“The world we know is the world of man. We live **Inside**.  There are worlds beyond we only half-remember as dreams, legends, and faith. They are **Outside**.  In between those are the places made from thoughts and pure magic.  They are **Sideways**.  It wasn't always that way, so it's probably not going to stay that way forever. There are Outsiders that want to come in. They've learned this world is a haven. There are others who want to get out. They'll learn this world is also a prison.

The Outsiders come in three basic varieties. The **Ephemera** are all the bodiless things; ghosts, spirits and sentient notions.  The things like us but foreign -- irrevocably different by virtue of being from some other world -- are the **Fairest**.  Living Outside has made them strange.  Lastly are the Outsiders with physical form and mental outlook that is animalistic and wild.  They are the **Chimera**; creatures, animals and oddities.

Overtime mankind has learned to cooperate with Outsiders and keep their secrets.  Of course, we can't always see eye-to-eye about the how and why. There are many different organizations that govern and compete over their secrets.  Most people don't know such groups even exist, but it's getting harder to keep it that way.

The enigmatic **Circus**emerged from Post-War England as an umbrella for unity and security. With the birth of the European Union, it has become **Cirque** and expanded its operations to cover the continent.  Burdened with so many competing interests, it tries to tightly control Outside phenomenon and prevent its various factions from balkanizing.  It's sad and strange to see such a young and large organization already on the brink of crumbling.

When the Soviet Union fell, its paranormal intelligence organization, the **Committee**, took advantage of the opportunity to become an autonomous entity. Now backed by a combination of powerful Outsider interests and phenomenally wealthy Oligarchs, the Committee is no longer bound by any laws. For nearly two decades it has dedicated itself to ruthlessly grabbing power for its own sake.

One of the oldest and best established organizations, the **Ministry**monitors and controls Outsider activity throughout Asia using a system of laws older than almost every society on Earth. Unfortunately, human civilization has been changing at an ever quickening pace.  More and more, the Ministry's ancient system seems to be creating more conflict with Outsiders and modern society than it prevents.

Across the ocean everything is run by the **Bureau**.  Secretly founded by the US government in the last century, it eventually extricated itself from all state oversight.  The Bureau involves itself with most paranormal matters in both North and South America.  Their influence in North America is absolute but maintained with a gentle touch.  Most Outsiders are granted citizenship, assimilated and tolerated so long as they keep a low profile and don't make trouble.  In Central and South America, the Bureau works the complete opposite.  There the Bureau makes up for a lack of official authority or control through brutal, often violent enforcement of US policy.

While most of these secretive organizations are regional, the **Mission**has power scattered all over the globe.  Once a secret institution of the Vatican, the Mission was entrusted with investigating and combating the Outside menace. As the Vatican's power diminished and social attitudes changed, the Mission saw its support dwindle.  To adapt to the modern world and continue its crusade the Mission was forced to cooperate and assimilate similar organizations from other faiths.  The resulting group is significantly more open-minded about matters of faith, but still passionate about serving humanity and understanding what the Outsiders mean to religion.

And we are the people between the people.  We are **Asylum** and we keep Inside and Outside running peacefully together.  We are a coalition of humans and Outsiders. Though many of us come from these groups, we are happy to count independent people and beings in our movement. Asylum is dedicated to a more perfect world through mutual understanding.

Not everyone agrees with this, however.  Hidden far behind all of this are the minions of the **Host** who seek a stark and brutal separation of humans and Outisders. They build and destroy with the surety of fanatics.  They respect nothing but their sterile ideal of The System of the World.

No matter where you came from, you are with us now because you agree that the Earth can be more.  Inside, Outside and Sideways are made from the same stuff, after all.  And if a jumble of human countries can combine and change, perhaps all the worlds can too.”