

Drugs from Spiderhead

Here a few from [Escape from Spiderhead](#) by George Saunders (*The New Yorker*, December 20, 2010). A good little story for giving nasty ideas for what might be going on here and there in the EP universe:

Verbaluce

This is a language fluency enhancer, making users more eloquent. It not only removes inhibitions against speaking, but helps produce a poetic state where the user can describe experiences vividly and exactly. Emotions, perceptions and ideas seem clear and possible to describe.

[+10 for skill rolls helped by eloquence such as writing, public oratory or seduction. It also produces somewhat annoying gastric problems afterwards.]

Amorine, Vivistif, LuvInclined, ED289/290 etc.

More than a century after Viagra, sexual enhancement drugs are a big (no pun intended) field, covering everything from improving the responses of the C-tactile nerves (making caresses more enjoyable) to boosting libido to reducing refractory periods.

A more controversial (but equally profitable) field is drugs that produce feelings of romantic love, mutual attraction or pair bonding. These drugs tend to require nanotech targeting in order to focus the feelings on the right person (although many users of older low-tech infatuation drugs claim they enjoy falling in love with everybody they see, no matter who they are). Another important group of drugs help inhibit or even remove romantic bonding between people. While psychosurgery is more exact for this purpose, it is often useful to prevent lingering imprinting for purely recreational love drugs.

ED556

Reduces feelings of shame, making users unable to feel embarrassed and willing to do things they would not normally do (if they otherwise make sense). It does not remove feelings of guilt (violating one's own values), just shame from violating social expectations. However, the line is blurry and many users report that feel less guilt on the drug too (a related experimental drug, ED934 has the opposite effect - users stop caring about their own values but still behave in a socially acceptable way).

[A related, earlier drug, ChatEase, removes some social inhibitions and increases the tendency to speak as per Verbaluce.]

Darkenfloxx

A literal depressant, producing intense aversive feelings - pain, sadness, horror - without any focus. In fact, it abstracts away from the detail: it is pain without any sensory component, sadness without anything to be sad about or a way to express it, horror that does not involve being afraid of anything, just horrified of existence itself. The user feels intensely bad: life is not worth living, has indeed never been worth living. Anything related to the experience afterward becomes dreadful and worth avoiding.

VeriTalk

A "truth serum", reducing the ability to formulate deceptions. It makes users very literal: metaphors just slip away, irony is hard to understand and thinking tends to be very concrete and reality-oriented.

[Produces -20 on attempts to withhold information or deceive, as well as skills requiring imagination.]

Some other drugs mentioned: Docilryde, Bonviv, BlissTyme, SpeedErUp and InstaRaje.