Mutagen 0.5 Playtest Notes & Ideas

Playtest Key Features:  
D100 skill checks

D100 Contests (win with higher degree of success)

Wraith (Shadow Mark, Gliding Pounce, Transforming Blade, Passage)

Chrysalis (Stalwart, Reflective Skin, Conduit, Dispersed Blossom, Cleanse)  
Nova (Telekinesis, Guided Launch, Push, Pull)

# Notes

## Character Creation

Felt smooth, needs more clarity and rearranging, skill/weapon feats at higher levels

Level 0 stats felt a bit high, Michelle finished Level 0 creation with 60 WILL. Very little need for things Aid, stat boost abilities etc

## Stats

Discipline too strong as is Evade, Strike and Firearm Damage - likely to remove it from Firearm Damage

## Contests

Felt good

## Skills and Skill checks

Skill proficiencies too high - +15/+30 is way too high, boosts 70 to 100, likely to change to +5/+10

## Weapons

DSC being added to damage is very strong. Needs to be carefully considered, removing a damage constant can mean attacks feel too swingy and unpredictable

## Classes

Chrysalis reflect skin too weak as is

Pounce seemed to be a strong ‘staple’ for closing gaps. This is its intended use however.

I want to look at Umbral Blade, I think it should be a one time cast with Concentrate as opposed to always recasting, more of a dice sacrifice to Lock a dice into the weapon then

## Enemies

Need tight balancing

# Ideas

### Hero points?

A system like inspiration/hero points should be included to reward creativity, let players reroll awful rolls etc. Awarded on Crit Fail

### Reflective Skin too weak

A Tier 2 ability with max damage being below enemy’s average might is useless

Options:

* Unmitigated damage, could be very very strong
* Increase damage, M \* STR/CON mod, cannot exceed damage dealt?

### Level 0 weapon ineffective against Level 2 enemies

Honestly this could be a good thing - the playtest was set up quickly and the weapon difference was overlooked

### Revisit Initiative

Need a simple initiative system - d20 + DSC/SNS?

### Remove DSC from Firearm damage (except Snipers??)

Adding DSC to damage means it does too much

Extra 6 damage for 6DSC is a lot, it is already used for Evade + STR

Adding only DSC to damage for snipers makes sense for flavour

### Take Aim

1s raise proficiency with proficiency doubling/tripling is far too strong and swingy

Prof bonus may work better DSC/DSC+2/DSC+5

Potential to double Take Aim to improve bonus further? Could be a Weapon Proficiency feat?

Enemies taking aim always only DSC+2 unless stated otherwise

### Flesh out skills

Add proficiency feats (skill/weapon feats), these will make Skills/Weapons feel more fleshed out

Collision

### 

### Add extra proficiency to level 2

Make sure Threat Levels include increasing skill/weapon proficiencies

# Playtest Updates

## Dev Comments

We’re back! Put on your armour, load your weapons and warm up those powers as Mutagen is back to playtesting and balance updates! Their most recent playtest for Mutagen 0.5 was eye-opening as we tested out brand new classes, enemies and abilities. Before we get into the balances notes and updates, the creator of Mutagen wanted to write a few words:  
  
*Hello all, I just wanted to thank the playtesters of this game. I know things are dicey (hehe) and the playtests can be slow as we iron out features but this game wouldn’t be where it is and will be without you. So thank you!*

What a soppy guy! Without further ado, here are some of the key notes we took away from the playtest:  
  
**Character Creation**: Overall this process felt smooth but certain steps could be rearranged for more intuitive creation, final stats felt a bit high and certain elements need to be clearer for the players

**Initiative:** We’re still ironing this one out. Down below in the updates we will be introducing a new initiative that we think will be easier and quicker

**Abilities:** There was a lot to dissect here so we will break it down by class

Chrysalis: Reflective skin was the only damaging ability taken and is definitely too weak in its current state. Tough skin and stalwarts have a lot of overlap.

Wraith: Felt strong and consistent, we want to revisit the umbral blade and its duration. Many overlapping abilities.

Nova: The clear strongest of the trio, push and pull are very potent, especially in enclosed spaces. However, it did not fulfil the power fantasy of the user.

**Damage:** Collision damage is too complicated as is and needs refining.

**Enemies**: This is a weird one as the players were using underleveled weapons and the enemies were very tough

## Mutagen 0.6 Changelog Pt.1

This is part 1 of the changelong. Coming up with reworks and tuning for abilities is time consuming so further class changes will be coming along soon. These will be the Tier 2 Wraith abilities as well as full Chrysalis and Nova balancing

### Initiative

For Mutagen 0.6, initiative will be calculated by rolling a d20 and adding either your DSC or SNS mod, whichever is higher. We hope this is a faster and simpler method for calculating initiative

### Stats and Stat Modifiers

Previously the average human was 20 in each stat, however this still provided a +2 bonus to the modifier for that ability as the modifiers were the stats / 10 rounded down. Moving forward modifiers will be (stats / 10) - 2 rounded down.

Therefore at 20, a character will gain a 0 modifier. -1 for 10 in the stat and +1 for 30. We believe this will provide more balance to the modifiers, especially in the early game. Players with 100 in a stat will therefore receive +8 to relevant rolls which is still a lot.

### Backgrounds

We will be adding more background in times and love the flavour and variety they bring to a character. The +10 and +5 boosts were a bit strong however so they have been scaled back to +5 and +2 respectively

### Lab Rats

The Lab Rats module is good and still needs further playtesting but it will be good to create another small module for testing higher levels of play. Tier 2 was too strong and enemies were quickly adjusted resulting in overturning.

### Enemy and Weapon Balancing

Nothing concrete here but enemies need a formula or system for being created to ensure they align with the correct Threat Level. We are considering having fixed values that enemy stats should average out for each Threat Level. E.g Threat Level 0 enemies stats added up cannot exceed 120, they cannot have a Might higher than 3 and cannot have Evade higher than 14 unless other drawbacks are introduced.

A similar system will need to be introduced with weapons to ensure viability at the correct stages of the game,

### Threat Levels

A new system that allows for much more quantifiable growth. Feels good and allows for clear progression with specific stages to add new proficiencies, quirks and stat boosts. During the playtest they system revolved around there being five Threat Levels. We believe this is too limiting and makes each Threat Level increase more significant. For developing the system further we will be working with a framework of ten Threat Levels. Whilst D&D and PF2e have 20 levels, some levels feel like you don’t gain that much power and we want characters feeling like each Threat Level provides a valuable boost.

### Wraith Rework

| **Ability** | **Old Text** | **New Text** | **Why** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Shroud | Whilst in this Form, you gain +2 Evade and +1 Speed. You may pass through objects 1m thick as if they are difficult terrain. You do not make sound whilst you are moving. This Form ends when you dismiss it or when you next take damage. | You are Lightly Obscured and gain +5 DSC to Saves/Contests. You lose Shroud when you take damage. | Shroud had too much overlap with other abilities. We also felt the speed boost didn’t match the flavour so changed it to represent the being ‘hard to pin down’. Lightly Obscured provides the +2 Evade bonus |
| Smoky Shroud | Tier 2: Adjacent allies gain +2 Evade, adjacent enemies gain -1 Strike. Enemies using thermal sight are immune.  Tier 3: The Evasion and Strike Penalties are doubled. Moving through objects no longer counts as difficult terrain. | Tier 2: Adjacent allies are Lightly Obscured. Adjacent enemies gain -2 Strike  Tier 3: You and allies are now Heavily Obscured. Enemies gain a Strike penalty equal to your DSC mod (min 2) | Text made consistent with the new Shroud. The Strike penalty increased to match appropriate Tier levels |
| Diss. Shroud | Tier 2: Shroud gains the following Mutate option:  Mutate: Any dice used for M are Locked whilst Shroud is active. When you are targeted with an attack you may expend a dice Locked in Shroud to increase your Evade against the attack. You may do this after the roll but before the outcome is determined  Tier 3: Whilst dice are Locked in Shroud, gain additional Evade bonus equal to Md. When you expend a dice to boost Evade and the attack misses, you may move metres equal to the roll halved | Tier 2: Shroud gains the following Mutate option when activating Shroud and at the start of your turn whilst Shroud is active:  Mutate X: Locked. When you are targeted with an attack you may expend a Locked dice to increase your Evade against the attack. You may do this after the roll but before the outcome is determined  Tier 3: Gain Evade equal to the number of Locked dice. When you expend a dice to boost Evade and the attack misses, you may move metres equal to the roll halved | Text clarification |
| Intangible | You can pass through objects 1m thick. This counts as Difficult Terrain. | You can pass through an object or wall that is max 1m thick. You can do this a number of times per Long Rest equal to your DSC mod. This counts as Difficult Terrain. | Being able to freely pass through objects is very strong, by limiting the qty you may use this, it will feel more special and considered and not tread on the toes of other abilities that let you do the same thing |
| Drain -> Gouging Drain | Whenever you deal damage with a melee attack, heal 1d4 | When you activate the Drain effect of your shadow mark on a melee attack, heal an additional 1d4 | Drain was created before the Shadow marks were. The constant passive devalued the Drain option of the Shadow Mark. Now it is a boost to the Shadow Mark drain when the condition is met. We also changed the name to avoid confusion |
| Terrifying Pounce | Tier 2: You can pass through enemies with Pounce. If you do they must make a WILL save. Once a creature has succeeded, they are immune for 24 hours.  Critical Success: You take damage equal to their WILL modifier  Hard Success: No effect  Success: They are Unbalanced  Failure: Same as success but they are also Frightened 1  Critical Failure: Same as failure but the target is Frightened 2 and Rooted (WILL)  Tier 3: Each effect moves up a degree of success.  Critical Failure: The target is Paralysed. | Tier 2: You can pass through enemies with Pounce. If you do, they must make a WILL save. Once a creature has succeeded, they are immune for 24 hours.  Critical Success: You take unmitigated damage equal to their WILL modifier  Hard Success + Success: No effect  Failure: The target is Unbalanced + Frightened 1  Critical Failure: Same as failure but the target is Frightened 2 and Rooted (WILL)  Tier 3: Each effect moves up a degree of success.  Critical Failure: The target is Paralysed. | As this is a passive ability to Pounce that will happen when you pass through an enemy, we feel it is unfair to punish a Success on the check |
| Siphon -> Siphoning Mark | You imbue your next attack with life-draining essence. Make a Strike with an equipped weapon, you heal 1d4 HP if you hit. You cannot heal more than the damage dealt. | When you Shadow Mark a target, you can instead use a Siphoning Mark, replacing the effects with the following:  When you successfully Strike the Marked target, heal 1d4. You may then expend the Mark to activate the following effect:  Drain: Heal the max value of the Locked dice | Still on the theme of overlapping abilities, Siphon interacted weirdly with the Shadow Mark:Drain and was also too ‘boring’. There would never be a turn where you choose to make a regular attack over a Siphon attack. By making this a mark we add more variety and choice to marking targets. |
| Bolstering Siphon -> Leeching Siphon | Tier 2: Siphon now uses a d6. When you heal with Siphon, choose an ally within 5m to also gain the healing  Tier 3: Siphon now uses a d8. When you heal with Siphon, all allies within 5m also gain the healing | Tier 2: When an ally Strikes a target with Siphoning Mark and is within 5m, they heal 1d4.  Tier 3: You and allies now heal equal to 1d4 + your DSC mod. | This is experimental but by letting allies benefit from Siphoning mark it could promote team focus-fire and party-wide sustain |
| Draining Siphon | Tier 2: Siphon now uses a d6. The target must make a CON save, do not roll to heal until the save is resolved Crit Success: You do not heal from Siphon  Hard Success: You only roll a d4 to heal  Success: No effect  Failure: The target is Drained 1  Crit Failure: The target is Drained 2, you heal max HP  If the target has a Shadow Mark you may activate it and apply M as a penalty to the CON save, after the creature has rolled but before the effects have been resolved  Tier 3: Siphon now uses a d8. Move all the save effects up a degree of success. Crit Fail: The target is Drained 3 and Rooted (WILL) | Tier 2: When you apply a Siphoning Mark, the target makes a CON save  Any success: No effect  Failure: Drained 1  Critical Failure: Drained 2  Tier 3: Increase the Drained conditions by 1 for the CON save. Increase Siphoning Mark healing to 2d4 | Due to the Siphoning Mark rework this needed to be changed. Now can apply the Drained Condition |
| Terrifying Pounce -> Assailing Pounce | Tier 2: You can pass through enemies with Pounce. If you do they must make a WILL save. Once a creature has succeeded, they are immune for 24 hours.  Critical Success: You take unmitigated damage equal to their WILL modifier Hard Success + Success: No effect  Failure: The target is Unbalanced + Frightened 1  Critical Failure: Same as failure but the target is Frightened 2 and Rooted (WILL)  Tier 3: Each effect is moved up a degree of success.  Critical Failure: The target is Paralysed. | Tier 2: You can pass through enemies with Pounce. If you do they must make a STR save.  Any Success: No effect  Failure: The target is Unbalanced 1  Critical Failure: The target is Unbalanced 2  Tier 3: Each effect is moved up a degree of success.  Critical Failure: The target is Prone. | Frightened is too strong given this is a passive upgrade to the ability. Also removed an negative success effects so to not punish the use of Pounce specifically for taking this Augment |
| From the Shadows | Class Passive | Class Quirk | This has been moved to a quirk to make room for the new class passive and as it only effects a certain playstyle so is good for specialising but not a core feature of the class |
| Hunt |  | You gain +1 Strike, +1 Evade and +10 to perceive or track against a Marked target. | The new class passive. This has been removed from Shadow Mark due to the introduction of new types of Mark. By extracting this out, a Wraith will always gain this bonus against their Marked prey |
| Shadow Mark | You mark a creature you can see within range. Allocate one of your Gene Pool to this target, this dice is Locked until the target is dead or you activate/cancel the mark. You gain the following bonuses: +1 Evade against attacks fom the target  +1 Strike against the target  +20 Stat bonus to perceive or track the target  When you deal damage to the target you may expend and roll the Shadow Mark to activate one of the following effects using M:  Harm: Deal M bonus damage (not doubled on crit)  Drain: Heal M HP  Reposition: Move half M metres (min 1) | Mark a target in range. When you successfully Strike a target with Shadow Mark, activate the Mark and use the result for one of the following effects:  Harm: Bonus psychic damage (not doubled on crit)  Reap: Heal yourself  Reposition: Move the result halved | Much clearer text. As stated above, the passive bonuses have been moved to the Class Passive.  Mark is now a keyword to avoid repetitive ability text |