upon the world, all while thinking it was entirely their own idea to do so.

600cp – Practical Quantum
No one really understands how powers work, but Utopia, and yourself, can easily understand the value of applying them. You have a real gift, not for the academic understanding of powers, but working with them on practical projects. Terraforming, civil engineering, environmental cleanup? Find the right power, run a quick simulation and you can make the Sahara green or stop tornadoes from tearing apart a country on a regular basis. While any Nova might be able to pull off these kinds of projects with enough work, you have a real talent for doing it faster and better than anyone would think possible. As long as you're directly involved with such a large-scale project somehow, whatever you're planning may not always work out in the end but you don't have to worry about things going awry. Your geothermal plant will never turn into a supervolcano, your biomancer-designed bacteria won't mutate, and similar power-based Nova-scale projects will, at worst, fail safely.

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The Teragen

100cp – Party manimal
What's the point of becoming something greater than any mere human if you can't have fun? You know how to party, how to help others relax and unwind, and things just seem to line up when you're putting one together. For those that care about such things, you also have a good eye for just how much 'partying' of any sort your guests can tolerate or safely indulge in before it's time to step back.

100cp – Marvel
You are transforming into a living god, walking a path from the old to the new. Challenges are the key to evolution, and 'impossible' is a word spoken only by those with limits. You have a boundless drive to fulfill your goals, but you'd best keep in mind that wants and needs are two very different things.

200cp – Supergroupie
Even among novas, there is a pecking order. All Terats are taught to be leaders but the label of follower that most would disdain is one you instead know how to exploit. You can smoothly present yourself as a petitioner, as something lesser, how to grovel and flatter without coming off as a sycophant. Or you could overdo it, if you think that would get better results. When it comes time to act, using your powers to advance the goals of someone you serve (or pretend to serve) they enjoy a respectable boost in power and scope, and any powers your superiors turn towards your benefit will enjoy a similar boost.

200cp – Monster
You seek to shed the petty limitations of baseline humanity. This is not the mindless devolution of succumbing to base instinct, but the recognition and taming of those things that seek to make your choices for you. You are in tight control of both your emotions and morality, and can prevent them from having any influence over your decisions. But though often confining, such structures exist for a reason. Be careful not to mistake apathy for a clean conscience.

400cp – When I was a baseline, I thought as a baseline
But now that you are a Nova, you must put away baseline things. Human instincts have been baked into your genes over millions of years of evolution, but why be afraid of heights if you can fly? Why flinch at the sight of something that cannot possibly harm you? Stop thinking of your powers as something like baseline tools, things separate from you. All the little ingrained habits and reflexes of your old baseline self will be washed away and replaced with a new self-image that fully encompasses all that you are capable of. You'll need some time to explore your powers, but after that? Using your powers will become as instinctive as breathing. They are a part of you. Never forget that.

400cp – Portent
Through the very act of contemplating evolution comes advancement. You can easily perceive flaws and in the course of working to correct them epiphanies come easily and often. This talent for exacting and merciless analysis will apply towards nearly anything you can think of, and it will never fail to aid you in overcoming greater and greater challenges. Always remember that perfection is a moving goal, so ever be mindful to look beyond your immediate problems else you find yourself within an evolutionary dead-end.

600cp – Chrysalis
The Teragen have come to recognize that eruption is only the first step of an ongoing process. Though it is an instrument of evolution, Taint, a buildup of toxic energies within the M-R node, will destroy a Nova if it is not tamed and channeled properly. Whenever a Novas taxes their node beyond its limits, or simply screws up badly enough, Taint may result. You have an innate sense of how Tainted you are, have a tolerance for it that increases as you grow in power, and always know how close it brings you to the risk of permanent harm. When enough taint has built up, you can spin a cocoon of quantum uncertainty to process it, purging it from your body and improving yourself at the same time. You might emerge from the chrysalis stronger, smarter, or with beneficial alterations to your body. An existing power might be enhanced or an entirely new power may manifest. The more taint you stock, the bigger the improvement. Be warned, this perk will not save you from self-destruction if you attempt to forcefully acquire taint beyond what you can endure, and while you may enter the chrysalis as often as you like it takes more effort to re-enter it the more times you've made use of it.

Post-jump, this perk will let you consider any similar damage or corruption from powers you possess as taint, and count all of it towards how much entering the chrysalis can improve you. The benefits gained can be focused upon whatever specific aspects of yourself you wish improved.

600cp – Carving Galatea
The public believes that the destruction of the space station Galatea and the release of radioactive material onboard triggered the first eruptions. This is partially true, but the lion's share of the spark came from Divis Mal straining his power to its very limits after years of preparation. Following in his footsteps you now know how to spark similar mass-empowering events. The recipients must have some form of latent power waiting to be activated. You can try to affect the outcome, such as nudging what is gained to favor certain expressions or the amount of raw power granted where such variables exist. Your control isn't perfect and there will always be outliers among the results. Be warned that whatever you set in motion, this perk offers no way to undo it or to escape the consequences.

You are initially limited to causing Novas to erupt. Post-jump you may instead try to activate any latent powers among the populace, such as the Inhuman or X-genes in the Marvel setting.

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The Directive

100cp – Cipher
Most people don't grasp just how easy it is to dig up information about them. From social media to the sheer amount of forms filled out in life that bureaucracy demands, anyone with a bit of know-how can quickly learn things that most people have forgotten. Such a transparent life is unacceptable to someone in the intelligence business. You know how to minimize the paper trail your life creates, and habitually act in ways that minimize the amount of physical evidence left laying around.

100cp – Tradecraft
Before you can graduate to field work, you'll need to demonstrate a firm grasp of all the classic spy skills. How to lie, how to realize when you're being played, how to tail someone without being obvious about it or palm small objects...and how to quietly kidney-punch and garrotte someone when they're not looking. You're a generalist, not a specialist, but your repertoire is broad and these skills will only improve with experience.

200cp – Broad discretionary powers
The Directive is a multinational agency, expected to work alongside the existing intelligence departments of the countries they operate in. Getting such disparate and institutionally paranoid groups to work together and share information is nearly impossible. As long as you're actually there to help solve a problem and there's even the smallest legal framework between the employers of everyone involved, jurisdictional or inter-departmental dickwaving will never impede your work.

200cp – Solving the locked room murders
Mind control. Teleportation. Precognition. A hundred ways exist for Novas to commit or conceal a scheme in ways mundane law enforcement isn't equipped to detect, let alone counter. But these are the matters the Directive must deal with, and you have a fine-tuned sense for them. This perk won't tell you the hows or whys, but when investigating anything from a broken lock to a world-wide conspiracy you will know with absolute certainty if Nova powers were involved in any way. Post-jump, you'll have an equally accurate sense for the involvement of anything that is beyond the mundane.

400cp – Killing superman
When pitted against someone with abilities that no baseline human could hope to defeat, the Directive knows not to fight fair. They plan, they study, they account for a target's powers, psychology, and every possible external factor that might matter, and even a few that shouldn't. When the time comes to put those plans into action they go off without a hitch. The timing of you and your fellow agents is like clockwork, equipment doesn't fail outside of extreme stress, and the more outmatched you are by your foe the further luck bends to favor you. This doesn't mean you can hurt someone when you flatly have nothing that can hurt them, but this perk works just as well for direct combat as it does for setting up situations in the future that ensure a target will be neutralized through more indirect means.

400cp – Mental compartmentalization
To deal with Mega-charismatic and mind-reading novas, the Directive has developed a system of hypnotic conditioning to protect their agents and secrets. You have benefited from these techniques, and are skilled enough in their use to perform the procedure or teach them to others. Telepaths who attempt to listen in on your thoughts will hear only nursery rhymes, mathematical equations, and other meaningless repetitive trivia. Beneath this first barrier you can layer a false persona that can stand up to some scrutiny. You can further hide important pieces of information even from yourself behind subliminal blocks that only lift when you experience a specific stimulus. These techniques aren't foolproof, but have tricked many Novas who thought that a 'mere baseline' could not possibly keep secrets from them and failed to look deeper.

600cp – Laughingstock of the intelligence community
Most of the world thinks the Directive is a joke, but when you're up against the clairvoyant, mind readers, and outright precognitives, being underestimated might be your only advantage. That's why the Directive and its agents move in ways that shield their goals from those with powers and enhanced mental abilities. Dropping hints to other agencies, hiding within bureaucracy and exploiting jurisdictional conflicts, taking seemingly contradictory or redundant actions, all to obscure their true objectives. It may seem wasteful, but it can keep even the likes of Utopia from easily seeing the whole picture until it's too late. While you might only be somewhat sneaky on a personal level, with the aid of a large enough group and with enough room to maneuver in it'll be nearly impossible for anyone to discover what your organization is really planning no matter the methods at their disposal.

600cp – Anima masking
There are a few methods to detect novas and hide from those methods in return, all of them quite reliable. Naturally the Directive wasn't content with a level playing field, and this is the result of its studies. An induced quirk of biology means that short of cutting you open nothing unusual will be found because your shed cells decay instantly, preventing analysis. The practice of dormancy has been refined, your node invisible to quantum senses even when still active so long as you do not use your powers beyond the barest minimum of exertion. If you are forced to act openly, you can alter both the cosmetic appearance of your powers and blur any unique signature inherent to them, making identification through such means nearly impossible. Even if you aren't a Nova some people might think you are, given that bad luck seems to dog anyone that tries to pick up forensic traces of your actions. Fingerprints are left smudged, tracks fade, and there's never a single shed hair left to find.

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Quantum Powers

*Novas have a stipend of **+1000cp** to buy Mega-attributes, Enhancements/Extras, and Powers. Purchasing any Mega-attribute or power grants **one** Enhancements or Extra for that power for free.*

The M-R node absorbs the ambient energies of the universe and allows Novas to perform impossible feats. This manifests largely in two ways - Mega-attributes and Powers.

Mega-attributes boost your capabilities far beyond the human norm. Enhanced strength and intelligence. Divine beauty or being manipulative enough to make world leaders dance like puppets on your strings. Even a single dot places you above what a normal human is capable of, and unless using enhancements to push their limits they require no expenditure of energy to use. There are usually no obvious signs of having Mega-attributes and they are active for as long as your Node is.

Powers are the equally traditional flight, laser eyes, and control over various elements. While a few powers are purely passive, most require energy to activate and maintain. **Purchasing a power gives it to you at the five-dot rating, unlocking its full potential and suite of possible applications.**

Mega-Attributes

Mega-attributes cost **100cp** for one dot, **200cp** for three dots, or **300cp** for five dots. There are nine attributes you can buy, and canon benchmarks show what each level is generally capable of.

Physical

Strength
- ● - Deadlift 1 ton.
- ●●● - Deadlift 25 tons. Toss automobiles for blocks.
- ●●●●● - Deadlift 100 tons. Juggle tanks like tennis balls.

Dexterity
- ● - Dodge bullets you can see being fired at you.
- ●●● - Move fast enough that the average baseline won't even notice your passage.
- ●●●●● - Pluck bullets from the air. Outperform the most advanced machines with sheer precision.

Stamina
- ● - Go weeks without sleep. Ignore irritants. Heal 3x faster than a baseline.
- ●●● - Ignore the pain of physical torture. Suffer bruising from low-calibre firearms.
- ●●●●● - Continue fighting after losing most of your body mass. Ignore most natural pathogens/toxins.

Mental

Perception
- ● - Recall every license plate in the parking lot you just ran through.
- ●●● - Guess a person's thoughts by the way their face twitches.
- ●●●●● - Hear wool growing on the backs of sheep.

Intelligence
- ● - Advanced calculus is like adding 1+1.
- ●●● - Do the intellectual work of an auditorium full of professors faster and better.
- ●●●●● - Outperform even the most advanced supercomputer clusters.

Wits
● - Remain perfectly calm in the middle of a chaotic battlefield.
●●● - Surprising you is nearly impossible, and even then you'll never let it show.
●●●●● - Process information so fast that you don't even have the chance to be disturbed or unsettled.

Social

Appearance
● - You're something out of photoshop.
●●● - Perfect symmetry and proportions. You could make muddy rags look good.
●●●●● - Your appeal is universal. Prolonged exposure can inspire feelings of worship in baselines.

Manipulation
● - Experienced con men wish they were you. Know when someone is trying to play you.
●●● - Get people to do outrageous and dangerous things with almost no effort.
●●●●● - Shake a nation with a few well-placed words. Discover a conspiracy by reading the paper.

Charisma
● - People like you from the moment they meet you.
●●● - Draw and keep people's attention no matter the circumstances.
●●●●● - Make yourself appealing to an alien race with a wildly different mentality.

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Quanta:

...simplest extensions of a Nova's innate power...

100cp – Quantum Conversion
You can convert your stores of energy into another very simple form of energy like light or heat. This power is incredibly efficient, and you have extreme control over how the energy is released.

100cp – Quantum Regeneration
Novas normally replenish their stores of energy at a steady, predictable rate, and risk Taint by straining their Node to increase this speed. Your Node has been carefully exercised to be more efficient than normal, allowing you to recover energy faster at no risk. The recovery of energy is even faster when completely at rest, such as sleep or deep meditation.

200cp – Quantum Leech
With a touch, you can drain the reserves of other Novas to refuel your own. Without specialized defenses, victims can only try to resist through sheer willpower. Overfilling one's reserves with stolen energy risks gaining Taint as well.

200cp – Deflect
If the Nova can perceive an incoming projectile he can reflexively attempt to tweak the forces behind it and deflect the projectile away. With greater skill he could even send it back at his attacker, or 'catch' and hold the projectile to release later. This power does not work on point-to-point effects like mental assaults that do not cross intervening space, or wide-area effects.

200cp – Quantum Bolt
The simplest and most common offensive power among Novas. You shape and release a blast of Quantum energy as fire, lightning, or any other suitably destructive form.

300cp – Disrupt
All Novas manipulate Quantum energies, but this power allows you to sabotage another Nova's efforts. By expending your own energy, you can try to unravel a single Power being used or activated by another Nova. The target can only contest the attack through his mastery of Quantum and the strength of his Node, and overpowering the target will completely cancel out the targeted Power. So long as this power is maintained, a target's use of a particular Power can be completely suppressed.

400cp – Quantum Construct
A rare power, doubly so because few recognize it for what it is. All Novas can shape quantum energies in various ways, but this power is needed to give those energies a level of independence. The more powerful and skilled a Nova is with this power, the stronger and more numerous constructs can be materialized to serve. Constructs can even be created with low-level powers that their creator does not possess, but must fuel those powers with the energy used to create them, causing them to burn out quickly. There are hard limits on how many constructs a Nova can maintain at one time. Constructs have no real intelligence or personality, but are programmed at the moment of creation and may behave in various ways based on the creator's subconscious expectations.

Defence:

...gods should not fear mortal slings and arrows...

100cp – Sensory Shield
A Nova with this power unconsciously reduces what might be debilitating levels of sensory input. Strobe lights and high volume will be reduced in intensity, and even tear gas or similar sense-based attacks will be reduced in effectiveness.

100cp – Psychic Shield
A passive reinforcement of a Nova's brain and nervous system works to block outside influence. This power will not let a Nova see through projected illusions or resist Mega-charismatic arguments, but any power that tries to directly manipulate his mind can be resisted.

200cp – Armor
The Nova is simply tougher than others. This power might include some visible effect or physical changes, a glowing suit of knightly armor or skin becoming an insectile carapace. Just as many Novas display no outward sign of this power at work.

300cp – Invulnerability
An extremely potent yet limited form of defence, developing this power can allow a Nova to ignore all but the most absurdly extreme examples of a single, specific form of attack. Invulnerability towards heat can allow for a picnic on the surface of the sun, while contempt for gravity allows for calm strolls through forces that would otherwise spaghettify even the strongest of Novas. You cannot choose a broad (quantum powers) artificial (weapons) or out-of-jump (magic) concept for your invulnerability.

300cp – Force Field
A Nova can surround himself in a protective field, offering greater defence against harm than Armor and blocking effects that require skin contact, but the field requires energy to activate and maintain. With practice, the field can expand to encompass others or be shaped to create walls and platforms.

Movement:

...found among the adventurous and reclusive alike...

100cp – Hypermovement
Amplifying a Nova's ability to travel, this power allows them to run or swim quickly, or augment another power that allows movement like Flight to enhance its speed further. 500km/h is the slowest that a Nova with this power has been clocked at and their speed will only increase with practice.

100cp – Flight
Iconic and inspiring envy in baselines everywhere, a Nova with flight can move in three dimensions with ease. The presence of air is not required to fly, but air resistance and momentum must be accounted for when trying to pull off tricky maneuvers. This power alone is somewhat slow, and most Novas might reach a top speed of 'only' 200 or 300 km/h.

200cp – Teleportation
Allowing short-range hops at a moment's notice, an experienced teleporter can circumvent the World with a hop or two if they have time to concentrate. Blind jumps can land a Nova off-course and will suffer injury if they land inside a solid object, but all teleporters automatically shunt themselves to the nearest open space in such an event, arriving battered but alive unless they were already injured or made a monumental error in transit. Since teleportation only affects a Nova's body, they must Attune anything, including clothing, that they wish to bring along.

400cp – Warp
A variant of teleportation, this power creates a meters-wide gate that anyone and anything can pass through. It also requires time and focus to set up for long-range travel, and can forcibly transport others if they can be pushed or somehow manipulated into entering the gate. In the future this power will allow for the Nova exodus from Earth by bridging the vast distances of interstellar space, but no one has yet displayed that level of power.

PSI:

...emulating a future yet to be...

100cp – Empathy
A crude but useful form of manipulation, you can boost or suppress whatever emotion a target is feeling at the moment. While you can accurately gauge whatever a subject is feeling no matter how good their poker face, you won't be aware of why they feel that way, and will have no control over how they act on their new feelings.

200cp – Intuition
A Nova with Intuition receives a warning when something unpleasant is about to happen to him. This sense is extremely vague, and only triggers when an event would injure a Nova's self and not his belongings or allies. The feeling of 'something is not right' grows more precise with practice, but never more than pegging a person or object as dangerous or pointing out the directions where whatever gives cause for concern will be found. This is a passive, cost-free power.

200cp – ESP
Displacing your senses to a distant location, you are able to perceive things as if you were present at that point using whatever natural or quantum-given senses are available to you. This does include taste and touch, but you can only observe - quantum wonkyness prevents measurable interaction between yourself and the things observed.

300cp – Telepathy
The human brain is a complex web of biochemical structures and electrical activity, and this specialized power allows for the observation, interpretation, and manipulation of those structures. While communicating with others through telepathy is easy, and 'scanning' for a mind that meets certain criteria is only slightly more difficult, manipulating a mind is best done with great care for best results. Memories can be dug up, erased, or modified as desired, and changing one part of a person's psyche can have secondary effects on the rest of it.

300cp – Domination
A brute-force form of control, the stronger the grip a Nova acquires over a subject's mind the more complex or abhorrent the commands that must be obeyed. Victims must rely on sheer willpower to resist, and commands that are blatantly suicidal or trample on things of great personal import are easier to resist. Without the help of other powers, commands must be given verbally.

Organic modifications:
...sing praise for the new flesh...

100cp – Claws
With bone spurs, an aura of flame, or even no visible display, you are able to greatly increase the damage you deal in hand-to-hand combat. Alternatively, some Novas can enhance the power of mundane weapons and projectiles by charging them with quantum energy that is released on impact.

200cp – Healing
This power can be applied to yourself or others, and the cost is dependent on how grievous the wounds are. Experts can help someone resist or recover from poison and disease. Regenerating lost limbs and organs with this power is possible, but is both very draining and time-consuming.

200cp – Size Alteration
Channelling energy through your body, you can increase or decrease your effective size and mass upwards or downwards. Growing will also increase your effective strength, stride, and stability, while the reverse is true while shrunk.

400cp – Shapeshifting
Extremely versatile, a shapeshifting Nova can alter their shape and compress or expand their size, but cannot alter their mass. With enough skill, this power can emulate a few others by giving the Nova wings or plating their skin with armor, or perfectly imitate the appearance of another. This power cannot truly give Novas other powers. so shapeshifting into a dragon will not let them breathe fire.

400cp – Density Shifting
Making oneself more solid or more porous, a Nova can become incredibly strong and durable or diffuse enough to walk through walls. At the highest levels of skill, an intangible Nova will be unaffected by all forms of matter and energy save direct mental assaults and able to selectively give parts of their body a different level of density than the rest.

600cp – Clone
You can create copies of yourself that have all your skills, memories and Quantum Powers. As your skill with this power grows you can create more and more clones, but your clones become progressively less capable the more of them are active at one time. Clones are also created holding only the Quantum Energy that went into their creation, giving them very little power to throw around.

600cp – Dispersed Organs
Part power, part mutation, your body is a mass of mostly undifferentiated tissue. You no longer have discrete internal organs, not even a brain, and their functions can be performed by any part of your body. Having a large chunk of your torso destroyed or your head obliterated is now only damaging and inconvenient instead of instantly fatal. You can be de-limbed or have your sensory organs destroyed, poison and disease will affect you normally for the most part, and you will still suffer insanity from excessive Node growth.

The beginnings of mastery:
...shape the world with care, lest you break it...

100cp – Animal/plant Control
Pick one. Both can be communicated with, though plants are extremely limited in what information they can provide. Plants can be animated, but not to the degree of uprooting themselves and moving around. Animals will regard you as a friend, and you may send out a telepathic call for them to come to your aid, helping in whatever way you ask unless you mistreat them. You may purchase this power a second time to gain both.

200cp – Cyberkinesis
A highly specialized power, a cyberkinetic can alter computer data, feed recording devices false input, reprogram machines or scramble their functions. This power does not require a Nova to be aware of every byte he manipulates so a knowledge of computer science is not required, but such a brute-force approach may make it easier for alterations to be discovered.

400cp – Elemental Anima
Projecting Quantum energy into a specific medium like water, fire, or air, a Nova can shape it with great flexibility. The chosen element can be strengthened or weakened, shaped and directed, or used for both offence or utility. You have a rough environmental sense for your chosen element, and can attempt to wrestle control of it away from another Nova that tries using it against you.

400cp – Weather Control
Another specialized field of study, the Nova grasps all the many variables that contribute to the functions of the world's weather and takes control of them. Unlike Elemental Anima, the range of this power can be measured in tens or even hundreds of kilometers but it will take time to change current conditions to what the Nova desires. When the situation is ideal, a Nova can easily level a city block with targeted lightning strikes, whip a storm into a hurricane, turn sweltering humility into nourishing rain, or bury a city under ice and snow.

400cp – Magnetic Manipulation
A Nova gains power over EM fields and everything affected by them in turn. Ferrous objects can be twisted into knots or thrown with great force, magnetic forces in an area can be nullified, amplified, or created when there is none. EM blasts strong enough to scramble a nervous system and punch through military-grade shielding are possible, fired with pinpoint precision or detonated over a wide area.

600cp – Molecular Manipulation
Everything inanimate is within your purview. Existing matter can be observed and its composition determined. A Nova can use his own stores of energy to temporarily create or transmute matter. Materials can be made to move on command, be permanently reshaped, repaired or disintegrated. With enough relevant knowledge and skill with this power, a Nova can instantly fabricate complex devices.

600cp – Gravity Mastery
Gaining power over one of the fundamental forces that governs the universe, you can freely manipulate gravity. Shifting its vectors and potency on a whim, you can use it to fly, move objects in a manner similar to telekinesis, shield yourself from attacks or rend targets apart with pockets of intense and rapidly-shifting gravitic fields.

800cp – Entropy Control
Mysterious and little understood, this power is potent within a narrow field of application. Focused on living creatures or machines, they quickly suffer injury or breakdowns, and the more complex a thing is the more damage it seems to suffer. Used as a barrier, projectiles shatter on impact and transfer far less energy towards the Nova then they should. Used in another way, everything that might go wrong for those targeted probably will go wrong.

800cp – Temporal Mastery
An exceedingly rare power, you are able to speed up or slow down time. The power can be focused to different degrees, accelerating a target's actions or aging them to dust, slowing an opponent or restoring an object to the state it was in before it was damaged. With continuous effort, you can hold someone in absolute stasis. All Novas with this power have an almost perfect internal clock. This power cannot be used to travel in time.

800cp – Biomanipulation
Perhaps the rarest of all known powers, you have near-total control over the processes of biological organisms. Bodies can be healed or injured in precise ways. Structures can be reshaped in any way that the laws of biology will allow, or organs stimulated to reproduce the effects of a wide variety of drugs or toxins.

Enhancements and Extras

Additional Enhancements and Extras cost 100cp to purchase.

What abilities a Nova is granted by eruption is not fixed or standardized. Some may gain power to survive danger, to empower a desire, or seemingly just copy something in the environment. Whatever they gain, time and practice see Novas grow in skill and raw power. Sometimes a Nova may by training or experience develop entirely new powers, but it’s far more common that they develop little tricks or quirks that set the powers they have apart from others with a similar powerset.

Enhancements are improvements to a Mega-Attribute. Usually these are quite straightforward. A Mega-charismatic Nova may truly shine in the areas of diplomacy or etiquette. An enhancement to the strong might mean being able to lift (and only lift) far more than their strength would suggest or being able to create a shockwave by clapping their hands to hit everyone close by with nearly the same force as a punch. The tough may rapidly regenerate, the dexterous able to use every appendage with the same degree of skill. Enhancements might only make a Nova far more able in a particular field, able to contest with other Novas who otherwise have more raw power, or they might edge into the arena of active powers, like the perceptive being able to passively sense when quantum powers are being used and attempt to analyze and identify them or the attractive rendering themselves plain and forgettable.

Extras are improvements to powers and are even simpler. Some powers might have their range increased to the limits of your perception, projectiles may split, ricochet, or home in on their targets. Powers may become very subtle and produce no obvious sign of use or energy-efficient to the point that the lowest-level powers require almost no effort to use. Others can be trained to activate automatically at specific triggers, or grow strong enough that they inflict or resist 'aggravated damage' as quantum bolts disintegrate targets and defensive powers mature.

There are too many possibilities to list. You are free to select your Enhancements and Extra from canon lists or create something entirely new that is in line with official sources.

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Items:

Each background receives its 100cp item for free and the others at a 50% discount.

Cipher

100cp – Money

It's a rare Nova that can't easily make money, but an untraceable cashflow has many benefits. In a hidden account protected from even the most extreme efforts to trace, audit, or seize, one million dollars will be deposited annually. You'll be able to access this money from anywhere.

100cp – Eufiber suit

You own a top-grade suit made of living Eufiber threads secreted by Anibal Buendia of a design of your choice. Once Attuned by feeding it a small amount of Quantum Energy, the suit will provide more protection than military-grade body armor. It will adapt to any powers you use, somehow never interfering and always providing protection even if you turn yourself into a living magnetic field or grow to skyscraper size. You may import an existing piece of clothing or armor to gain this benefit. If you are not a Nova, it is still a very durable and stylish outfit.

200cp – Mite

Developed from Nova mitochondria, Mite is highly addictive and induces orgasmic levels of euphoria but is very likely to kill after prolonged use. People are still drawn to the drug not just for the high but because the grotesque levels of muscle growth and changes to tissue structure it causes can grant low levels of Mega-strength. Buying this item gives you a recipe for creating a far safer variant that can be used for a simple chemical high or creating enhanced soldiers without the risk of deformity or death.

200cp – Vitrium notes
A synthetic crystal that can be spun and blown like glass while being mechanically as strong as steel at a quarter of the weight, colored or transparent as desired. But every object made of Vitrium has a unique resonant frequency that if hit at sufficient intensity will cause it to shatter like a crystal wineglass. Perhaps these notes discarded by Vitrium's creator can help you perfect the material?

400cp – Kuro-Tec armory
Somehow you've acquired a stock of advanced weaponry. Some of it is non-lethal, but most of it is designed to defeat Novas on the battlefield. Wireless Tasers, Masers, railguns, a GAU-8 30mm gatling cannon modified to be man-portable (assuming you have Mega-strength) smartweb launchers, and microdrone swarms with chemical injectors. The armory only contains one each of the really big guns. Spent ammo and destroyed/lost weapons are replaced monthly. Needless to say, almost everything here is highly illegal to use outside of a warzone, and some of the tech may be on Utopia's blacklist.

400cp – Eufiber tumor
Don't show this to anyone unless you want to deal with some very awkward questions. Somehow you've acquired a small piece of Anibal Buendia's tissue floating in a nutrient bath that generates strands of living Eufiber. The simplest use for these strands is to create clothes that Novas can attune themselves to for additional protection. Living Eufiber is known to interact with other powers, such as cyberkinesis getting a boost when working with computers linked by a Living Eufiber network a Nova has attuned to. Finding other uses for this material will require experimentation on your part.

600cp – Private Island
The fabulously wealthy need a place to unwind and indulge in debauchery away from prying eyes. This tropical island covers roughly a hundred square kilometers, and has pleasant weather year-round. It starts off undeveloped, but construction and changes to the landscape are retained between jumps. The island is owned wholly by you, and thanks to legal chicanery trespassers are kept away by it being labelled a nature preserve, kept off the books, marked as a no-fly zone, etc. In future jumps, it might even qualify as actual sovereign territory. You may attach other properties to the island, within reason.

Project Utopia

100cp – Merchandise
Toot your own horn with JUMPER! brand merch. This is a supply of toys, clothing, small appliances and other knick-knacks with your face, color scheme, pseudonym and such. Stock your house for an ego boost, donate some to charity or toss it into a crowd. They love that last one, so long as it’s done at a manageable velocity.

100cp – Mox
Moxinoquantamine was created by Utopia to help Novas train their powers. After taking a dose, powers become more difficult to use but the user is afforded protection from dangerous feedback. While Mox is in effect, users will not suffer injury or gain Taint from making a mistake while using their powers. The Mox recipe you purchase here will have a similar benefit for other kinds of biological powers used in future jumps.

200cp – Green space
Utopia's greatest contribution to the world might be their environmental cleanup efforts. This is one hundred square kilometers of healthy soil and greenery you can drop wherever in the world you like. Unlike Utopia's less successful terraforming efforts elsewhere, the improvements made to this land are stable to the point that unless someone goes out of their way this area will likely be the last pocket of the ecosystem to collapse if anything happens to the planet.

200cp – Proteus' sterility cocktail
Perhaps the biggest contributor to the hate between baselines and Novas when the truth of its existence comes out, this is a retrovirus able to affect even extremely robust beings. After bonding with the subject's reproductive organs, a subtle DNA change causes all associated cells produced to be both flawed and targeted by the subject's own immune system. The change only affects the gonads, and short of specific DNA analysis no cause for the sterility will be discerned. Only a specialized regeneration power or outside help can reverse the damage. The virus comes in ingested and injection forms and is not transmissible, but could be modified to be highly virulent and communicable by air. Proteus decided against developing a cure, but with these notes you may be able to fix that.

400cp – Rashoud facility
A laboratory for testing Novas and training their powers, designed to handle the kind of abuse amateur power use can dish out. Besides a wing filled with cutting-edge computers and equipment dedicated to analysis of the physics of quantum powers and the biology of Novas, the facility boasts a vast reinforced chamber for practical training. This room is durable enough that no power, no matter how potent or exotic, can damage the facility or break containment to cause trouble elsewhere.

400cp – Spreading the message
Utopia needs a way to share its message with (manipulate) the world. While not as large as the infamous N!, this is still a worldwide media presence in multiple formats. Between partial ownership and more subtle methods of influence you can ensure the stories you want told will get told the way you want and get a good chunk of the profits from doing so. In future jumps you'll have an equal level of control and profit from a local media group.

600cp – Arcology
You are recognized as the owner/director of this encapsulated mini-city. Its general aesthetics are up to you and its facilities are top-notch. Almost completely self-sufficient, the only thing it lacks is a way to feed the population. The facilities are top-notch and range from machine shops to conference halls, communication systems and living areas. In future jumps you may place a copy of the arcology anywhere you reasonably could, political and environmental conditions permitting, all paperwork already filed. The tower can be attached to or include any other appropriate properties you own, and life just seems better here. The streets are cleaner, businesses are honest, people are a little nicer, and unsavory elements are loath to visit or do business within the area.

The Teragen

100cp – Groupies
Many Terats collect followers, sometimes unintentionally. The more direct control you have over them, the fewer there are, with fanatic cultists numbering a few dozen to fans of your sex tapes number in the tens of thousands worldwide. Whoever they are, you have some way of contacting and directing them. Some might have useful skills, but none are exceptional or powerful individuals. These are thugs and fanatics, flash mobs and fandoms. Not an elite force or even employees by any measure.

100cp – Jumper manifesto
A sheaf of paper that records your thoughts in a style that is both distinctly 'you' and very easy to understand. Even if you aren't the sort given to proselytizing or philosophy this manifesto is a useful tool for self-analysis. It will sometimes reveal things that you didn't consciously realize or were unwilling to consider.

200cp – Club jumper
Not as infamous or exclusive as the Amp Room, but this club is stylish, expensive, and attracts all kinds of interesting and powerful people. It's up to you whether it's an establishment for having wild nights, something more stately or anything in-between, but the architecture can handle a few careless Novas with minimal damage. While the club does bring in a modest income even without your oversight, the club makes it very easy to network as people that would be interested in any sort of relationship with you, or know those that would, just happen to show up here on a semi-regular basis.

200cp – Stylish lair
Run-down or themed hideouts are so passe. You are the owner of a venerable villa, a luxurious penthouse suite or simply a mansion in a very wealthy area code. Whatever it is, it's big, with defenses both subtle and overt, and styled in exactly the way you like. The utilities, land and taxes are all paid up, and the cupboards are automatically kept well-stocked with your preferred victuals.

400cp – Nursery
As many Novas seemed to randomly become sterile the future of the One Race became of great concern to a few Terats while others let themselves be mired in hedonism or politics. This ordinary-looking briefcase holds a small but powerful computer, a compact device for DNA analysis, and most importantly, genetic samples taken from a wide range of Nova donors. Samples from individuals before and after eruption, from the naturally taint-resistant to those bearing the worst aberrations, there's a little bit of everything represented here. A skilled geneticist could learn a great deal from this data, or do terrible harm to the world by perverting the power in these genes.

400cp – Quantum cocoon
This shouldn't exist, but somehow the cocoon of energy spun by a Terat undergoing chrysalis remained intact after the process was completed and remains a potent tool of evolution. Anyone with the latent potential to develop some kind of power can enter this cocoon and with an effort of will consciously choose how their powers will manifest. Alternatively, if they should have no potential they could still enter the cocoon and any sort of change inducted upon them by an external force is guaranteed to work perfectly with no side-effects and grant the best possible result.

600cp – Mineral caverns
A sprawling network of natural caverns that you have expanded on, these tunnels are surprisingly cozy. There's about as much space in the caverns as a large shopping mall, and you can rearrange things to your liking. You'll also need to install amenities yourself, the caverns begin with nothing but bare stone walls. Changes you make inside are retained, and you can choose to have appropriate properties attached to the caverns at the beginning of each jump. The main appeal of these caverns is that unusual mineral formations occlude any energy emissions from inside or outside. Sensors, super-senses, magic and 'other' will register the caverns as an area of undisturbed rock, no matter who or what is inside.

The Directive

100cp – Papers and Badges
Officially the Directive is a perfectly legitimate agency with established powers and permissions, but it's often better to keep everyone guessing. Rummage through this pile of official-looking paperwork and you'll find enough I.D. to pass yourself off as a member of almost any organization you can think of. Things have been set up in advance and they'll stand up to only a moderate level of scrutiny, but you should be smart enough to not give anyone a reason to dig deeper.

100cp – The suit
A well-made if perfectly mundane suit. It's so generic that it could easily be mistaken for any number of other brands and gives an equally vague impression of quality. The quality of its fit, level of cleanliness and any other qualities always seems to lean towards whatever you'd prefer at the time. It would be easy to wear this in any number of situations and blend right in.

200cp – Red line
For when you do need to make things official, this is a list of high-level individuals in a multitude of organizations and everything you need to contact them directly. You can skip right past the red tape and the secret handshakes needed to speak to someone important when time is of the essence.

200cp – Klot
A binary adhesive developed by Kuro-Tek, mixing the two components together results in the creation of a sticky, chemically inert grey gel that is strong enough to restrain Novas with high levels of Mega-strength. Fireproof, non-conductive, and flexible, Klot is also strangely resistant to Nova powers that manipulate matter, requiring more effort than normal to effect. De-Klot quickly dissolves Klot into harmless sludge. The recipe you purchase here expands its resistance to include out-of-jump powers.

400cp – Poison pen
The Directive is at a disadvantage in direct conflicts, which it tries to avoid but is sometimes forced into. Science is their equalizer, and there are two compounds they often rely on. The Virally Tailored Poison was stolen from Proteus, a synthetic enzyme requiring a sample of the target's DNA to create. By injection or skin contact upon the specific target all but the most resilient Novas can be quickly rendered unconscious. Eclipsidol was created by the Directive to bring down Novas, with injection, inhaled, and contact versions. The toxin causes a Nova's powers to activate randomly and continuously for no more than a minute before their Node is drained and all their powers shut down completely for five minutes on average. Both of these compounds are only issued to Directive agents for special and specific missions, and revealing their existence risks bringing extremely unpleasant attention your way. You know how to make both, but the versions you purchase here will have similar effects on other biologically-based powersets in future jumps.

400cp – The forgotten city
It would be rather silly to expect a conventional jail to hold Nova criminals. This complex is built deep underground and was designed from the ground up to restrain those with abilities beyond the norm. The defenses both internal and external are almost purely mundane but take into account every power known to this world. From digital filters to prevent the mega-charismatic from talking their way out to simple but effective means of keeping shapeshifters, the invisible, and mind-controllers from getting in, every square meter of this prison is designed to make quiet infiltration an utter nightmare. While not impossible to crack, it's safe to say that it would take incredible levels of power or planning to accomplish. If all else fails, there are nuclear failsafes that can be detonated if something worse would result from an escape. You may place this prison anywhere suitable in a jump you visit, and its defenses will update to account for any new powers present. It will also be recognized as a legitimate prison by the governments of the world and have a reputation as a good place to put powered criminals.

600cp – Safehouse Network
Across the world in every major city, most minor cities, and a few in rural areas, there are locations that are perfectly normal in every way...on the outside. Beneath discrete electronic shielding and soundproofing, behind security doors and shatterproof windows, each location is stocked with all the equipment and supplies a spy on the move needs. Untraceable weapons, bug-out bags, sophisticated communication systems that can be wiped with the push of a button, false IDs, surveillance gear and more, though everything is firmly in the 'small and discrete' category. Every hidden cubbyhole is carefully designed to defeat both mundane searches and Nova senses, and discovering anything unusual about the homes or their contents will require physically tearing them up. If you wish, you may hint the existence of a safehouse to someone, they will never fail to quickly locate it and the supplies inside.

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Companions:

100cp - Ascended devotee
Even a Nova can only do so much in one day. This assistant is a baseline, their appearance and personality customized to your desires and fanatically loyal. They have 1000cp to spend on perks and items and have undergone genetic modification. Though they may not purchase Quantum Powers and do not have the capacity to Erupt, they have been designed to ensure that any children you have with them are guaranteed to be born with the needed gene sequences to Erupt as a Nova later in life.

X00cp - Nova companions
You may import or create a single Nova companion for 100cp. They have a background and 600cp to spend on perks and items and a further +600cp to spend on Quantum Powers. For 200cp, this is increased to **four** companions, and for 300cp, **eight**. Alternately you may leave a spot open to invite a canon character along with you on your chain.

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Drawbacks:

Mandatory - Taint
The M-R nodes of Novas cannot perfectly channel the vast amounts of power at their disposal, and even second-gen are not completely immune. The by-product of this inefficiency is a corruptive form of radiation that some Novas know of as 'Taint.' The amount of Taint passively generated by a healthy, low-level M-R Node is so minuscule as to be harmless and will dissipate naturally. The constant use of Tainted powers or prolonged proximity to high-level Novas with equally high levels of Taint can irradiate an area, sicken baselines, and put other Novas at a higher risk of developing Taint themselves.

There are three main activities that risk gaining Taint:
- Node abuse. Repeatedly draining and refilling your stores of Quantum Energy. Overcharging your Node by stealing or absorbing energy past your ability to safely hold.
- Pushing powers beyond their limits, or using them in ways you are unskilled in.
- Being careless when using or developing new powers can make them prone to generate Taint whenever used. It is possible to re-train them with great effort to not do so.

Newly-gained Taint is 'Temporary.' Remaining in Dormancy for at least a solid month or by only using your powers far below their full power for a similar time frame is the only way to bleed it off.

If a Nova builds up enough taint, it will catalyze and become Permanent. This causes Aberrations to manifest as deformity, insanity, and power dysfunction. Aberrations are never beneficial and generally follow some kind of theme based on a Nova's powers and personality. The only way to purge Permanent Taint is through the Teragen's Chrysalis, but that is a difficult, dangerous process not without side-effects.

You begin this jump with **ZERO** Permanent and Temporary Taint. In the Aberrant RPG, a character is retired after reaching 10 dots of Permanent Taint, and taking the maximum of **+900cp** worth of Aberrations will put you one very bad day away from Jump failure. Taint and Aberrations cannot be hidden, manipulated or prevented with out-of-jump perks or powers.

Aberrations

You may freely design the aberrations you manifest. The following serve as benchmarks of intensity.

+100 – Quirk
You have a minor quirk that would be dismissed as something mundane without a deeper investigation. Strangely-colored eyes, or a very subtle motion of your hair as if by a non-existent breeze. You may be unable to feel fear or pain, or suffer from paranoia or over-sensitivity. Your libido might be non-existent or overactive. You might be extremely androgynous, or your limbs just a bit too long.

+200cp – Biological alteration
Altered biology is an inconvenience in day-to-day life. You might be allergic to synthetic materials and pollutants or equally uncomfortable in the wild. Something odd but common is a needed part of your diet, like wood, sunlight, or a particular metal. There might be an obvious but not crippling change to your body's structure, such as nearly translucent skin and tissues with wildly different colors than the human norm. At most, you might have supernumerary features or even be a functional hermaphrodite.

+300cp – Quantum instability
Something is wrong with your powers and there's no way to avoid it except by entering dormancy. You are vulnerable to a specific form of energy that easily penetrates any defensive powers. One of your powers is constantly active and cannot be turned off. A power is somehow inverted or distorted, Mega-appearance becoming Mega-ugliness. Otherwise neutral or even beneficial powers now have harmful side-effects.

+400 – Biological dysfunction
Under examination you would not pass as human. You might need radioactive materials in your diet to avoid starvation. You've lost the ability to breathe air and must live underwater, or grow weak and sickly outside of a very specific environment. Inspired by your powers your body has changed, flight giving you non-functional wings or patagia, chitinous skin for armor, animalistic features and uniquely non-human organs manifested by your tainted body in response to the increasing strain of Taint.

+600cp – Impossible deformity
Few would consider you human anymore. You're a mess of loose organs floating in a person-shaped forcefield. You may have multiple extra limbs that change their arrangement each day that are both hostile towards all others and not under your control. You have a near uncontrollable urge to reproduce by implanting parasitic embryos in others which grow into equally tainted Nova offspring. Your Taint spreads outwards, and you become a walking wasteland that poisons everything around you.

Drawbacks

You may gain a maximum of +1000cp from drawbacks.

+100cp - New to the game
Perhaps you've just erupted, or like the second generation of Novas you're still a child. Maybe you're still in school. Whatever it is, you're far weaker and less skilled than you should be. Time and training will see you improve, but expect to take the long road to greatness.

+100cp - Costume fetish
It's a new you! Not like the old you! And the new you needs a new look! Distinctive costumes are for Novas, not casual wear! You need to look the part of a Nova, and if you don't...You'll quickly become attached to your 'Nova look' and will want to wear your costume even when socially inappropriate. Or maybe you've evolved beyond the need for clothes at all? You can force yourself to change clothes, but out-of-costume you'll be uncomfortable and nervous, unable to work at your best.

+100cp - Kami-samaaaaaaaaaa!
The Kamisami Buddhist Sect is a growing religious movement that near-worships Novas within Japan, though even it pales in comparison to how India sees them as incarnate deities. Somehow you've become a popular figure of devotion, having many who closely monitor your life, record and study your every word, and pattern their own behavior off how they believe you would have them act. In turn the media pays very close attention to anything newsworthy your followers might get up to.

+200cp - Let me tell you about our cause
It's hard to ignore someone who can juggle tanks. Novas are often outspoken about their beliefs, and it seems like all of them now have some kind of political or social issue that they just can't help but tell you all about. If you espouse different views expect long, stubborn debates on the subject. In the worst cases, expect this to help you make plenty of enemies.

+200cp - Quantum disharmony
Some quirk of your nature as a jumper prevents you from Attuning to anything here. Keep in mind that beyond just eufiber, attunement is required to make full use of many powers. Teleportation now can't bring along anything you wear or carry, so expect to spend a lot of money on new clothes or just get used to being naked constantly. This drawback also means others cannot attune to you, so don't expect to rely on others as a taxi service. This does mean a few power-tricks won't work on you, but the problems you'll face will far outweigh any benefits.

+200cp - Person of interest
You've landed on several watchlists. Utopia, the Directive, the Teragen and other big names of the Nova world will have files on you that are kept up-to-date. You'll be subjected to increased scrutiny, and once in a while someone will be sent around to chat you up with leading questions or to plant a few bugs. Whatever information they learn or conclusions they reach will overwhelmingly color their opinions and decisions made regarding you.

+300cp - Node spark
All out-of-jump powers now need quantum energy to activate and are thus capable of generating Taint. Any alt-form that grants benefits beyond baseline humanity also requires energy to maintain. Active powers need more energy to use than passive powers, and any extra power sources you may have (MP, Chi, etc.) are suppressed for the duration of the jump. If you are not a Nova, you can still gain Taint from self-destructive behavior, stress, or by simply not taking good enough care of yourself.

+300cp - Node lock
All out-of-jump powers are sealed, and the cosmic warehouse is locked. You cannot take both this drawback and 'Node spark.'

+300cp - Sordid past
For all their power, even Novas must fear public opinion. Perhaps they still want to function in society, or because other Novas may get involved if things get loud enough, and you've got some very big skeletons in your closet. Maybe you were a pretty horrible person before eruption changed your appearance and you rebranded, or past work for your faction crossed some lines that no court would ignore and no superior would tolerate becoming public. Whatever it is, there are some pretty serious consequences hanging over your head if the truth gets out. For now your secret remains unknown to the wider world, but considering the kinds of powers and intrigues in play these days there's no guarantee it'll stay that way…

+400cp - Years one and two
The following years are going to get interesting. Secrets revealed, power-plays, conspiracies, wars big and small, and politics. Utopian, Terat, independent, all will be involved one way or another in all kinds of trouble. And now, so will you. You're going to have a very interesting time here, getting involved in one major event each year. Sometimes it's as simple as a regional conflict that threatens to involve larger powers, or maybe a cult leader driven insane by Taint and Utopian experimentation is publicly threatening to unleash biomancy-produced super-plagues across the world. Whatever happens, however you're involved, you will be a major determinant in how the situation is resolved. Naturally you'll have to deal with the fallout as well.

+400cp - Breeder
You are immune to Utopia's sterility cocktail and are extremely fertile. Your quantum-powered gonads can't be turned off, birth control never works, and intercourse with you will even heal any existing damage to your partner's reproductive organs. On top of all that, your offspring are guaranteed to carry the needed genetics to erupt. It won't matter what you do, word of your status will inevitably get out and many groups will want to kill or control you. Expect Project Proteus specifically to send out Novas kill-teams of their own to assassinate you and your children.

+600cp - Aberrant war
All out-of-jump powers are locked and the cosmic warehouse is sealed. The jump now ends in the year 2061. Utopian scandals, the actions of Taint-maddened Novas and political manipulations will inevitably lead to the United Nations declaring war on all Novas in 2049, giving you 41 years to prepare for the end of the world. Nations will crumble. Hundreds of millions of people will die. Regional conflict spreads like wildfire. Vast swaths of the ecosystem will be ruined and irradiated by Taint, and the OpNet will be destroyed and all data connected to it at the time is lost. An increasing number of Novas will suddenly and inexplicably acquire enormous amounts of Taint and go mad. You cannot prevent these events from occurring. You can only survive it, and perhaps mitigate the worst of it. Eventually the Chinese will issue an ultimatum, a threat of planetary destruction through sustained nuclear bombardment. You will then leave the jump as Divis Mal leads an exodus of Novas from Earth to the stars.

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THE END

After your time here is done, any Taint or Aberrations you've acquired will be removed, and any neurological damage inflicted by Node growth will be repaired as a one-time benefit. While you can still suffer these problems in the future, out-of-jump powers are now fully effective in the mitigation/treatment of Taint and any problems related to it.

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Visible aberrations gained during this jump can be kept and used as a purely cosmetic alt-form.

Continue On
Your evolution doesn't stop here. Explore the multiverse, bringing all your power and items you've purchased here along for the ride.

Stay
It's a big universe, there's plenty of room to grow. Set down roots, be a god or something. Your affairs back on Earth will be set in order for you.

Go Home
You know what would make Earth more interesting? Novas. Return home. I'm you'll find a use for the power you've collected.

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NOTES

All powers and mega-attributes can be exercised to become more powerful over time. It is also possible for a Nova to manifest entirely new powers as a result of careful training over a long period of time, or in response to prolonged trauma as a survival mechanism.

Novas have a Quantum Rating on a rough scale of 1-10 that determines their overall level of strength. Having a higher Quantum rating makes all a Nova's abilities more powerful, grants them larger energy reserves, and is required to possess the most complex powers. Assume your Quantum rating to be half the cp cost of your highest-priced power or mega-attribute, divide it by 2, round up, and add 1. Buying an 800cp power or 500cp Mega-attribute would mean you start off at Quantum 5. This would place you among the most powerful Novas in the world today by raw power, but not experience.

'Dormancy' is a skill that allows a Nova to turn off their Node. While 'Dorm'ed down' a Nova does not have access to any of their powers or Mega-attributes, but Aberrations are also suppressed and you cannot gain Taint.

'Attunement' is the skill of imprinting your quantum signature onto another person or object. Anything you've Attuned is treated as a part of yourself, and your powers cannot harm them. If your clothes are not attuned while using certain powers like teleport or sizemorph, they will be left behind or shredded.

Oversized objects do not crumple under their own weight when lifted by a Nova with Mega-strength.

So what can Novas do?

Most Novas follow a theme of some sort, developing powers in line with their personality, the situation they faced when erupting, or in response to defining events in life. A Nova can theoretically develop any kind of power. On a scale of 1 to 10, canon Powers requiring a Quantum of 10 (Aberrant's power stat) included world-shattering quantum blasts, creating areas of 'anything I imagine can happen in here' and 'Universe Creation'...which does exactly what it sounds like. Yes, really.

However the M-R Node does not come with an instruction manual. Most Novas are limited to manipulating more familiar concepts like fire or computer data (even though the latter actually requires controlling several forms of energy to accomplish) simply because most people aren't capable of comprehending things like time or entropy, or maybe they just can't jive the association between electricity and magnetism. Developing new powers isn't about spending points, it's about training yourself to think in entirely new ways.

Here are two benchmarks lifted from an official publication:

Caestus Pax, the leader of Team Tomorrow, has been a Nova for at most 12 years and has a Quantum rating of 6. He has all physical Mega-attributes in the 4-5 dot range, and a range of powers that deal with kinetic energy, can hit targets in orbit with his quantum blasts, and until his fight with Divis Mal is widely considered one of if not the most powerful Nova in the world of 2010.

Divis Mal has a Quantum rating of 8. He has gone through the Chrysalis four times, and by 2010 has been a Nova for almost a hundred years. He has no Mega-attribute rated lower than 3 dots, most are rated at 5. He has a huge range of powers that have been refined to an absurd degree, and was able to seize control of the world's media networks for an extended period to deliver the Null Manifesto. He is also noted to understand the nature of Nova-dom in many ways that is far beyond anyone else in the setting, and it was through his sheer power that the first new Novas of this era were induced to Erupt.

Divis Mal, or perhaps one of the more powerful 2nd-generation Novas, might have reached Quantum 10 by the Trinity Era in 2106, but canon has never stated anyone has reached this level of power.