

G U R P S<sup>®</sup>

# MARTIAL ARTS ADVENTURES

*Hard-Hitting Scenarios for GURPS Martial Arts*



**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

# PURE MIND. CALM SOUL. HANDS OF STEEL!

The indomitable martial artist is unique among adventurers. He does not rely on the trappings of technology, nor does he hide behind bullet-proof vests or high-powered rifles. He defends himself with his hands, feet and soul. His confidence grows from his mastery, and honor and courage are his guides.

This book contains three ready-to-play scenarios for adventurous masters of martial arts. Inside you'll find:

***Pawns of the CloneMaster.*** Chris McCubbin skillfully adapts the now-legendary game *Kung Fu: 2100* to the *GURPS* milieu. Invade the villainous CloneMaster's mansion with your highly-skilled Terminators. Destroy the despot's computer systems and clone banks before the sinister Jellies and gun-wielding technicians can decimate your forces. And above all, beware the CloneMaster!

***Dark Arena.*** From the author of *GURPS Martial Arts*, C.J. Carella, comes a cinematic adventure in the tradition of late-night karate movies. Famous martial artists are being abducted by a scheming millionaire to participate in a highly illegal full-contact tournament . . . to the death! The PCs are caught in the middle as they fly to a secret hideout in mainland China, where the perils of the dark arena await . . .

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Also included are new rules for the *GURPS Martial Arts* system, including new styles, skills and maneuvers. The *GURPS Basic Set* and *GURPS Martial Arts* are required to run these adventures.

---

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# GURPS

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*Hard-Hitting Scenarios for GURPS Martial Arts*

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# INTRODUCTION

Few genres are built for adventure like martial arts. From ancient Japanese ninja to the modern masters of late-night kung fu movies, martial artists have always been revered and admired as honorable bravados whose thrilling exploits constantly test the limits of human endurance . . . and often exceed them.

Street-fighters and samurai alike draw from the same canon of unwritten law. Skill and raw courage can defeat technology and firepower. The soul is the bastion of strength – true power comes from within. Hands, feet and mind are the most powerful weapons.

This book contains three scenarios that propel intrepid warriors into the dangerous world of the martial arts.

*Pawns of the CloneMaster*, by award-winning author Chris McCubbin, takes players into the world of the classic pocket-box game, *Kung Fu 2100*. As powerful Terminators, the heroes must defuse a deadly trap and destroy the evil CloneMaster and his treacherous technology before his henchmen can wear the Terminators down.



*Dark Arena* is a high-stakes journey into the bleak underbelly of the criminal world. Famous martial artists are being kidnapped and forced to compete in a deadly tournament, where the chances of survival are slim. The PCs are working with Interpol to stop the illegal tourney . . . by joining in! Can they halt the games before getting crushed by a giant sumotori or slaughtered by vicious animals? The answer lies in the dark arena . . .

*Rightful Possession* transports modern-day fighters into Bushido Japan, where they must unravel the mystery behind a cursed wakizashi. Battles with ghosts, dragons and giant centipedes punctuate this gripping scenario where the fate of an ancient and honored clan rests with the heroes' choices.

Finally, we've included new *Martial Arts* rules written by *Martial Arts* author C.J. Carella. New skills, maneuvers and styles are explained in depth, including styles for some fantasy and alien races. Also presented are optional rules and new equipment – historical, cyberpunk and more.

So test your skill and honor with these challenging and sometimes brutal adventures. Only those with strength, courage and mastery will prevail.

– Jeff Koke

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

*Pyramid*. This bimonthly magazine includes new rules and articles for *GURPS*, as well as information on our other lines: *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures* and more. It also covers top releases from other game companies – *Traveller*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, etc.

*New supplements and adventures*. We're always working on new material, and we'll be happy to let you know what's available. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

*Errata*. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

*Q&A*. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

*Gamer input*. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book in later printings!

*BBS*. For those who have home computers, SJ Games operates a multi-line BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours per day at 512-447-4449, at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud. Give us a call! We also have discussion areas on CompuServe, GENie, and America Online.

## Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. An MA refers to *GURPS Martial Arts*; J represents *GURPS Japan*. *GURPS Magic* is shown by an M; *GURPS Cyberpunk* is indicated by a CY, *GURPS Fantasy Folk* by an FF and *GURPS Aliens* by an A.

# 1 PAWNS OF THE CLONEMASTER

By Chris W. McCubbin

Illustrated by Kevin Atkinson

Based on the game *Kung Fu 2100*, by B. Dennis Sustare

*Rising Dream turned from the fallen technician and glided to the reinforced door. To his left, Shadow Lotus vanished into the computer room. Rising Dream stood a moment, quieting his spirit, then sought the door's weak point. The gunfire behind him had quieted, and the only sound that came to his ears was a muffled, rhythmic thudding and the thin whine of dying electronics as Shadow Lotus dealt with the main computer banks in the next room. Finding what he sought, Rising Dream launched his right fist at the indicated spot. In the hallway beyond, technicians and servants scurried away as the portal exploded in their faces.*



Rising Dream stepped over the wreckage of the door. One of the servants ran at him, brandishing a large kitchen knife. In acknowledgement of his bravery, Rising Dream granted the man an honorable death. The rest of the room's former occupants had all evaporated through the demolished door. Rising Dream strode down the hallway and turned into the first room he came to – the communications center.

He turned toward the computer banks, to his right, but a figure stood between him and his goal. He wore a gi like Rising Dream's own, but rather than the white with red belt of the Society of Thanatos, the intruder wore midnight blue with gold belt – the colors of the CloneMaster's household.

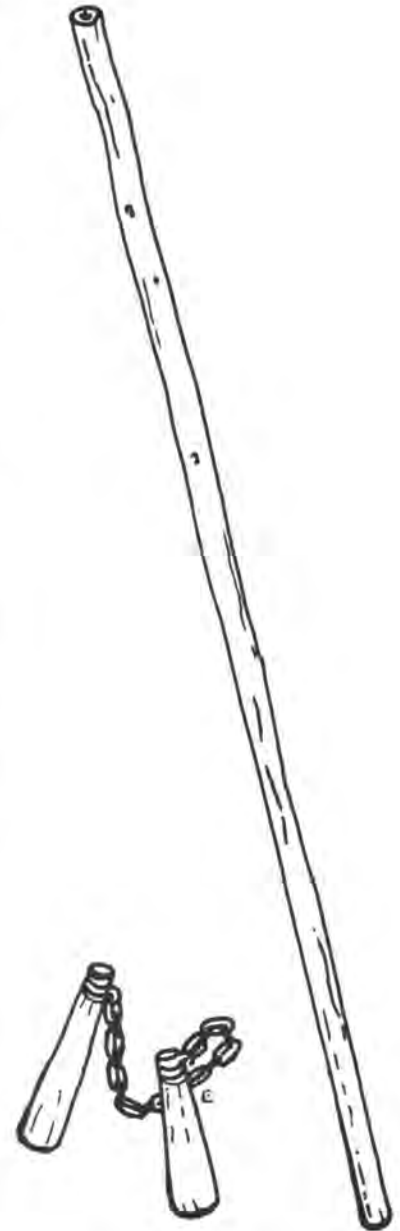
"Hello, Davy, you're looking well," the Jelly taunted him with his birth name. Scorning to make any reply, Rising Dream assumed a defensive stance and waited, forcing the Jelly to make the first move.

He did not have to wait long. The nameless one launched a low kick, which Rising Dream avoided, then a blow to the head, which he blocked, but then an unexpected third punch impacted squarely into his gut. Rising Dream felt something inside tear away from its neighbors.

"Nameless Jelly Dog!" he growled, as his foot crashed into his opponent's jaw. When the Jelly tried to counter with a punch, Rising Dream broke the wrist of the attacking arm, then swept the Jelly's feet out from under him.

A moment later it was over. Leaving the broken body of the traitor where it lay, Rising Dream stepped over the Jelly and sent his fist deep into the interior circuitry of the communications computer. Only when the last spark had died and the last readout faded did he stop to see to his own condition.

Rising Dream slowed his breathing, searching for the Heart of the Mountain. It came to him, and he felt new strength flow into his limbs.



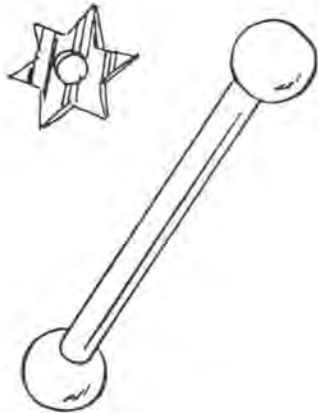
### About the Author

Chris McCubbin is a Nebraska native. He came to gaming by way of the comics industry, where he worked as an editor on Fantagraphics Books' two respected magazines, *Amazing Heroes* and *The Comics Journal*.

McCubbin has written six books for SJ Games, including *GURPS Fantasy Folk*, winner of the 1991 Gamer's Choice Award for Best Roleplaying Supplement. He's also written several adventures for *GURPS*.

In addition to being SJ Games' staff writer, he's also the company art director, and was the editor of the late *ADQ*.

He enjoys good movies, fun books, decent restaurants, alternative rock music and BBSing. He lives in Austin with his wife, Lynette Alcorn, and their cats – Polychrome, Clipper and Oliver.



### About the Game

This adventure originated in the spring of 1980, when Steve Jackson's magazine, *The Space Gamer*, published a drawing by Mitch O'Connell (the original drawing is reprinted on p. 5) as the contest for the issue. The challenge was to come up with the best game or game scenario to explain the action in the picture, along with a short fictional vignette.

The winner of the contest was B. Dennis Sustare, who was already an established game designer, best known for his off-beat RPG *Bunnies & Burrows* (coincidentally, also recently reincarnated as a *GURPS* worldbook). Sustare turned in an outline for an original game, *Assault on the CloneMaster*, a science-fiction combat game for two players. This idea so impressed Jackson that he invited Sustare to develop his concept into a complete game, to be published in *TSG*. The game appeared in *TSG* #30, as *Kung Fu 2100* (so we were using the name "Terminator" several years before the movie came out).

A few months later, Jackson decided to expand beyond magazines and publish games. The newborn Steve Jackson Games debuted with three games and the first package of *Cardboard Heroes Miniatures*. One of these games – the only one not designed by Jackson himself – was *Kung Fu 2100*. It was packaged in a plastic "pocket box" and cost \$3 (sigh).

Sadly, the game *Kung Fu 2100* has been out of print for several years, but SJ Games is pleased to have this opportunity to return to its origins, and the brutal, exciting world of the CloneMasters and the Terminators.

*He crossed the room and threw open the door. A single man in flowing robes of blue and gold crouched by the final clone tank. A handgun spoke, but with an imperceptible motion Rising Dream evaded the shot – he felt, rather than heard, the passing of the bullet inches from his right eardrum. The next shot passed equally close to his left ear, then Rising Dream had the gun in his own hand. He crushed the hated thing and contemptuously tossed it aside.*

*"Immortality," the CloneMaster begged. "Riches beyond your dreams and life eternal. I can give you that." He tugged pitifully at Rising Dream's gi.*

*Ignoring the creature before him, Rising Dream drove his fist through the plastic of the clone tank, spilling the acrid nutrient bath across the floor of the room. The half-formed thing within slumped out of the wrecked tank and onto the CloneMaster, who only whimpered softly to himself. Then, to Rising Dream's amazement, he took the vaguely-humanoid mass tenderly into his arms, crooning to it like a mother holding an injured child.*

*Time to finish it. Though the CloneMaster gave no hint of hearing, Rising Dream spoke, "Richard Michael Garson – self-styled 'CloneMaster' – you have been tried and found guilty of assassination of the human spirit by the Society of Thanatos. The sentence is death." Implacable as an iron meteor, the fist descended . . .*

## Background

In the year 2006, mankind perfected the technique of cloning exact replicas of adult human beings, with all skills and memories intact. The process, however, was very expensive, requiring massive mainframe computers for the storage and transfer of human memory, a sophisticated biological laboratory for the creation of the clone cultures and, in case of emergency, special equipment to accelerate the growth of a new clone.

Only the richest and most powerful could afford clones, and, in truth, even if the rich and powerful could have afforded to bring cloning to the masses, they had little interest in prolonging the lives of the fractious and ignorant general population.

For this reason, what should have been the greatest cultural leap forward since the domestication of fire instead sparked class warfare on a scale never before seen. All over the world the people rose up against their rulers, demanding – illogically, but irresistibly – equal rights to immortality.

Locked in their fortified towers, the elite slaughtered billions of insurgents with their private armies, poison gases and designer plagues. Eventually, the broken, scattered remnant of the Earth's populace was forced to submit to their once and future masters.

The rulers restored order with a brutal efficiency. The old cities were razed to the ground, and all technology – even metal itself – was forbidden to the masses. The "CloneMasters," as they began calling themselves, divided the world up into feudal fiefs, each one ruled over by a single CloneMaster, each CloneMaster with his own fully-equipped cloning laboratory in his own fortified mansion.

While outside the people scratched away at the soil with tools that would have been scorned in medieval times, inside the CloneMasters lived in a private, high-tech paradise. Although most of the common folk hated their masters passionately, the CloneMasters could always attract a fanatically loyal cadre of slaves and servants. The CloneMaster's servants received better quarters, and extra rations of food and clothing, but the ultimate prize – reserved for the bravest guards and most brilliant technicians – was a place in the memory banks of the CloneMaster's computer, or even, perhaps, a fief of their own.

But among the people, discontent grew. A shadowy figure went among the villages and towns preaching that explosives, guns and vehicles were not needed



to overthrow the CloneMasters – that mastery of body and spirit were enough to overcome the forces of oppression. Secretly, people began to gather around this new teacher, to learn from him.

Finally, in the last decade of the 21st century, the new rebellion was ready to strike. Stories began to be told of small groups of young men and women, wearing loose white clothing and scarlet belts, armed with nothing but hands, feet and will, who would appear from nowhere at a CloneMaster's fortress, destroy his tanks and computers, kill the CloneMaster himself, then vanish. It was said that these destroyers owed allegiance to a movement they called the Society of Thanatos, and called themselves "Terminators."

In response, the CloneMasters acquired a new breed of enforcer, capable of killing a disobedient serf with a single, merciless blow. This elite force called itself "Janizaries," but when the citizens spat their names in private, they called their new tormentors "Jellies." To say it aloud was death, but the rumor passed quickly among the people – the Jellies were failed Terminators, traitorous students of the Society of Thanatos.

Now it is the year 2100. The CloneMasters live in constant fear of the Terminators, but the Society of Thanatos has also endured heavy losses at the hands of the increasingly paranoid CloneMasters. The future of the world hangs in the balance.

## The Setting

This adventure takes place in an average-sized, rural CloneMaster fief somewhere in what was once the continental United States (GMs are encouraged to set the adventure in the region where they live and to incorporate prominent local geographical features in their descriptions).

The local CloneMaster is Richard M. Garson, originally a biochemist, and one of the pioneers of the cloning process. Garson rules his lands without undue cruelty, but with no tolerance whatsoever for dissent or disobedience. Garson has named his little kingdom "Fidelity."

The local population consists of subsistence farmers and a very few craftsman and merchants. Fidelity has no industries, and its most important export is Garson's cloning expertise – other CloneMasters frequently consult Garson whenever there's a technical difficulty with their cloning operation, and pay handsomely for his advice.

The Society of Thanatos has been active in Fidelity for over a decade, but only three years ago did an actual Proctor arrive. The Proctor – Righteous Wind – brought with him a dozen or so advanced students, and he has recently raised a few of these students (the PCs) to full Terminator status. In addition to the senior students who came to Fidelity with him, Righteous Wind has also acquired a few dozen younger pupils from Fidelity and neighboring fiefs. Righteous Wind moved his training camp to Fidelity when his former headquarters was compromised, after a couple of former pupils turned Jelly.

The placement of the rebel encampment depends on the local terrain. The rebels will make their headquarters far from the beaten path, someplace easily concealable from aerial observation. Good choices include deep woods, caverns or abandoned mines, remote valleys or ravines, or the ruins of an abandoned city.

Righteous Wind is a tall black man in his late 40s. He keeps his head shaved. His last mission as a Terminator cost him his left eye and three fingers from his left hand. He has an unusual sense of humor for a Society Proctor, and is very popular with civilian members of the local underground – his students rapidly find, however, that his genial nature does not translate to softness in training.

All of the above information is freely available to the PCs.

## About the Adventure

*Pawns of the CloneMaster* is a very cinematic adventure for two to five high-point-value characters. Although the setting could be used as the basis for an entertaining (if somewhat one-dimensional) campaign, it's primarily intended as a one-shot change-of-pace adventure.

Although the situation it portrays is rather "dark," *Pawns of the CloneMaster* should not be taken too seriously by either the players or the GM. The emphasis here is less on problem-solving or roleplaying than on good, old-fashioned *mayhem*. The intent is to offer the players a chance to take *GURPS Martial Arts* characters at the absolute outer edge of cinematic "realism" and then put them promptly to work breaking things and busting heads.

In *Pawns of the CloneMaster* the "reality check" is a distinctly low priority. This adventure is supposed to "make sense" only so far as a reasonably well-scripted comic book or adventure movie makes sense. Reality should never be allowed to interfere with the action. All the cinematic rules from *GURPS Martial Arts* (except, perhaps, the *Chambara* rules) are appropriate, and many optional rules designed to make *GURPS* correspond more closely to the real world can be ignored entirely.



## The Massacre

### Lyman Goldman

Lyman Goldman was a star of martial arts action-adventure movies and sensies in the early 21st century. The handsome, charismatic Goldman combined a genuine acting talent unusual in the action-adventure genre, with a revolutionary genius for martial arts techniques.

In 2028 Goldman – not yet 40 and at the height of his popularity – unexpectedly quit the entertainment industry, several years before the rioting reached critical levels. He bought a small island a few hundred miles off the coast of Florida.

Goldman's radical politics were well-known – he had angrily and publicly refused to allow himself to be cloned or brain-taped. Goldman had a unique personal philosophy incorporating elements of objectivism, libertarianism and Taoism. He announced his retirement from public life with the terse statement, "I have no stomach to witness the end of civilization."

Fifteen years later the riots were over, and the newly-christened CloneMasters were consolidating their hold on the world. One day, a small party of surveyors, accompanied by a somewhat larger group of armed guards, landed a helicopter on a small Pacific atoll near the Gulf of Mexico. They were met by a middle-aged hermit, who politely escorted them to a large, sturdy house entirely handmade from native materials.

The surveyors told the hermit that their employer had claimed the island and they were going to build his new mansion where the hermit's home now stood. The man replied, politely, that not only the house, but the whole island was his. The surveyors told him he had no legal right to the property. The hermit said that while his looks might be deceiving, he really did have full legal title to the whole island. The surveyors said that all former claims and rights had been abolished, and the only relevant law was now the will of the CloneMasters. The hermit ordered the men to leave his property immediately.

One of the guards leveled his rifle at the hermit. After that, the account becomes confused, but a few seconds later all the guards were dead, and their weapons were smashed and useless. The old hermit wordlessly climbed into the team's helicopter, and flew off, leaving the survivors stranded. They were not rescued for several days.

The CloneMasters' data banks soon revealed that the island had been the property of Lyman Goldman. The stolen copter was found several weeks later, crashed deep in a Louisiana bayou. Of Lyman Goldman there was no trace.

At the start of the adventure, the GM should read the following to the PCs:

*Your examination takes all day. When the final test of your abilities is complete, you stand before your Proctor, trying not to show your anxiety. He looks each of you over carefully, then speaks, without smiling. "I will consider my decision overnight. Compose your spirits and get some sleep. Report here after breakfast."*

*Terminators do not show disappointment. Each of you quietly bids your teacher good night, and goes off to his own chosen sleeping place. Despite Righteous Wind's exhortation, however, and for all your training in mental discipline, you get little sleep that night.*

*The next morning you have little appetite for your morning bowl of rice, but you eat it anyway. You notice that egg and a bit of roast duck have been added to the grain. To your overworked imaginations, even this has significance – is the special breakfast intended to celebrate your new status, or is it just a meaningless coincidence?*

*After the meal, you gather at the practice grounds. Righteous Wind walk in a few minutes later and takes his familiar seat before you. He says, following a long moment of silence, "Your training is complete. As a Proctor of the Society of Thanatos, I declare you all Terminators, and fully qualified to strike directly against the forces of tyranny."*

*Righteous Wind claps his hands once, and a novice student appears carrying the scarlet belts reserved for Terminators. He silently hands one to each of you, and you rebelt your gi with the mark of your new status. Each of you bows to your teacher and thanks him for his years of training. He solemnly acknowledges your thanks.*

*Suddenly, Righteous Wind's face breaks into an enormous grin. From all sides of the training ground the other students rush to congratulate you – the first members of your cell to attain full Terminator status. Somebody produces a gift – a sealed bottle of French champagne, vintage 2013, its monetary worth almost incalculable, its history unguessable. There's enough wine for each of you and your teacher to have several small cups full.*

*An hour or so later, Righteous Wind orders the other students to return to their daily routine. He takes you aside. "You should take some time to come to grips*



*with your new duties. Why don't you go out and spend a couple of nights on the land. When you come back, we can discuss your first mission." After some debate, you decide to spend three nights in the wilderness. The first two nights you'll each spend alone, then at sunset on the third night you'll meet together. The next morning, you'll return to Righteous Wind and the training camp.*

*For two days and nights you contemplate your new responsibilities, your years of training . . . and your own mortality. You know that the odds are against any of you ever surviving to become a Proctor, much less seeing the final fall of the CloneMasters.*

*When you come together on the third evening of your retreat, the mood is solemn, but your resolve is firm. You talk quietly together until long after the last light fades.*

*No sooner have you settled down to rest, however, than the night's stillness is destroyed by the flash and thunder of distant explosions – explosions that come from the direction of Righteous Wind's training camp!*

The PCs are camped just over a mile from the training center, but the intervening terrain is rough, and it will take almost half an hour for the Terminators to arrive.

By the time they get to the camp, the main battle is over. The first sight of the enemy will be four helicopters sitting in an open area near the camp. The copters are unarmed transports, each fitted to carry about a dozen passengers. Each one is guarded by a pilot – stats as for a technician (pp. 23-24) but replace the primary and secondary Scientific skills with Pilot (Helicopter) and Mechanic; they carry Beretta pistols – and a single Pacification officer. Pilots are in the cockpits of their helicopters, while the guards are stationed outside the open cargo doors on the side. The guards have large flashlights that they hold in their off hands. The flashlights do not interfere in any way with aiming or firing their weapons.

If any of the guards or pilots become aware of the Terminators, they will be able to send out a general alarm if left unmolested for three seconds. A pilot who becomes aware that the landing zone is under attack will raise the alarm, then lift off five seconds later. A Terminator can grasp the landing gear of a rising helicopter for two seconds after it gets off the ground (three seconds if he makes a successful Jumping roll). It requires a successful roll vs. DX to grasp the landing gear, then the Terminator must make a Climbing roll at -2 to climb up the fuselage of the copter and into the cargo doors. A Terminator in the cockpit of the helicopter will be able to completely disable the machine – including the radio – in one second.

The Terminators should not be allowed to try to pilot the helicopters, even if their intent is to crash them into the CloneMaster's mansion – such an action would be a violation of the anti-technological principles of the Society of Thanatos.

Beyond the helicopters are about a dozen surviving Pacification Troopers (the GM is free to adjust the number of survivors up or down, depending on the number of PCs), sweeping the area for survivors and incriminating evidence. Like the helicopter guards, these troopers have powerful flashlights. If the Terminators took out the force at the landing zone quietly, and move on quickly, the Pacification forces will be widely dispersed in groups of two or three – it should be easy for the Terminators to stalk them and eliminate them quietly, group by group.

If the helicopters managed to alert the forces on patrol, the Pacifiers will form up into a two-man column and immediately begin to march double time back to the landing zone. If they make it, they'll spread out and make for any helicopter that seems reasonably intact. Any attack against alerted Pacifiers will probably draw fire from at least four or five weapons.

If the Terminators avoid the copters entirely, and proceed directly to what's



### *The Society of Thanatos*

After abandoning his island refuge, Lyman Goldman wandered the North American continent, becoming increasingly enraged at what he saw. He had been prepared for the fall of society – had even, perversely, looked forward to it – but he could not tolerate the coldblooded despotism of the CloneMasters.

Gradually, he began to attract followers. To the youngest and healthiest of his disciples he began to teach the martial arts techniques that he had created and refined during his sojourn on the island.

Soon, the new movement needed a name. Goldman dubbed it "The Society of Thanatos," after the Greek word for death – since, as the ancient masters had taught, "the way of the samurai is death." He called his fully-initiated students Terminators. After the first Terminator raids, the CloneMasters literally didn't know what hit them. One day a CloneMaster would be in full command of his fief and in normal communication with his peers, the next he would be dead, his home a ruin, his servants dead or scattered and his clones and computers destroyed.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## The Society of Thanatos (Continued)

Terminators who survived three to five missions (and there were few of those, even in those early days) became "Proctors" – teachers sent out to recruit new rebels and train new Terminators. The empowering teachings of the Society of Thanatos spread among the demoralized people.

In 2100, Phase 1 of the society's plan is coming to an end. Phase 1 is a campaign of organized terrorism against the CloneMasters by the Terminators, designed to force the CloneMasters to draw inward, and barricade themselves even more securely in their fortress-homes. If Terminator raids have become ever more dangerous and deadly in recent years, this only tells the society that their master plan is working.

In Phase 2 the people, cut off from their masters by the CloneMasters' justifiable paranoia, will begin to organize in earnest, making larger, more controlled strikes against the infrastructure of the CloneMasters' power, destroying sources of supply and lines of communication. In the meantime, the Terminator attacks will continue, to keep the CloneMasters in their hidey-holes.

Phase 3, currently scheduled to begin some time before 2150, will be the real revolution, during which the people will rise up *en masse* and sweep away their oppressors.

### Society Ideals

Potential Terminators are typically recruited between the ages of 10 and 13, and their training continues until they are anywhere between 18 and 25 (students are allowed to progress at their own rate). Less than 5% of those who undertake the training ever graduate to full Terminator status. Terminators never fight with weapons of any kind, believing that doing so undermines the crucial harmony between body and spirit. They are actively discouraged from even picking up found objects to use as clubs or missiles.

Training is Spartan and cruel – but so are the daily lives of the 21st-century serfs.

Students sleep outside, in all sorts of weather. They harden their minds and bodies through painful trials and rituals. They often fast for long periods of time (though when they eat, they eat much better than the serfs who feed them – the people gladly starve and sacrifice for the benefit of the Terminators, whom they consider their only hope for freedom). The Terminators are taught to kill without mercy and die without regret. By the time their training is done, a Terminator can dodge bullets, smash through stone or steel and maintain absolute control over his (or her – fully 25% of Terminators are young women) own body.

*Continued on next page . . .*

left of the training center, they'll be able to hunt down the Pacification troops on patrol, but the helicopters will lift off and fly away as soon as patrols stop checking in on schedule – patrols check in by radio every 10 minutes.



### What Happened?

Somebody in Fidelity Village betrayed the location of the Society of Thanatos training center to the CloneMaster. A wave of helicopters came in low and fast, dropping bombs on the site. When their load was expended, they returned to the CloneMaster's headquarters. Meanwhile, a second wave of four helicopters landed and unloaded about 50 Pacification troops, who set up mortar emplacements and began shelling the training center with explosive shells and poison gas (the nerve toxin used acts fast and disperses quickly – by the time the PCs arrive it's completely dissipated). After several minutes of intense shelling, the Pacifiers stowed their mortars and moved out for final cleanup.

Despite the completely unexpected nature of the attack, and the loss of Righteous Wind in the first wave of bombing, the junior trainees of the camp still managed to take out more than half of the invaders. But by the time the PCs finish

dealing with the CloneMaster's invasion force, the only survivors of the training camp will be 1d+1 of the youngest novices (aged 10 to 12), who obeyed an order to run and hide themselves when the attack began. These children will be able to tell the Terminators most of the details of the attack.

### What Now?

The GM should tell the Terminators that the safest place they can think of for the children is the mill of Fidelity Village. The miller is an active resistance leader, and the mill has long been a Society of Thanatos safehouse. The journey to the village takes about 11 hours on foot, so starting the trek after midnight, the Terminators and the novices would arrive at the village sometime after noon. There are several out-of-the-way places where the whole group can hole up until dark in reasonable safety.

For each hour the party is actually on the move (not counting any time spent holed up in the wilderness), the GM should roll 2d. On an 11, a helicopter flies overhead – the party has 2d seconds to get themselves and the children out of sight. On a 12 the party meets four Pacifiers on a jeep patrol. The group will hear the vehicle approaching 3d seconds before it comes into view. In either case the PCs will need to roll vs. Invisibility Art to remain unnoticed by the patrols. The GM should roll once vs. a Camouflage skill of 13 for the entire group of children, to see if they get out of sight in time.

If any of the fugitives are noticed by a jeep patrol, the vehicle will stop, and the Pacifiers will move out as a unit to investigate. If they are spotted from the air, the helicopter crew will fire one submachine-gun burst at -9 (hits only on a 3 or 4) at whoever failed the roll, then begin a search pattern and call for jeep support. The jeep and the helicopter will each cross the PCs' escape route 1 to 3 times in the next half hour. If the party succeeds in concealing itself for that time, the patrols move on. If the Terminators destroy a jeep patrol, there is a 4 in 6 chance that another jeep will be dispatched to check on the missing patrol, and will cross the party's path 1 to 3 times.

The usual approach to the mill from the training center is to swim across the mill stream and enter through a hidden trapdoor behind the water wheel. This approach should not be made during the daytime – the mill is open for business and quite busy, and the water wheel is in motion, making the approach quite dangerous (roll vs. Swimming-3 to get around the wheel; if the swimmer fails the roll, he's sucked in, taking 1d-2 crushing damage times the amount he missed the Swimming roll by). Finally, the mill stream is downstream from the CloneMaster's mansion, and *can* be seen from the mansion's guard towers – it would take a pair of high-powered binoculars and a *very* lucky or attentive guard to notice people swimming across to the mill from the mansion, but the Society of Thanatos is nothing if not thorough in their precautions.

At night, the wheel is locked, the mill is closed, and the stream can be crossed easily and safely (make an unmodified Swimming roll – the children all have a Swimming skill of 12). The nearest safe wilderness hiding place is about a half hour's march from the mill.

The only other approach to the mill is the road from Fidelity Village. This is also the road that leads to the CloneMaster's mansion, and, in the aftermath of the big strike on the training center, it's *very* heavily used by Pacification troops. Check as above for patrols, but check every 5 minutes. It will take 15 minutes for the group to cross the village and another 15 minutes to get to the mill.

## The Demonstration

In the metalless economy of 2100, the stone mill has once again become an economic center of the community. Fidelity Village boasts an excellent hydraulic-

## The Society of Thanatos (Continued)

When a trainee attains full Terminator status, he receives his society name. This name inevitably consists of an adjective describing Zen ideals or martial arts prowess (leaping, harmonious, rising) with an object from nature or mythology (leaf, fox, fist, dream, dragon). Minor deviations to make the name easier to pronounce (i.e. Shadow Lotus, not Shadowy Lotus) are allowed. This name is sometimes shortened to just the noun for the Terminator's classmates and closest friends (e.g., Leaping Dragon could get away with calling Rising Dream just "Dream"), but very few are ever permitted this degree of informality.

If a Terminator survives three to five missions for the society (which less than 10% of them do), they become Proctors, and take a vow never to take direct action against the CloneMasters except in self defense. Instead, the Proctors go out among the people, and set up new cells to train future Restitutors and organize the serfs for Phase 2.

The society's teachings are as harsh as its training. Life is cheap, and mercy is forbidden to enemies and traitors.

There is more than a trace of Luddism in the Society's teachings. The hard-core members of the rebellion (including all the Terminators) believe that technology – the source of the CloneMasters' power – is intrinsically evil, and must be abolished. They look to a peaceful agrarian anarchy to replace the rule of the CloneMasters. There is, however, a growing moderate movement in the rebellion that wants to appropriate CloneMaster technology, rather than destroy it, and use it for the benefit of the people. So far, dissent between the factions has been kept to a manageable level – both factions agree that the really important thing is to get rid of the CloneMasters; philosophical debate can wait until the common goal of the CloneMasters' destruction is reached.

The final fate of Lyman Goldman is unknown. Many of his followers believe he still lives, even though he'd be more than 100 years old in 2100.



## Do-It-Yourself Terminators

If the players wish to build their own Terminators, rather than using the pre-generated characters for this adventure, they can be built according to the following guidelines.

All Terminators are at least 600-point characters. They must have at least ST 13, DX 14, IQ 10 and HT 13, and the advantages Combat Reflexes, High Pain Threshold, Toughness 2, Patron (Society of Thanatos; 25 points) and Trained by a Master.

They also have the mandatory disadvantages Enemy: CloneMasters (-60 points), Fanaticism, Poverty (Poor), Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) and Vow (Never use weapons or any technology above TL5; -10 points). They get full value for these disadvantages (-110 points), but cannot take more than 20 points of personal disadvantages, nor can these disadvantage be anything that's likely to interfere with their duties (GM's option, but Terminator personal disadvantages should effectively be limited to minor character flaws – Jealousy, Intolerance, Stubbornness, etc.). They may take up to -5 points of quirks.

As "basic training," a Society of Thanatos trainee must learn Judo and Karate (attaining a skill of at least 18 before he can become a Terminator), Meditation to level 16, and put at least one point each in Savoir-Faire (Dojo), Shuriken, Staff, Flail and the Yawara maneuver (see sidebar, p. 15). Society trainees are allowed to use traditional martial arts weapons to defend themselves, until they actually gain full Terminator status, after which they are expected to rely entirely on their own bodies.

*Continued on next page . . .*



powered mill, built for the community at the CloneMaster's expense. The mill, powered by a water wheel, produces enough flour and meal to feed not just Fidelity Village but all the outlying farms and the CloneMaster's household as well, with enough left over for a small but profitable export business to several nearby urban fiefs.

The miller, Brian Jurgenson, is a large man in his early 50s. A lifelong bachelor, he's a morose man who only gets impassioned when he's talking about the coming fall of the CloneMasters. He has been a leader of the local resistance and an important Society of Thanatos contact for almost two decades. Jurgenson is the CloneMaster's nearest neighbor, and he's always been scrupulous in turning over his receipts from the sale of his grain abroad. As far as anyone can tell, the CloneMaster has no suspicion of his treasonous activities. In recent years he has taken a less active role in the underground. Those who have noticed Jurgenson's absence believe he feels eclipsed by Righteous Wind and his training setup. Still, Jurgenson has never failed the movement when it has asked for his help.

The trapdoor behind the water wheel opens into a secret 15-by-15-foot room underneath Jurgenson's bedroom. By the time the Terminators have pulled the last dripping child onto the cement floor, Jurgenson will appear through the concealed door at the top of the flimsy wooden stairway, holding a lit candle.

When he sees who it is, he'll express amazement and joy that the Terminators and the children are still alive, and produce blankets and towels, fresh milk, tea and home-brewed beer, homemade bread and cold meat.

Once the fugitives are provided for, he'll dress and leave for the village, returning after about 90 minutes with three individuals wearing dark, heavy cloaks and carrying heavy packs. Jurgenson will tell the children that they're leaving right away – the three townsmen will take them to a safe place in the wilderness for the rest of the night, and then see them on to safe homes in neighboring fiefs.

Once the children are gone, he'll tell the Terminators that there'll be a meeting of the local resistance the next night to make plans. Then he'll say good night, leaving the PCs to bed themselves down in the secret room, using the blankets he brought them. By training-camp standards, a dry floor and a warm blanket amount to luxury – the Terminators should sleep fine.

## Bad News

The PCs will awake about dawn the next day, when Jurgenson unlatches the

water wheel and begins grinding the day's grain. There's plenty of food and drink left over from the night before. If any of the Terminators try to leave the secret room, Jurgenson will spot them and hurry them back to the hidden door in his bedroom, saying, "Thank God there were no customers here – just stay downstairs, all right? It's not safe for you up here."

An hour or so before noon, Jurgenson will come through the door with a white face. He'll crouch at the top of the stairs and tell the PCs he has horrible news.

"I just got word from town. The children you brought last night were caught – all of them. They're going to be executed at midnight in the town square.

"But that's not the worst of it. The Pacifiers are gathering everybody to the town square right now. After the children are killed, the CloneMaster is going to hold a lottery. He's going to put everybody's name into a box, and draw 40. Everyone whose name is drawn will be executed then and there – one townsman for every Pacifier that was killed in the raid the night before last. He says it's our punishment for protecting the training center all these years."

Before the Terminators can ask any questions, there's a loud pounding on the front door of the mill. The miller jumps at the sound.

"That's the Pacifiers, come to fetch me into town. For God's sake let them take me. I can take care of myself – you just have to stop the executions tonight."

With that he hurries off, fastening the door behind him. The PCs hear booted feet above, then muffled voices for a few minutes, then all becomes quiet.

### *What's Going On*

Jurgenson has betrayed the revolution. He's the one who went to the CloneMaster with the location of the training center. In return he's been granted a place in the household of a remote CloneMaster, and a chance to someday gain a clone of his own.

The men to whom Jurgenson turned over the children were, like him, collaborators and turncoats. They led the children into a trap – Pacifiers used sleep gas to take the children without any effective resistance.

The planned demonstration for the night is a hastily cooked-up plan between Jurgenson and the CloneMaster, designed to lure the Terminators into a trap.

Of course, the Pacifiers could try to take the Terminators at the mill, but the CloneMaster does not want his mill to become a battleground, and he also likes the idea of destroying the Terminators in full view of the entire community.

The CloneMaster is not particularly anxious to kill off 40 townsmen (almost 10% of his subjects!), and he hopes that the PCs will make their move before the executions begin. His plan is to destroy the Terminators when they make their rescue attempt, to execute the Society of Thanatos children, and then to let the townsmen go at the last second, hopefully thoroughly terrified and demoralized. However, if the Terminators don't show up to get slaughtered, the executions will come off as announced.

### *In Town*

Fidelity Village is a tiny community of about 150 souls. About 300 more serfs live on subsistence farms scattered throughout the CloneMaster's fief. There are also about 50 technicians and servants living in or around the CloneMaster's mansion, and about 100 Pacification troops (under normal circumstances – at the moment the CloneMaster has purchased or borrowed about 200 more troops from neighboring fiefs, to augment his forces during his strike against the Society of Thanatos) garrisoned in the village and at the mansion.

*1. The Town Square:* This is the physical and economic center of Fidelity Village. A farmer's market is held here every Tuesday, when the citizens get a chance to sell or trade their meager excess. At one end of the square is an uncovered concrete bandstand, flanked by two concrete poles that can be used to hold artificial lighting, banners or bunting. At the other end is a marble statue of the CloneMaster.

*2. The Town Hall:* This is a bare, wooden building used for town meetings, gatherings and celebrations decreed by the CloneMaster.

*3. The CloneMaster's Store:* Garson maintains a small store where citizens can pick up what necessities they can't produce locally or the small luxuries that they can rarely afford. The storekeeper is also the town mayor, and he occupies the house next to the store. Prices are not extortionistic, but the CloneMaster does make a profit from the store.

*4. The Church:* This is a neat, unpretentious chapel, also built by the CloneMaster. Its traditional, stained-glass (actually plastic) windows are one of the few

### *Do-It-Yourself Terminators (Continued)*

When training in the basics has progressed far enough, Goldman's system breaks down into five separate disciplines, all of which the trainee must master in order to become a Terminator. There are two offensive disciplines (Iron Fist and Lightning Foot), two defensive disciplines (Body of Mist and Monkey Soul), and one discipline devoted to healing and self awareness (Mountain Heart). A Terminator must master each skill and maneuver within each of these disciplines to level 16 or better (except where noted).

*Iron Fist:* This discipline allows the Terminator to destroy solid objects and disable an opponent with a single blow. It consists of the Iron Hand advantage and the skills Breaking Blow, Power Blow and Pressure Points.

*Lightning Foot:* This discipline consists of the assortment of advanced maneuvers, concentrating on kicking techniques, that make the Terminator so deadly in one-on-one combat. The maneuvers involved are Aggressive Parry (learned to at least level 12), Back Kick, Drop Kick, Flying Jump Kick, Hit Location (Karate), Hook Kick, Jump Kick, Kicking, Knee Strike, Shin Kick, Spin Kick and Sweeping Kick.

*Body of Mist:* This is the art of not being seen and of avoiding ranged attacks. It allows the Terminators to infiltrate enemies or get close in before they strike. The skills involved are Acrobatics, Hypnotism, Invisibility Art, Light Walk, Parry Missile Weapons, Stealth and the maneuvers Enhanced Dodge and Roll with Blow.

*Monkey Soul:* This is an assortment of skills designed to make the Terminator hard to hit or catch. They include Acrobatics (note that Acrobatics is part of both the Monkey Soul and Body of Mist disciplines – the character need only learn this skill once), Body Language, Climbing, Drunken Fighting, Jumping and Traps, as well as the Enhanced Parry maneuver.

*Mountain Heart:* This highly mystical discipline puts the student in touch with his body – so much so that he can actually ignore massive amounts of physical damage. Mountain Heart consists of the skills Body Control, Breath Control, Mountain Heart (see p. 14) and Yin/Yang Healing.

*Optional Skills:* The above represents the core of Goldman's kung fu technique, but there are many Society of Thanatos proctors who know and teach other disciplines, not so central to Goldman's method. PCs can freely buy any normal advantage, skill and maneuver from *GURPS Martial Arts*, and may also buy any cinematic abilities from *GURPS Martial Arts* with the GM's permission, as optional abilities.

## New Skill

### Mountain Heart

M/VH

**Prerequisite:** Body Control 15+

This (extremely cinematic) skill was Lyman Goldman's greatest discovery during his years of solitary meditation. With Mountain Heart you can actually convince your body that it has taken less damage than it really has.

To call upon Mountain Heart requires at least three seconds. You must first make a Breath Control roll, then a Body Control roll, then the Mountain Heart roll itself. If any of these rolls are failed, the process must start over again, with the Breath Control roll.

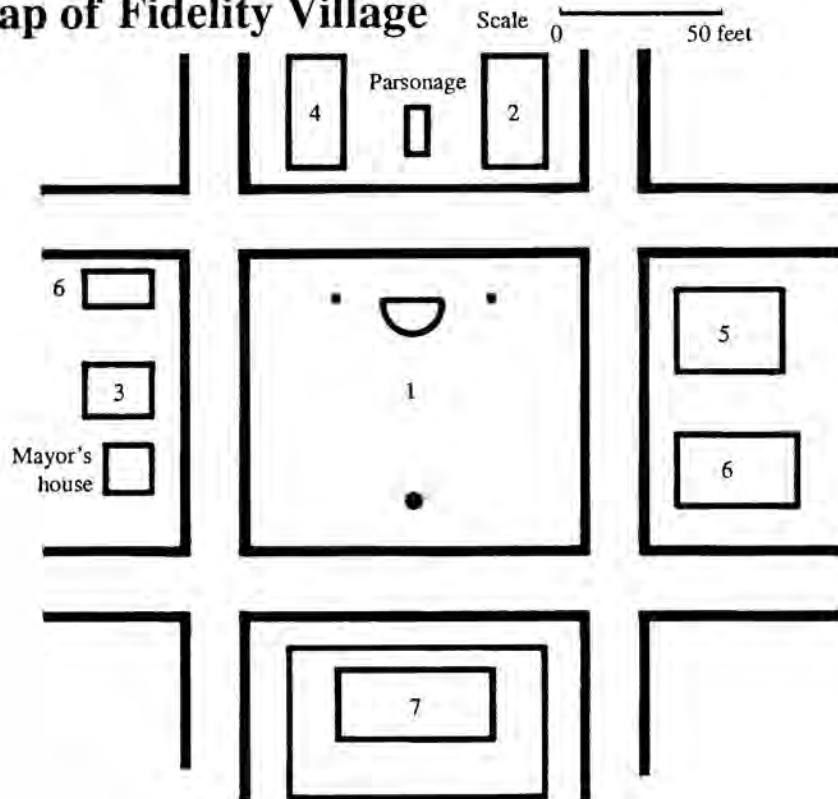
If the Mountain Heart roll is successful, you take back 1d of lost hit points. You may never exceed your normal hit point total with Mountain Heart, nor may you use Mountain Heart to recover more hit points than you had after your last successful use of Mountain Heart. (For example, Shadow Lotus's last successful use of Mountain Heart brought her to 11 hit points; she takes three more points of damage and uses Mountain Heart again – she may not recover more than three hit points from this use of Mountain Heart.) Once you've successfully used Mountain Heart, you may not use it again until you take fresh damage.

Characters should keep track of their "real" damage, irrespective of Mountain Heart rolls, since this damage indicates the amount of time necessary for a full recovery. For instance, if Leaping Dragon takes 25 points of damage, and regains 13 of them through Mountain Heart, he'll have to recuperate long enough to heal all 25 points, not just the 12 he still felt after Mountain Heart. Also, if a character sustains HT×6 points of "real" damage, he dies due to massive internal trauma, regardless of Mountain Heart.

Mountain Heart is a very powerful cinematic ability, and GMs should exercise extreme caution in introducing it into campaigns other than the one portrayed in this adventure.



## Map of Fidelity Village



bits of beauty in the otherwise drab village. The town parson at the moment is a Dominican priest, but the church also hosts Protestant services on Sunday evenings, led by a lay minister. It's often a site for weddings of all faiths. A small cottage next to the church serves as the parsonage.

**5. The Inn:** This is an old-fashioned inn with a common room below and several bedrooms above. The innkeeper and his wife are the only employees, and they live in an apartment on the first floor. The common room provides the townspeople with a place to go when their day's work is done. At least one on-duty Pacifier is stationed at the inn every night from sunset to midnight, to guard against sedition. At midnight the common room is closed, by the CloneMaster's decree. Overnight guests are usually peddlers, or minor envoys to the CloneMaster, not important enough to stay at the mansion. Sometimes a traveling entertainer comes through.

**6. The Infirmary:** This small building was also built by the CloneMaster for the community. Once a week one of the CloneMaster's physicians comes to town, and provides TL7 medical care. The rest of the week the high-tech, metal equipment is kept locked away, but the physician's assistant (the local midwife) can provide TL5 First Aid. There's a fully-equipped TL8 surgery and intensive-care facility at the CloneMaster's mansion, and sometimes seriously ill or injured townsmen are brought there, if the CloneMaster considers them important enough to be worth the effort.

**7. The Barracks:** This concrete, two-story building, surrounded by an electric fence, houses the town garrison of the Pacifiers. It is the only building in town with an electric power supply. Normally one squad of 10 Pacifiers occupies the village barracks for about two weeks, then they return to the mansion, and another squad rotates down to the village. With its electricity and climate control, the barracks represents a standard of living far beyond that enjoyed by the townspeople. The barracks is also the only place in the village where the mansion can be reached electronically, via a radio with a strong directional antenna.



8. *The commissary*: The commissary is basically a flat roof supported by poles. In cold weather, canvas walls are hung to keep the heat in. Mounted above the front of the commissary is a wooden sign board where the CloneMaster posts propagandistic messages to the town. Currently the sign reads, "Honest labor brings rich rewards."

Every subject of the CloneMaster is entitled to up to three meals a day at the commissary – the fare is simple but nutritious. Nobody *has* to eat at the commissary – in fact, on the average only about 100 people show up for any given meal. The commissary is staffed by elderly residents of Fidelity. It also serves as a distribution center for baby formula and vitamin supplements for children – the CloneMaster believes a healthy serf is a happy serf.

### *The Hostages*

By the time the Terminators hear that the town is being held hostage, the citizens will have already been rounded up. The CloneMaster made sure that his collaborator was the last one taken.

The citizens of Fidelity have been gathered into a space that takes up 1/3 of the total ground area of the square, enclosed by a triple strand of concertina wire (see sidebar, pp. 16-17). They are packed into the area quite tightly – no more than about 1/5 of the approximately 450 peasants in the enclosure can sit at any one time, and only the oldest and frailest can lie down.

The guards have allowed the citizens to dig themselves an open latrine in the far corner of the enclosure (the entrenching tool used was confiscated and returned to the barracks as soon as the job was done), but there is no screen or enclosure around the pit. Several elderly ladies from the commissary remain near the latrine and provide the women with a measure of privacy by forming a circle around them and spreading their voluminous skirts to form a screen.

The children from the Society of Thanatos are chained to the concrete post to the right of the bandstand. Each child is secured no fewer than three times: by a neck collar attached to a iron ring fastened around the pole itself, and by manacles attached to the wrists of the children on either side of him. The children slump dejectedly around the pole.

The chains are not metal – they're a high tech plastic polymer that cannot be snapped or broken by bare hands (the concrete posts, on the other hand, can be snapped with a successful roll vs. Breaking Blow – but 1d-3 of the children will have to make DX rolls to avoid the falling pole, taking 4d damage if they fail). The chains will part if they take at least 20 points of damage from a metal tool or bullets. The guard commander has the only key to the chains – all the locks are identical.

Four townsmen are excluded from the wire enclosure. They are the town elders – the mayor, the innkeeper, the priest and the miller.

There are only 10 guards deployed around the square – the normal garrison for the barracks. The guards have taken their two jeeps out of the barracks compound and parked them at the places indicated. Four of the guards remain stationary in the crossings at the four corners of the square. Four more patrol around the outside of the concertina wire enclosure. The ninth stands on the bandstand, keeping a special eye on the children chained to the post. The final Pacifier – the squad commander – stands near the four village elders. The commander has the same stats as a regular Pacifier, but he's armed with a pistol (Beretta 92, p. B208) rather than a submachine gun.

The most effective security comes from the helicopter that circles over the square. The side door is open, and inside are three Pacifiers, two with submachine guns and binoculars, and a third behind a light machine gun on a swivel mount. The helicopter circles about 150' up, but in case of trouble it will swoop to within

### *New Maneuver*

*Yawara (Average)*

*Defaults to Karate -3 or Brawling -5, Cannot exceed prerequisite skill level*

A yawara is a short, weighted stick. The martial artist grips the stick in his fist, and uses the weighted ends to do additional damage to his opponent. Yawara is not considered a weapon skill, but a Karate maneuver. A martial artist using a yawara does +3 damage with all hand attacks.

Yawara doesn't affect the martial artist's parry – just his chance to hit and his damage.

### *Heavy Weapons and Concertina Wire*

*M60, 7.62 × 51 MM*

Damage 7d, SS 19, Acc. 10, 1/2D 1,000, Max 4,700, Wt. 23, RoF 10, shots 100, ST 13, Rcl. -1.

This light machine gun is a military workhorse. It's fired using the Guns (Light Automatic) skill, and is fed with 100-round, disintegrating link belts. It can be fired from a tripod or from a more permanent mount.



*Browning M2, .50 BMG*

Damage: 12d, SS 20, Acc. 16, 1/2D 1,200, Max 5,000, Wt. 84/128, RoF 8, Shots 100, Rcl -1.

By the year 2100, the Browning .50-caliber has been one of the most common heavy machine guns in the world for almost two centuries. It's fired using the Gunner (Machine Gun) skill. The gun itself weighs 84 lbs., and the heavy mounting plate required for the gun weighs another 128 lbs. The gun is belt fed, usually with 100-round disintegrating belts.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## Heavy Weapons and Concertina Wire (Continued)

### Concertina Wire

Concertina wire is coiled barbed wire. Its coil shape allows it to be compressed tightly for easy transport, or stretched out to defend an area against intruders. A single strand of concertina wire stretches up to 15 hexes and stands 3' to 4' tall, depending on how far the strand is extended. Concertina wire is free-standing, and can be easily curved to form an enclosure or defend an odd-shaped area. The strand is usually held in place by wiring it to tent stakes driven into the ground. A pair of heavy, quilted gloves with palms and fingers protected by steel rivets are required to deploy concertina wire. The gloves cost \$50 and weigh 2 lbs. per pair.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## The Approach

Using Invisibility Art, it will be easy for the Terminators to sneak into town and then into one of the buildings surrounding the square. (Give the helicopter a single Vision roll of 12 for purposes of the Invisibility Art contest.) Once inside they won't be disturbed, but not knowing that in advance, they'll probably make some attempt to conceal themselves anyway. The different buildings around the square offer various opportunities for concealment.

**The Barracks:** This is a two-story building with a flat roof covered with various antennas and other convenient protuberances. It would be the perfect hiding spot, except for the fact that it is tightly locked and completely surrounded by a 15-foot, high-powered electric fence (3d damage for each round in contact with the fence, must make a roll vs. ST-5 to pull yourself away from the fence). The fence is prominently posted "DANGER: HIGH VOLTAGE." Both the gate and the barracks door are protected by sophisticated electronic locks that cannot be picked without TL8 equipment. A successful Breaking Blow roll can destroy the gate or heavy wooden doors, but this *will* attract the attention of 1d+2 guards. There are only one gate and one door at ground level, but there is a door on the roof.

**The Store:** The large, plate-glass windows at the front of the store offer little opportunity for concealment inside. A short false front rises 4' above the flat roof

50' of the ground (which is still more than 20' above the roof of the tallest building in town – well out of jumping range). Every hour a second helicopter comes and replaces the one on duty, allowing the first to return to the mansion and refuel.

None of the guards, in the air or on the ground, will have any compunction whatsoever about firing into the crowd inside the enclosure.

Finally, the square has been wired with powerful arc lights and a PA system for the night's festivities (techs from the mansion finished installing the lights and sound about the time the miller was "taken").

Every hour or so the priest is allowed to go draw a bucket of water and deliver it to the people in the enclosure. Once or twice an hour, the miller gets into a loud argument with the guard commander, protesting the injustice of the situation and demanding to see the CloneMaster. About noon the squad leader will strike Jurgenson on the face with the butt of his revolver, producing a large bruise and drawing a trickle of blood. After that the miller's outbursts will be somewhat less frequent and strident, but he'll continue to try to appeal to the guards. (This whole exchange, including the blow across the face, was cooked up beforehand between the miller – who's an excellent actor – and the commander.)

– this could easily conceal the Terminators. There is a back door, locked. The lock could be easily broken on a successful Breaking Blow, but to do it without making inconvenient noise requires a roll at -6. If the roll succeeds by less than 6, the GM should make a hearing roll for each of the five Pacifiers closest to the building.

*The Mayor's House:* This is a comfortable (by 21st-century peasant standards) one-story cottage with a low peaked roof. The roof offers no concealment, but the whole party of rescuers could easily make themselves comfortable in the curtained front room until things start to happen.

*The Infirmary:* The roof of this concrete shack is low and flat and offers no concealment whatsoever. The one door is quite sturdy (because of the medicines and surgical supplies stored within), and it cannot be opened quietly. (Roll as for the barracks, above.)

*The Church:* Its high, peaked roof offers no chance of concealment. However, there is a choir loft at the end of the church facing the square. The loft offers an excellent secure view of the entire square through one of the clear patches in the stained plastic window. The church has a back door that's left unlocked – in general, the church is an extremely convenient and secure place to hole up for the afternoon.

*The Parsonage:* This is a tiny two-room cottage with a shallow, peaked roof offering no concealment. It has only two windows; they both face the church, not the square. The main door also faces the church, and the side door (leading to the outhouse) is set away from the square. Neither door is locked.

*The Town Hall:* This building has a broad, flat roof behind a 4' false front like that on the store.

*The Inn:* There is a shallow, peaked roof offering little concealment; however, the guest rooms on the second floor offer a view of the square through small windows with wooden shutters. There is a back door leading to the kitchen, which is unlocked. There are no guests in the inn – there were two travelers staying here the night before, but when the town was rounded up, they were sent on their way. The inn's guest rooms are probably the most comfortable and convenient place for the PCs to hide.

*The Commissary:* This offers little concealment except at the very back, among the pots and kettles. The sign on the roof offers a much better hiding place.

## Nightfall

About 20 minutes after sunset the electric lights will come on, bathing the square in an almost painfully bright glare. About half an hour later the noisy helicopter will fly back to the mansion. The PA system will start to play classical music, concentrating on slow, ominous pieces in minor keys.

About the time the lights come on, a third jeep will arrive in the square with two additional Pacifiers and one Jelly – the evening's executioner (pick any of the Jellies on pp. 38–40 with the Iron Hand advantage).

Besides the permanent arc lights and searchlights atop the barracks, the CloneMaster has added powerful lights. These have been mounted on the poles beside the bandstand and on top of the barracks, store, town hall and commissary.

Once the helicopter's gone and the lights are on, the Pacifiers who arrived with the Jelly will go into the barracks and return a few minutes later, leading a string of 11 bound men. Each man is handcuffed, wearing a ball gag and manacled by the ankles to the man in front of and behind him. The end of the chain will be fastened to the pole opposite the one that the children are attached to.

## "This Looks Too Easy"

By now, if the players are roleplaying in the proper 21st-century paranoid mind-set, they have ample reason to suspect a trap. Some things that might tip them off:

## Heavy Weapons and Concertina Wire (Continued)

It takes one man-minute per hex to deploy concertina wire (e.g., one person could deploy two coils of concertina wire across 30 hexes in 30 minutes, two could do the job in 15 minutes, and three in 10). If protective gloves are not available, it takes 5 man-minutes per hex to deploy the wire, and each person working on the wire will take 1d-3 points of damage per strand deployed.

To secure an area, concertina wire is usually deployed in a triple strand – two adjacent strands on the ground, and a third on top of them. (This is how the wire is deployed in the adventure.) A single strand can be walked through safely, if minimal care is taken (make a successful unmodified DX roll), but it is difficult and dangerous to cross a triple strand. If anyone tries to crawl through the wire, the GM should roll 1d per strand being crossed, and require him to make that many rolls vs. DX-5 to get through (Double-Jointed characters roll vs. DX-2; the GM should apply additional penalties if the character is wearing bulky clothes or trying to hurry). Each roll represents 1 second of progress through the wire. If he fails by less than 3, he's caught in the wire for 1d seconds. If he fails the roll by 3 or more, he takes 1d-2 crushing. If he fails by 5 or more, he takes 1d-2 crushing, and is caught for 1d seconds. On a critical failure he's caught, and the damage taken is cutting. If he's trying to get through the wire silently, and he takes damage, he must make a Will roll or make some sort of audible sound, unless he has the High Pain Threshold advantage. If the character has lots of time, he can roll 1d per strand being crossed, and make each roll represent 1 minute of crossing time – in such cases, the rolls are against unmodified DX.

The easiest way to cross concertina wire is to lay something on top of it – a log, a sheet of metal or thick plastic, a body – and climb over atop that object.

Due to its flexibility, concertina wire has no PD or DR, but it can be cut by any pair of professional-quality wire cutters, snapped by an application of ST 120 or more (or a successful use of the Breaking Blow skill), or crushed by any object heavier than 1,000 lbs. Concertina wire provides no PD or DR against missile fire or area-effect weapons, but there is a -1 per strand to any to-hit roll for someone firing through concertina wire from more than 5 hexes away, due to the obscuring effect of the wire on vision.

A coil of concertina wire weighs 30 lbs. and costs \$100.



### *The Cloning Process*

The cloning process favored by the CloneMasters is a complex, expensive procedure, designed for maximum reliability and safety for the subject. The process consists of two parts – the cultivation of the physical clone, and the memory transfer.

The physical clone is typically grown from a small tissue sample, usually taken from the upper arm or inner thigh of the subject. This tissue is then placed in a nutrient solution and grown into a much larger tissue mass. Ideally, all subsequent clones will be created from the tissue mass of the original subject body – if a clone is cloned too often, “clone fatigue” can set in, causing small, unpredictable defects in the new bodies. Using an original tissue mass avoids this hazard. Samples of blood and bone marrow are also taken and preserved.

*Continued on next page . . .*

✓ The miller’s dramatic and perfectly-timed warning.

✓ The remarkable ease with which the young, but quite dangerous, Society of Thanatos acolytes were captured (and, if they think to look, the children’s escorts from the night before are *not* visible in the square).

✓ The extremely light guard on the rounded-up townspeople and the long wait until the executions begin. This is the real dead giveaway, particularly after dark when the very dangerous helicopter patrol goes away.

The situation is, of course, a trap. The “jaws” of the trap are four tripod-mounted M2 .50-caliber machine guns, set up on the roofs of the barracks, the commissary, the town hall and the store. The gun mounts are located directly behind the arc lights on top of each of these buildings – after dark, it is completely impossible to see the machine gunners at their posts from the square.

The jeep that delivers the Jelly executioner will let three extra troops off about a quarter mile outside of the village. These troops are specially trained Pacifier commandos. They each have ST 14, DX 13, Gunner-16, Stealth-14 and Climbing-14 (other stats as per the sidebar on p. 25). They are each carrying an M2 .50-caliber machine gun and two 100 round belts of ammo. (There is a fourth commando who spent the day waiting inside the barracks. He’ll creep out onto the roof as the lights go on.) The commandos will approach the back walls of their stations using Stealth. Once they get into town they’ll retrieve lightweight aluminum stepladders from pre-arranged hiding places, and climb to their assigned roofs. Once there, they’ll find their weapons’ heavy mounting plates waiting for them. (To the untrained eye, it looks like part of the lighting array – roll at IQ-5 to notice the mounts before the gunners arrive.)

Then they’ll pull up the ladders, mount and load their weapons, and wait for something to happen.

The gunners have silent radio transmitters. Each transmitter is a box the size of a credit card with a single button. When the button is pressed, it sends a “beep” to the commander in the square below. Every 20 minutes, in rotation, the gunners send a prearranged, personally coded signal to the commander. If the commander doesn’t get a signal at the arranged time, or if he gets the international Morse Code SOS signal, he’ll immediately call in reinforcements (3d+12 Pacifiers in two helicopters) from the mansion, who’ll arrive in 2d minutes.

When the rebels try something, the gunners will immediately open fire on anyone who looks suspicious or threatening. Once the guards in the square hear the machine guns open up, they’ll immediately leave the square by the most direct route possible to give the machine guns unrestricted arcs of fire. The gunners will take all reasonable precautions to avoid hitting friendly troops (although if the only way to take out an enemy is to take out a friend, too, they’ll do so), but they have absolutely no compunction about firing into the crowd or among the children. Once the machine guns open up, the commander will call in the airborne reinforcements, who’ll arrive in 2d minutes.

### *Spotting the Trap*

Due to the glare from the arc lights, it is completely impossible to notice the machine gunners from the square or (once they’re in place) from anywhere on the ground. But with a little bit of caution, the PCs should be able to discover the machine gun nests in time.

Obviously, if the Terminators are actually on the roof when the gunner gets there, they’ll know something is up. Each Terminator on the roof can attempt a roll vs. Vision or Hearing (whichever is higher) to notice the ladder being placed against the roof 1d+3 seconds before the Pacifier actually appears.

Likewise, if the Terminators are inside a building with a machine-gun nest atop it, they have a good chance to hear the gunner arrive. The gunners are very quiet about their business, however. To climb silently to the roof, the gunners need

to win a Quick Contest of Stealth vs. the PCs' Hearing, with the gunners at +3. An additional contest is required to mount their weapons, this one at no modifier. If the Terminators spend several hours in a building with a machine-gun emplacement on the roof, the gunner must win one additional contest for each full hour to allow for small movements and random misfortune which might tip off the Terminators to his presence.

If the PCs specifically investigate the rooftops, they'll automatically spot the machine gunners, assuming they make the appropriate Climbing and Stealth rolls to gain the rooftop without being seen.

The machine gun nest atop the commissary can be plainly seen from one of the second-floor rooms in the inn; however, this room has only one window, and the square can't be seen at all from it, so the PCs are unlikely to concern themselves with it. The machine gun will only be seen if the PCs say they're checking all the windows in the inn, or all the windows facing the commissary, or something similar.

A character with Danger Sense should roll for "bad vibes" if he's very close to a machine gunner without knowing it or if the PCs are about to rush into the crossfire.

If none of these situations apply, the GM should simply ask each PC to make a Vision roll. If any of the Terminators makes the roll by more than 7, he catches an undefined glimpse of something moving at the nearest (or most easily visible) machine-gun nest. If any player mentioned out loud, in any way, that he suspects an ambush, his character's Vision roll is at only -2 as a reward for his suspicious nature.

Just because the Terminators spot one ambusher doesn't mean they'll automatically notice the three others. Once the PCs know that there's one machine gun trap set up behind the lights, it will be easy for them to figure out what the most likely places for similar traps are – but it's up to the Terminators to think to look for possible additional ambush sites.

Each machine gunner is armed with a Beretta pistol like the commander's (see p. 15) and a large knife, and will use them to defend himself if he's surprised at his post.

## The Executions

Unless the PCs interfere, the executions will start precisely at midnight and continue until the CloneMaster's sentence has been carried out.

The children will go first. Two Pacifiers will fetch a child, unfastening the right manacle from the child next to the one being taken. They then use that manacle to cuff the victim's hands behind him. Unfastening the victim from the child on the other side, then unfastening the collar, they march the child to the podium, where the Jelly and the village priest wait. The priest will pronounce last rights over the victim, who will be forced to kneel; then the Jelly will walk up behind him, place his hands on either side of the head, and break the victim's neck with one quick twist.

When the deed is done, the miller and innkeeper will drag the corpse off to the side of the bandstand and dump it there.

If the Terminators haven't shown themselves by the time all the children are dead, the Pacifiers will move right on to executing the 40 townsmen. The guards will open a narrow gap in the concertina wire, and two guards will place themselves at the gap to prevent escapes.

The mayor will stand on the podium behind a cardboard box, next to the guard commander, and draw folded pieces of paper out. He'll unfold the paper, read the name printed inside and hand it to the commander for verification.

If the chosen victim doesn't come out voluntarily, the innkeeper and miller are

## The Cloning Process (Continued)

When a new body is needed, a sample is taken from the original tissue mass, and the entire DNA matrix is analyzed and encoded onto computers. The clone is not grown from a fetal state, but is instead built from the "inside out" – the skeleton is grown first, then the organs and circulatory system, then the muscles, and finally the skin and hair. From encoding to complete adult clone the process takes about 100 days. It can be rushed to take as little as 30 days, but this entails considerable risk to the clone.

The clone can be grown to any age, but most CloneMasters prefer to decant their clones at the physiological equivalent of age 18 to 25 (Garson grows his clones to a mature 23 years). Minor alterations and physical improvements are possible, although somewhat risky.

There are actually two parts to memory transfer – braintaping and RNA transfer. Braintaping uses powerful computers and a neural interface to make a computer file of all the subject's memories and experiences. These memories can then be transferred to the new body. RNA transfer conveys physical experience to the new body – for example, if a concert pianist were cloned, braintaping would bring back his knowledge of music, but his fingers would not "remember" how to play the piano without a successful RNA transfer.

Transferring a braintape takes about 24 hours. RNA transfer takes 7 days, and can be accomplished in parallel with other phases of clone growth, although it cannot be initiated before the brain, spine and nervous system are fully developed.

When a CloneMaster wants to transfer into a new body, the normal procedure (if the transfer is planned, and not the result of accident or misfortune) is to extract an RNA sample a week before final transfer. On the actual day of transfer, a full braintape is taken under deep hypnosis (most CloneMasters make a full braintape at least once a week, with daily "supplementals," in case of emergency), after which the body is sedated. The braintape is then checked and double-checked (a process which takes most of an afternoon), and if the tape checks out, the CloneMaster's old body is placed under deeper sedation, and the braintape is played into the clone. The clone is then awakened, tested for memory and skill retention, and given a complete physical. If everything checks out on the new clone, the old body is still further sedated, to the point where its heart stops painlessly.

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### *The Cloning Process (Continued)*

It is strictly forbidden for any CloneMaster to impart his personality to more than one body at a time, and doing so will result in extreme sanctions from other CloneMasters. A CloneMaster is allowed to produce a clone "son" or "daughter" while he is still alive, but such clones cannot receive any of the "parent's" memories or RNA, and must be cloned as a zygote, after which they grow as normal fetuses either in an artificial womb or in a surrogate mother (sometimes female CloneMasters give birth to their own clone offspring). CloneMasters may not produce more than one clone offspring every two years.

Standards, regulations and protocols for cloning and clone reproduction are set by a council of five CloneMasters called the Parthogenic Council. This council is arguably the highest central authority in 21st-century Earth, since among many other powers, they must individually confirm each new CloneMaster. Members are nominated by the sitting council and elected by their fellow CloneMasters. They serve five-year terms, and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. One new council member is elected each year. The chairman is whichever member happens to be in the fifth year of his term. (Richard Garson has both sat upon and chaired this council in the past, though he is not a member at the time of this adventure.)

CloneMasters are required to maintain only one "ready" clone at a time. When they wish to clone a servant or relative, they must do so through an independent facility maintained by the Parthogenic council.

In the rare case where a braintape is available, but tissue samples are not, it is possible to transfer the memory into a "blank" clone. The failure rate for such attempts is very high, but the Parthogenic council nonetheless retains a selection of blank clones as a last resort.

sent into the enclosure to bring him out. Once on the podium, the victim is once again forced to kneel, the priest administers last rites and the Jelly breaks his neck.

The third citizen called will be a teenage girl in late pregnancy; the town elders will all make an appeal that she be spared because of her condition. The Jelly will give their pleas a few moments' consideration, then reject them – but he'll declare that the pregnant girl counts for two executions. None of the men chained to the left concrete post will be called, nor will any of the four village elders.

If the PCs allow the whole thing to go on, the executions will be over by about 3 a.m. One of the Pacifiers will take the Jelly back to the mansion, and the rest of the Pacifier detachment (including the machine gunners, who'll pack up their weapons and leave without any particular effort at secrecy) will return to the barracks for the night, taking with them the men chained to the pole (these are known members of the resistance, who are being held for interrogation). The pile of bodies will remain under armed guard until noon the next day, when next of kin will be permitted to come for their dead.

### **The Strike**

If the rescuers choose to strike before dark, they'll have to deal with the helicopter – an attack they're virtually defenseless against. While the Terminators are dealing with the guards on the ground, the helicopter will be strafing unmercifully – if they can't get a good shot at the PCs, the Pacifiers in the chopper will mow down the chained children, then they'll turn their sights on the townspeople.

Once they come under fire, the crowd in the enclosure will turn into a mob. They'll throw the weakest occupants onto the wire and use their bodies to climb over. Between machine gun fire from the helicopter and mob violence, several dozen people, at a minimum, will die .

If the guards take more than three casualties, from either the Terminators or friendly fire, the commander will order a withdrawal. The survivors will pile into the jeeps and head for the mansion at top speed. After 1d+3 minutes the square will be completely empty except for the dead and dying. Reinforcements will arrive from the mansion 1d minutes later, and will begin a house-to-house search for any Terminators that might still be in the area. The CloneMaster will take no further overt action against the peasantry.

If the PCs wait until after dark to strike, their success will hinge on their luck and foresight in spotting the machine gun trap. If they take out the ambushers first, they'll have a relatively easy time dealing with the remaining guards and the single Jelly and freeing the prisoners with relatively little loss of life. The hardest ambusher to take out will be the one on top of the barracks, but it can be done with a little imagination – for example, a Terminator might pole vault over the electrical fence at the rear of the barracks (first locate a pole of proper length, then roll vs. Jumping-3) and climb up the outside of the building (Climbing-2).

If the machine guns are not taken out before the Terminators attack, it will go much the same as a daylight attack, except that the damage to life and property will be far greater from the four .50-caliber guns than from the single .30-caliber. At a minimum, more than 100 citizens will be killed in the crossfire.

It will be relatively easy for the rescuers to take out the four guards posted at the crossroads without being immediately noticed. If one of these guards can be eliminated silently (say, with a successful Pressure Points or Pressure Secrets roll), his absence won't be noticed for 1d+3 seconds – if the PCs are attacking efficiently, with a coherent plan, that should be plenty of time to move in on the guards in the center before they even know they're under attack.

Once the guards in the square realize they're under attack, they'll try to make an orderly withdrawal to their three jeeps, firing at any Terminators they see (or think they see) but not wasting ammo by deliberately firing into the crowd. The

commander will immediately send the signal that will summon the airborne reinforcements from the mansion.

One tactic that might occur to the PCs is to cut the power to the lights in the village square. Electricity for the Pacifier barracks is supplied by a single power line leading from the CloneMaster's power plant several miles away, but there is also a backup generator in the basement of the barracks. For the evening's demonstration, the CloneMaster has ordered that the generator be left up and running. To cut the power to the lights, the generator and the power line must both be destroyed. Either one can be destroyed with a successful use of the Breaking Blow skill.

The difficulties of getting inside the barracks are discussed on p. 16. Once the machine gunner on the roof of the barracks is removed, there will be no obstacles to the PCs' entering through the roof entrance and going down to the basement to destroy the generator. The Terminators know that there's a generator in the barracks and should be told so if they think to try to cut the power.

If the lights go out while some of the machine gun nests are still in place, it will greatly cut down on the number of casualties – perhaps two dozen citizens will die, with as many killed in the panicked rush through the barbed wire as from the machine-gun bullets. Although obviously it is preferable that the Terminators take out the machine gun emplacements entirely before they attack, turning out the lights will keep casualties down.

If the PCs can eliminate the guards quickly, or just keep low and let them leave in their jeeps, it will be a simple matter to destroy the wire enclosure (Terminators can snap the wire with their bare hands with a successful use of Breaking Blow) and let the citizens go. The former hostages will immediately evaporate back to their homes, and the CloneMaster will make no further attempts to involve them in public demonstrations.

If one of the Terminators breaks the left concrete post, with the chained and gagged men attached to it, the first man in line will approach the rescuer and make it clear he wants his gag removed – which the Terminator can do in one second just by pulling a quick release at the back of the man's head. Once he can speak, the captive will gasp, "Don't worry about us, save the children." Then the whole line will lurch off into the shadows, moving in a fast lock step that allows them to make maximum speed despite their chains – their movement would be comical, if it weren't such a magnificent example of discipline under pressure.

However, unless they take the guard commander and his key, the Terminators will have a problem freeing the children. They can snap the concrete pole they're chained to, but the chains will still hold them into an awkward and highly noticeable mass that will be hard to hide and even harder to move through the wilderness.

If the commander gets away and the GM wants to give the PCs some slack, he can have the town priest silently pass one of the Terminators the key during the attack (he picked the commander's pocket when the fight started, though the PCs won't know that for some time). Otherwise the GM can let the PCs try to rush the children through the wilderness to safety while they're still wearing their chains.

### *The Escape*

It will take the Terminators about 25 minutes to get to a safe hiding place in the wilderness. If the children are free, they can keep up. But if the children are chained, it will take an hour and a half to get them to safety – longer if there are dead or seriously wounded children still chained to the survivors. Each PC can carry one wounded but unchained child through the wilderness to safety without slowing himself down significantly – dealing with any more wounded children will delay the party enough to run the risk of meeting Pacifier patrols.

If the rescuers haven't made it to safety within half an hour of leaving the square, the GM should start rolling for Pacifier search patrols. Roll 2d every 5 minutes, and on a roll of 10 or more a patrol shows up. Each patrol will consist of

### *Jellies*

Barely one in 20 Society of Thanatos trainees ever graduates to full Terminator status. Most of the washouts return to civilian life, where they become valuable contacts and agents for the society and the underground, using their martial arts abilities to gather intelligence and defend their families and communities from the worst excesses of the CloneMasters.

However, a significant minority of students – fully 15 to 20% of the senior washouts – become embittered and resentful of their teachers who cut them off after so many years of training, and turn to the patronage of the CloneMasters, who will reward them richly for their skills. The CloneMasters call these traitors to the Society of Thanatos "Janizaries," but the people call them spineless Jellies (though not to their face).

Though utterly despised by the Terminators, Jellies are not, in fact, without honor. They hold to the ancient code of the samurai, whose only aspiration was to die carrying out the will of his sworn lord, regardless of whether the lord's will was stupid or wise, kind or cruel, right or wrong. Of course, while the Jellies are waiting for their chance to die gloriously, they're enjoying a standard of living far beyond the dreams of any of the CloneMaster's servants, except perhaps the senior technicians. Jellies do not assume names like Terminators do. They refer to one another as "brother" (even females), and are formerly addressed by CloneMasters and senior technicians as "honored janizary." The common folk call them "sir."

In recent years the number of Jellies has increased, as the CloneMasters have set up training centers of their own, taught by the most experienced Jellies.

Jellies do not share the Society of Thanatos's abhorrence for all high technology, but they will not fight with any weapons other than the traditional bo, nunchaku, shuriken and yawara, believing that more advanced weapons will undermine their training.

Jellies are graded according to a system that sets the price of their hire. In order to be accepted by the CloneMasters as a first-level Janizary, a Society of Thanatos dropout must have mastered at three of the five disciplines (see p. 13). Mastery of a given weapon (skill level of 18 or better – 20 or better with the Yawara) can be substituted for mastery of one of the disciplines. Level two Jellies have mastered four disciplines, or three disciplines and a weapon. There are persistent rumors of level three or four Jellies, who would be a match for a Terminator in every way.

An assortment of pregenerated Jellies can be found on pp. 38-40.



### ***Servants, Techs and Pacification Forces***

Between the Jellies and the common serfs lie a small class of elite serfs. This class consists of those subjects of the CloneMaster who actually live within his compound – household servants, Pacification troops and technicians – and they enjoy a much higher standard of living than the common people.

The CloneMaster's servants are generally much more propagandized than the common serfs, and many of them sincerely believe that the Terminators are a group of ruthless terrorists out to seize power for themselves by any means necessary, who take sadistic pleasure in torturing and killing the honest, loyal subjects of the CloneMaster. Consequently, many untrained servants will fight to the death, rather than risk falling into the hands of the Terminators.

#### ***Servants***

There are several classes of servants used by the CloneMaster. There are those who live on the CloneMaster's estate, but outside the mansion, including the groundskeepers and handymen who keep the walls, plumbing and power plants of the CloneMaster in good repair, and his estate attractive and healthy (the Terminators probably won't meet any of these in this adventure); clerical servants, who serve the CloneMaster by keeping the estate books in order and helping the CloneMaster manage his personal correspondence; household servants (maids and repairmen); and kitchen servants.

*Continued on next page . . .*

1d+1 Pacifiers, and there is a 1 in 6 chance that the patrol will have one Jelly along. If a patrol is indicated, all the PCs may make Hearing rolls – if they succeed, they have advance warning, in seconds, equal to the greatest amount any of them made the roll by.

## **The Final Showdown**

A couple of hours after dawn, the CloneMaster will withdraw his search parties and the Terminators will no longer hear large groups of Pacifiers tromping through the area.

Two or three hours after the Pacifiers withdraw, whoever's on sentry duty at the Terminators' camp will spot a human figure heading, apparently, directly towards the hiding place. He's carrying no weapons, so he's not a Pacifier, and he's making no attempt at concealment, so he's probably not a Jelly. If he's allowed to approach, the Terminators will be able to see that it's the village priest. He'll stop a few feet from the hiding place, and call out, "Hello? Is anybody in there?"

If the PCs attempt to surprise or restrain him, he'll offer no resistance unless they actually do damage, in which case he'll try to get away. As soon as the Terminators allow him to get in a word, he'll give a Society of Thanatos recognition signal, which the PCs will recognize, "10,000 flowers will bloom in the Spring."

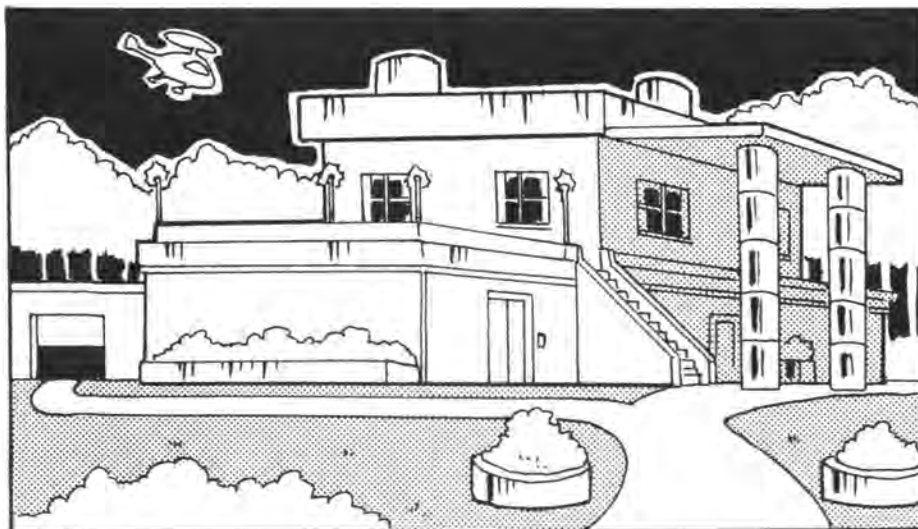
If allowed to talk, the priest will introduce himself as Father Allen Hancock. He'll say that he's here to contact the Terminators on behalf of the local resistance.

If the PCs ask him how he found them, he'll say this is the third spot he's checked on a list of seven given him by other members of the resistance. If the PCs ask him to name the other spots, they'll find that they are all, indeed, secret Society of Thanatos hiding places (which Righteous Wind initially found by consulting with members of the local resistance).

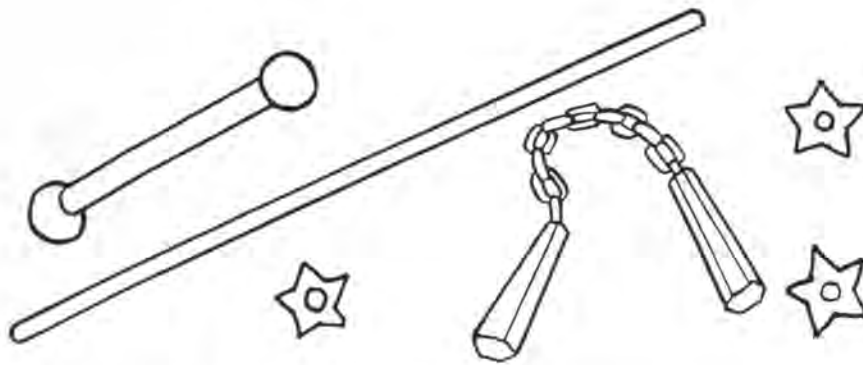
The GM should explain to the PCs that they actually have little knowledge of the local resistance movement – too many promising trainees have turned Jelly for Righteous Wind to have entrusted more information than absolutely necessary to the PCs. (They were only told about the secret entrance to the mill in the last six months.)

Father Allen will bring the Terminators up to date. If they haven't worked it out for themselves already, he'll say that Jurgenson was the traitor.

*"Some of us had suspected Brian was thinking about turning for several months, but we had no proof until the assault on the training camp. The night of the raid a dozen or so members of the local resistance were rounded up and locked*







away in the barracks. But I'd only joined the local organization a year ago, and by that time there were already those who no longer trusted Jurgenson, so he was never told I'd joined. When I wasn't taken that night, we had proof that Brian was the traitor.

"When you busted up last night's party, I had a chance to slip up on the guard that had chained up the prisoners and lift the handcuff key – nobody suspects a priest of being able to pick a pocket.

"I gave the prisoners the key, and left them to find their own places to hide from the Pacifiers."

(Note, if for any reason the PCs didn't interfere with the executions, omit the proceeding two paragraphs – the prisoners are still locked in the barracks.)

"I'm not the only thing the resistance didn't tell Jurgenson about – for the last eight months we've been stockpiling contraband weapons. I went to one of our caches and grabbed a pistol; then I went looking for Brian. I found him at the mill, packing – I think he knew we'd figure out it was him, and he was going to try to get to the mansion to ask the CloneMaster for sanctuary. I confronted him with my suspicions, and he tried to attack me with a walking stick, so I shot him." (Note: If Jurgenson was killed in the village square, omit all but the first sentence of this paragraph.)

"The resistance met this morning, and we all agree that now we have to move fast. It's only a matter of time before the CloneMaster tracks down some or all of the escaped resistance leaders, and once he does, it's only a matter of time until he finds out about our weapons. If we're ever going to get a chance to strike, we have to strike now.

"But we need your help. We think we have the numbers and weapons to take out the outer defenses and pin down the Pacifiers in the main garrison, but we need you to actually go in to the mansion and get the CloneMaster himself."

At this point Father Allen will present the Terminators with the player's map (shown on this page). He drew the map himself – he's been a guest of the CloneMaster several times, and has toured the entire mansion.

"We know of two ways to get you into the mansion. If our strike goes as planned, you should be able to walk right through the front door without coming under too much fire.

"The other way is through the

## Servants, Techs and Pacification Forces (Continued)

Many CloneMasters also keep a few entertainers and courtesans in their household, but Garson is something of a prude and doesn't approve of such indulgences. He does welcome traveling entertainers to his household from time to time, and one of the senior technicians has been his mistress for several years – she has her genetic code and memory patterns stored on the mansion's computers, for cloning purposes.

The following stats can be used for a generic servant:

ST 10, DX 10, IQ 11, HT 10

Advantages: None

Disadvantage: Severe Phobia (Terminators).

Skills: Savoir-Faire-12, one of the following at 13 – Accounting, Cooking, Professional Skill: Domestic Service.

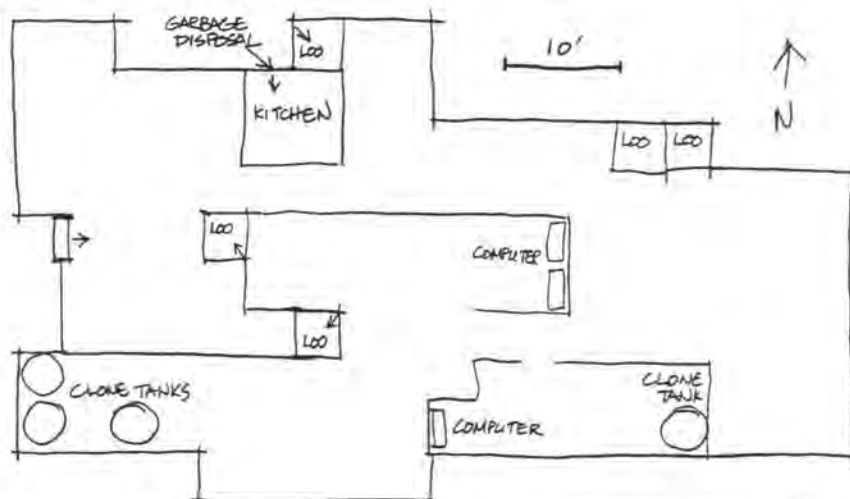
There are a few elite servants in the household – these include the butler, the head cook, the senior bookkeeper and the CloneMaster's personal valet. These individuals might have a slightly higher IQ than their subordinates, and perhaps a level of Charisma and a bit of Leadership or Administration skill, but they won't be any more effective in hand-to-hand combat.

### Technicians

These are the highly trained individuals who aid the CloneMaster in his scientific pursuits, particularly the cloning process itself. This is virtually the only path to real advancement in the 21st century – most new CloneMasters are appointed from the ranks of the technicians. Only a minuscule fraction of all technicians ever acquire a clone of their own, however.

Continued on next page . . .

## Players' Map





### ***Servants, Techs and Pacification Forces (Cont')***

A generic technician has ST 10, DX 11, IQ 13, HT 10. No special advantages (though Eidetic Memory, Lightning Calculator and Mathematical Aptitude are highly valued and rather common), and the disadvantage Phobia (Terminators).

Their skills are normally a primary Scientific skill at 13, and at least one secondary Scientific skill at 11.

Senior technicians are the absolute elite of the CloneMaster's subjects – only the Jellies dare speak to them as equals (the senior techs tend to regard the Jellies as filthy mercenaries – but of course they don't say so to their faces).

Senior technicians are substantially identical to their subordinates, except that they have a minimum of 15 in their primary Scientific skill, and two secondary skills at 13 each. They might have an extra point or two of IQ, and some skill in Leadership or Administration as well, but the most important thing about the senior technicians, for the purposes of this adventure, is that they are allowed to go armed. Senior technicians have a Guns skill of 12, and carry a Beretta pistol.

The senior techs in Garson's household are the Senior Biochemist, the Senior Programmer (also Garson's mistress), the Senior Electrical Engineer and the Household Physician. Everybody addresses the senior techs by their full titles, including (usually) the CloneMaster himself.

*Continued on next page . . .*

sewer. The CloneMaster's plumbing isn't that much better than his serfs' – he's diverted part of the mill stream to run through a concrete conduit under the mansion, and all of the mansion's biological waste – vegetable, animal or human – is just dropped into the sewer, where it's carried back out to the stream.

"The entrance and exit to the conduit are protected with a heavy iron grate, but the grates are past due for maintenance, and we think we've got them to a place where you should be able to get them off entirely.

"Once you're in the sewer, you can get up into the mansion through either the garbage dump in the kitchen or one of the three commodes on the lower level. It's not an appetizing plan, but it does have the virtue of being unobtrusive.

"The details of the assault are up to you. If you all use the same entrance and attack in a group, you'll be able to present the strongest offense, but if you split up and attack simultaneously through different entrances, you'll create more chaos and divide the CloneMaster's defenses. It's your call.

"Once you're in, you need to not only kill the CloneMaster, but also destroy his four cloning tanks and three main computer banks – if any one of them survives, another CloneMaster will be able to revive Garson, with all his memories intact and up to date.

"If you succeed in your mission, we should be able to use the resulting chaos to get our known resistance members to a Society of Thanatos refuge, and smuggle our guns to somebody else who can use them. If you fail, the CloneMaster will probably be able to bottle us up here in Fidelity, and run us down one by one."

The Terminators can now make plans and ask questions. Father Allen is planning to launch the assault shortly after sundown, but he's open to suggestions from the PCs.

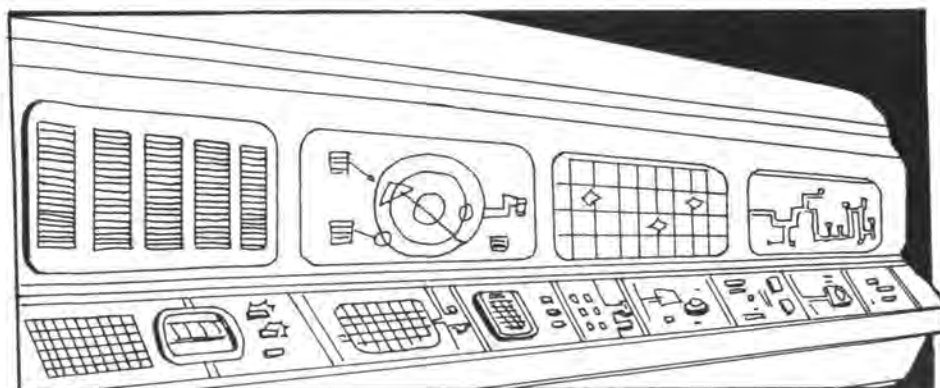
He'll take the children with him when he leaves. They will be assigned some of the less suicidal duties in the assault.

### **Environs**

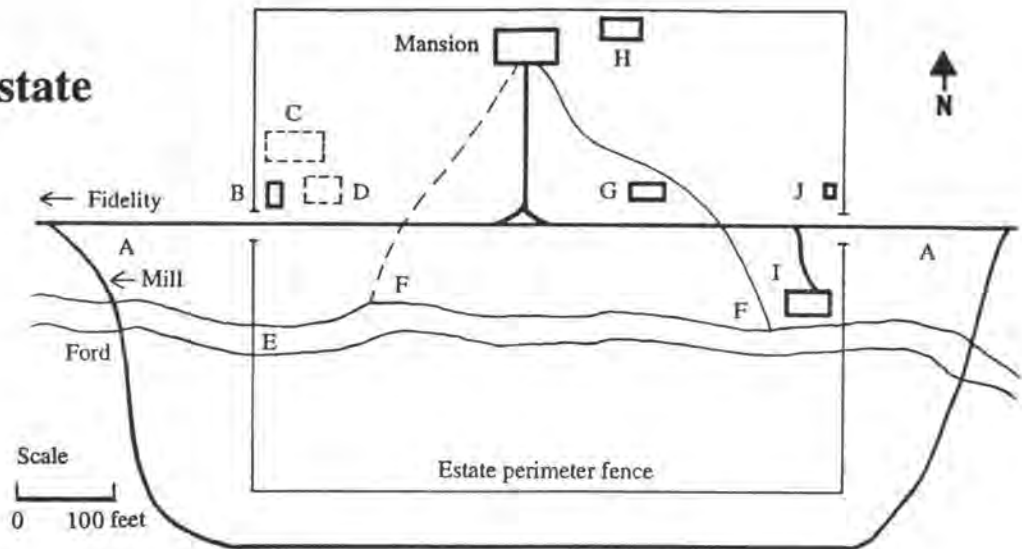
The CloneMaster's mansion rests in a large fenced estate about one mile wide by three long. The fence is 15 feet tall, and electrified like the one around the barracks in town (see p. 25). Most of the space within the fence is parklike wilderness.

A. At this point the road from Fidelity splits. The direct route leads through the estate and past the mansion. Those without legitimate business with the CloneMaster are expected to take the long detour across the river and around the estate.

B. This is the main Pacifier garrison. It's the primary objective for the local resistance in the upcoming battle. It's a large, three-story concrete building that incorporates a barracks with a 200-man capacity, administrative offices and the armory. Right now the barracks is full to capacity and more, between the CloneMaster's own soldiers and those he's borrowed or purchased from other CloneMasters for the current crisis.



# Map of the CloneMaster's Estate



C. This is the Pacifiers' parade ground.

D. This is the motor pool, where all the CloneMaster's jeeps, trucks and helicopters are kept and maintained.

E. This is the same stream that runs past Fidelity Village and powers the mill wheel. Where it passes through the CloneMaster's estate the stream is rocky, fast, clear and very beautiful.

F. These two points are the entrance and exit to the CloneMaster's sewer. Both points are protected by a heavy iron grate, as Father Allen said, but the grate at the exit is rusty and worn loose in one corner. The grate can be pulled loose on a successful roll vs. ST-10 (Terminators can use Power Blow to augment their ST).

The exit tunnel is 4½' tall, with about 18 inches of air space at the top of the pipe. The air is, of course, fetid – anybody traveling down the corridor must make a HT roll or be at -1 DX and ST until they've been out of the tunnel for at least 10 minutes. (This nausea can be overcome with a successful Body Control roll.)

G. These are the quarters for the groundskeepers and day-servants of the CloneMaster. This is a large, two-story wooden building with electric power and climate control – by village standards the accommodations are palatial. The servants will flee at the first threat of violence.

H. This large metal building is where the CloneMaster stores controlled substances – like metal – that are essential to Fidelity's economy, but that aren't allowed to the common people. In addition to raw materials, this building also houses the CloneMaster's metal, wood and plastics shops.

I. This is the hydraulic power plant that provides electricity to the CloneMaster's estate. It's the final objective of the resistance forces.

J. This is a small guardhouse guarding the south gate to the estate. It's basically just an office and day room where the guard squad assigned to watch the gate on a given day can eat or rest between patrols.

## Counter-Strike

Unless the PCs come up with some other plan, they'll meet the resistance force at the agreed-upon rendezvous – a clearing about half a mile from the mill – late in the afternoon of the same day Father Allen found them.

The rebels wear dark clothing, and they've darkened their hands and faces with ash and grease. There are 40 to 50 of them, and they're armed with a motley assortment of weapons – from grenades and submachine guns to breech-loading shotguns and holdout pistols.

The Pacifiers outnumber the freedom-fighters and have better weapons, but they're completely unprepared for any sort of coordinated armed assault – they're

## Servants, Techs and Pacification Forces (Continued)

### Pacification Forces

The Pacification Forces (derisively named "Pacifiers") are the military police of the CloneMasters. They are trained at regional training centers cooperatively financed by a consortium of CloneMasters.

Pacifiers are trained to keep order at all costs. The Pacifiers have regulations against looting and corruption, but not against cruelty and bloodthirstiness. The common people know that the only way to stay on a Pacifier's good side is to stay out of his sight.

On the local level, there are basically three ranks of Pacifier – troopers, officers and commanders. Normally there's one officer for every 15 troopers and one commander per fief (sometimes, in the larger fiefs, there are two commanders, designated junior and senior).

Troopers are armed with Uzi submachine guns and billy clubs; officers and commanders carry Beretta 92 pistols. Pacifiers do not wear body armor – it's considered unnecessary against the unarmed populace of the late 21st century.

The following stats can be used for a Pacifier:

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 11

*Advantages:* Legal Enforcement Powers – 10 points (does not have to respect civil rights, can kill with impunity).

*Disadvantages:* Bully, Duty.

*Skills:* Brawling-12, Driving (Car)-12, Guns (Light Automatic)-13, Interrogation-11, Shortsword (Club)-12.

Officers and commanders have Military rank (1 for officers, 2 and up for commanders, depending on the size of their force) and a minimum skill of 12 in Administration, Leadership and Tactics.

## Servant Reaction Table

Any time a servant or (non-senior) technician is in a room with a Terminator, the GM may roll 1d on the table below. This roll is not mandatory, but may be used if the GM does not wish to plan out the reactions of each individual NPC.

1. *Run Away:* The NPC will leave the room at top speed, through any exit except the one by which the Terminator entered. If there's only one entrance, the servant will fight, as in 4-6 below.

2. *Freeze:* The NPC will freeze in place, hoping the Terminator will pass him by.

3. *Beg:* The NPC will collapse into hysteria, weeping and pleading with the Terminator not to kill him. If the Terminator is not actually in combat, the NPC will cling to the Terminator's gi, and the Terminator will have to do at least 1 point of damage to the NPC to make him let go.

4-6. *Attack:* Fearing a fate worse than death, the NPC will attack the Terminator with whatever comes to hand – a tray, a tool, a kitchen utensil. Treat this as a generic attack with a skill of 8, doing 1d+1 crushing damage (except in the kitchen, where an attacking NPC has a 1-in-3 chance of grabbing a knife or cleaver – GM's option: treat as a dagger or hatchet).

expecting petty terrorism or an attack from Society of Thanatos Terminators, not guns and explosives.

Also, unbeknownst to the resistance, there has been friction between the commanders of the local Pacifier garrison and the commanders of the mercenaries hired by the CloneMaster for the current conflict, which will inhibit the effectiveness of the defenders. The upshot is that if the rebels strike carefully and unexpectedly, they're in an excellent position to win – an even better position than they expect.

Read the following to the PCs.

*You follow the rebels as they move out through the woods. Although your instincts cry out that you should be leading the battle, you stay to the rear – it will be your turn soon enough.*

*You crouch in the underbrush as the attackers split into two forces; one contingent storms the CloneMaster's motor pool, while the other attacks the main garrison itself. If your troops can take the armory before the off-duty Pacifiers can organize themselves, you might have a chance.*

*Your feel a soft touch on the sleeve of your gi. Your escort is ready to take you to your agreed-upon point of entry into the mansion. He nods and flashes you a quirky grin. You rise and follow him deeper into the CloneMaster's carefully-cultivated "wilderness." Behind you, you hear explosions as the rebels ignite the gas tanks of the first vehicles in the motor pool – things seem to be going well. At the same time, the hornet's buzz of the Pacifiers' sub-machine guns grows louder and more regular as the enemy rallies their defenses. You force thoughts of your allies' fates from your mind and compose your spirit to meet the death that probably awaits you in the CloneMaster's mansion.*



If any of the Terminators are planning to enter the mansion by the front door, they'll be given a well-armed escort of six rebels. This squad's mission is to pin down the Pacifiers guarding the CloneMaster's front door and hold the entrance as long as possible against any reinforcements that might arrive – it's a suicide mission, unless the Terminators can get in and finish their mission before any reinforcements arrive.

The escorts rapidly deal with the sentries, giving the Terminators an open path to the door.

Those PCs who are planning to enter by way of the sewer will be escorted only by two of the youngest rebels, armed only with hand guns. These two will remain concealed near the exit pipe, in case any of the Terminators return by that route.

The sewer tunnel is dark and slimy, but there's nothing to interfere with the Terminators' progress. Once the invaders get under the mansion itself, the tunnel broadens out, becoming almost an underground pond, floored with cement and punctuated by ferroconcrete pillars supporting the mansion's upper stories.



A tiny outline of artificial light seeps through the lids of the garbage disposal and commodes. The light provides little illumination, but it conveniently highlights the entrances for the invaders.

The tops of the disposal and the commodes are unfastened and are only about seven feet above the floor of the sewer. A Terminator can grab the top of his chosen exit with any successful Jumping roll; he can then pull himself up and through the opening with a successful Climbing roll.

If the Terminators are splitting up for the attack, with some going in the front door and others up through the sewers, the rebels will issue them synchronized digital watches (circa 1978), water-resistant with illuminated dials, so that all the Terminators can enter the building at the same instant.

### The CloneMaster's Mansion

The mansion itself is a low, sprawling structure built onto the side of a gentle hill. A broad, carefully maintained lawn surrounds the building. Its facade is all steel and plastic – it looks like nothing so much as a particularly ugly office building built in the 1970s. The top of the lower section of the mansion can be used as a heliport, but there's no entrance from the heliport directly into the mansion – an iron stairway leads down the front of the building to the front door.

There are various windows and skylights around the building, but they're made of tough transparent plastic, not glass. They require three consecutive rolls vs. Breaking Blow-3 to shatter.

There are normally three Pacifier sentries on duty at the mansion's front door – two at the door itself, and one on the helipad. These guards will fall easily to the PCs' rebel escorts.

There is only one door to the mansion (the CloneMaster being less worried about fire safety than assassination), made of heavy, reinforced oak. Due to the

### Novices

The children rescued from the Pacifiers after the raid on the training camp are already Martial Arts masters by 20th-century standards, although they're only beginners in the ways of the Society of Thanatos.

GMs may use the following template for the Society novices.

ST 9, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 11.

*Advantage:* Combat Reflexes.

*Disadvantages:* Enemy: CloneMaster, Fanaticism, Poverty: Poor.

*Skills:* Flail-10, Judo-14, Karate-14, Meditation-12, Shuriken-10, Staff-10, Stealth-12, Traps-10, Yawara-13.

### The Resistance

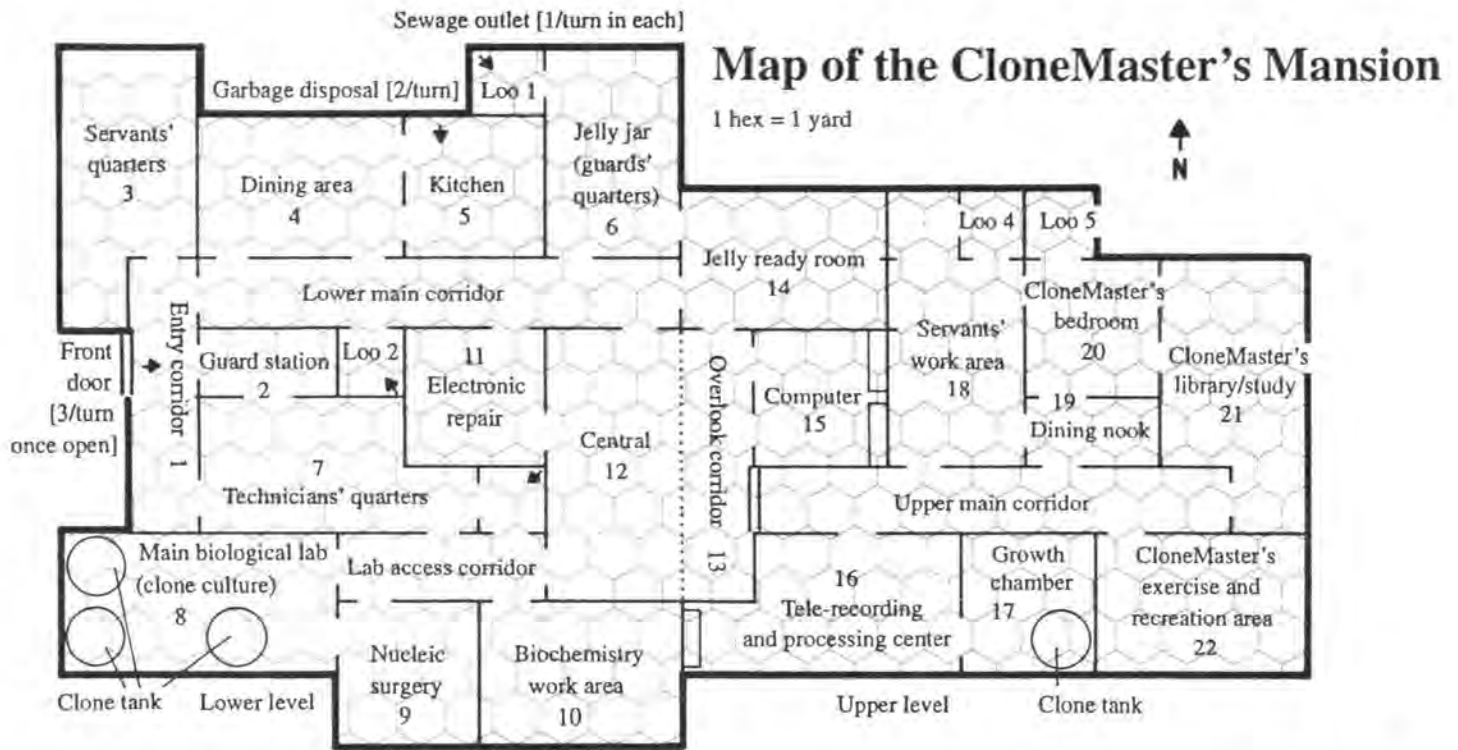
As with any other totalitarian government, there is a thriving underground resistance among the serfs of the CloneMasters. It is important to keep in mind that the resistance is *not* just the civilian arm of the Society of Thanatos. The resistance and the society are close allies, with a common goal, but they are separate organizations with independent structures and agendas.

There is no real structure to the resistance movement – it's a loose network of individuals dedicated to the eventual downfall of the CloneMasters, and the defense of the common folk in the meantime. The resistance controls an effective intelligence network, a secret revolutionary militia, a black market and an underground railroad for the rapid relocation of political fugitives, among other activities.

*Continued on next page . . .*



*Pawns of the CloneMaster*



current emergency it has been securely locked and barred from the inside. The Terminators will have to make a roll vs. Breaking Blow at -4 to break the door in.

### The Resistance (Continued)

Although it seldom becomes dangerous or divisive, there are points of conflict between the society and the resistance. In particular, when a Society of Thanatos member starts talking about the evils of technology, resistance members tend to nod politely and slip into a daydream about the day when they can move their family into the CloneMaster's mansion.

One of the most secret operations of the resistance is a concentrated effort to obtain and hide secret caches of firearms and explosives, and to train serfs to use these weapons in the final battle against the CloneMasters. Rather surprisingly, the Society of Thanatos actively supports this operation. After all, not everybody has the discipline to master the secret arts of the Terminators, the society reasons, and it's necessary that each individual fight the oppressor in the most effective way he can. There will be plenty of time after the revolution to eliminate firearms and other technological evils.

The following statistics can be used for a typical member of the resistance's militia:

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10

Advantage: Toughness +1.

Disadvantage: Fanaticism.

Skills: Acting-10, Camouflage-12, Fast-Talk-11, Guns-10, Karate-11, Scrounging-12, Stealth-12, Survival (local terrain)-11, Swimming-12, Traps-10.

1. *Entry Corridor*: The entrance to the mansion is a broad hall with wood paneling, pleasantly decorated with paintings, photographs from the CloneMaster's early life and potted plants and flowers. There are several wooden chairs and end tables provided for visitors who are waiting for someone.

The Lower and Upper Main Corridors are decorated substantially like the entry corridor.

2. *Guard Station*: From this small room the Jellies on duty can check out visitors for possible threats to the CloneMaster. It's a plain, functional room. Near the door are a couple of comfortable, but rather worn chairs and an end table strewn with old copies of *Janizaries!* magazine. At the back of the office is a small wooden desk and a filing cabinet used in dealing with the Jellies' administrative needs – duty rosters and training schedules are posted on the wall near the desk.

Unless the GM is saving them for something special, there will almost certainly be one or two Jellies here if any PCs come through the front door.

3. *Servants' Quarters*: This is a large, dormitory-style room divided up into individual cubicles with light, plastic screens. The cubicles near the door – belonging to the junior housekeepers – are small, sparsely furnished and precisely ordered. The cubicles towards the back are slightly larger and better furnished, belonging to the more senior servants. The last four belong to (in order) the CloneMaster's personal valet, the chef, the butler and the senior accountant; they are quite individualized and comfortable. The butler, valet and accountant all have small bookshelves, and the butler, accountant and cook each have a private desk.

4. *Dining Area*: This is a large, institutional-style dining hall. The tables are functional and ugly. However, the lighting and paneling are quite expensive – the CloneMaster sometimes brings out the nice furniture and gives parties or formal dinners in this room.

5. *Kitchen*: This is a large, fully-equipped kitchen capable of preparing meals for up to several hundred diners. Along the far wall are walk-in refrigerators, freezers and pantries. There are numerous ovens, grills and large soup kettles.

The garbage disposal in the northwest corner is probably the most attractive point of entry from the sewers. It is basically a large, covered manhole about three

feet in diameter. In addition to sending garbage down, it also serves as the primary access to the sewers for the CloneMaster's maintenance workers.

6. *Jelly Jar*: These are the quarters for the CloneMaster's Jelly bodyguards. Normally, the CloneMaster keeps no more than three or four Jellies on staff, but since he found out about the Society of Thanatos training center, he's beefed up his forces.

The Jellies do not divide up their quarters into cubicles. The room is open and uncluttered, with only a few plants and paintings on the wall for decoration. The Jellies sleep on thin futons with light sheets and tiny pillows which are kept rolled up and stacked against the wall during the day. The Terminators will consider this the height of decadence.

Along the north wall is a large bookshelf above a cabinet containing various games, puzzles and amusements. The Jellies also have a TV and VCR (antique but in excellent condition) and a new CD stereo system.

7. *Technicians' Quarters*: A dormitory room virtually identical to the servants' quarters, except the technicians' cubicles all have desks, VDTs, keyboards linked to the household computers and at least a small bookshelf loaded with textbooks and technical manuals.

8. *Main Biological Lab*: This cluttered room is where the dirty work of the cloning process gets done. The room is dominated by three large, cylindrical tanks, each holding a nutrient solution distorted to varying degrees of murkiness by the raw genetic material floating within. These tanks are one of the Terminators' primary objectives and are destroyed automatically on any successful use of the Breaking Blow skill. In addition to the tanks, the room is also crowded with desks, files, VDTs and innumerable cabinets full of tools, supplies and exotic chemicals.

Senior technicians encountered here will be very careful about not firing their guns when there's any chance that the bullet will miss and hit the tanks.

9. *Nucleic Surgery*: This austere, white room is kept scrupulously clean. Equipment inside is impressive-looking and probably very expensive – it includes a large surgical laser rig, not just one but two powerful electron microscopes, and several enclosed sterile boxes of various sizes, with latex gloves built into the walls for the scientists to use to work on substances where they want no risk of contamination whatsoever.

10. *Biochemistry Work Area*: Unlike the mad-scientist trappings of Main Bio and Nuke Surgery, Biochem looks like a very ordinary chemical lab, with racks loaded with equipment and chemical solutions, protective aprons and goggles hanging on the wall, several sinks and work tables and an emergency shower in the corner.

11. *Electronic Repair*: This spacious shop provides and repairs high-tech hardware for the CloneMaster. The room is full of workbenches and locked cabinets holding spools of wire, soldering irons, circuitry boards and innumerable pliers and screwdrivers.

12. *Central*: Central is basically an all-purpose open space. It's used for staff meetings and conferences. Large-scale tasks from the labs sometimes take over Central for a day or two, for the extra work space. Films and live entertainment are sometimes presented here for the amusement of the CloneMaster and his favored subjects. The CloneMaster likes to have his visitors brought here to meet him so he can make an impressive entrance from the overlook corridor. Video monitors, with views of each part of the mansion and other areas of the estate, like the barracks and power plant, line the top of the west wall, above the doors. The monitors are placed so that from the overlook corridor the CloneMaster can oversee his entire estate.

13. *Overlook Corridor*: The CloneMaster uses this 10-foot-tall platform overlooking Central to address his servants, greet visitors impressively or just watch

## Troubleshooting

If the players are roleplaying in the spirit of the adventure – the Terminators are fanatical rebels who just want to wreck as many bad guys as possible before they get killed – there's really very little that can go wrong with this adventure. The GM should not allow the PCs to become bogged down in tactical subtleties – Terminators don't think that way. They prefer the suicidal, surprise frontal attack, relying on their abilities to carry them through to their objective.

The worst thing that can happen is for a Terminator to die too early, during the fight at the training camp or the rescue at the village square. If this happens, the GM should introduce a new PC to replace the deceased. If all the pregenerated PCs are in use, and the GM doesn't have time to design a new Terminator from scratch, he can just take the deceased PC, change his name and quirks, and give him back to his original player (let's face it, there's not *that* much difference between one Terminator and another anyway).

A replacement PC could be introduced as a fugitive from a neighboring fief, or he could be assigned by the Society of Thanatos to Fidelity training camp as an assistant to Righteous Wind, or he might have been just passing through near by, when he heard the rebels were having a hard time in Fidelity.

If the Terminators are taken completely by surprise by the ambush in the village square, things could get bloody. It is not necessary, though, for the GM to massacre the entire team. Instead, he might arbitrarily throw the players a hint – "As you prepare to attack, you notice one of the spotlights atop the general store suddenly tremble violently for a moment, almost as though someone had stumbled into its supports." Alternatively, he could allow the ambushers to open up, but give the PCs a few seconds to stumble back to cover while the ambushers slaughter the townspeople. In this case the GM should make a big deal about the death and suffering brought about by the PCs' inattentiveness. Needless to say, Father Allen and the resistance fighters will have a markedly different attitude towards the Terminators if they cause such a massacre.

Either way, if the Terminators don't discover the ambushers through normal caution or reasonable luck, they should be penalized at least one character point at the end of the adventure.

The whole point of the adventure is the fight at the mansion. If one of the PCs is killed in this battle, it's no great tragedy, particularly if he gives his life heroically – since this is a one-shot adventure, an exciting, honorable death is a good way to end it.

*Continued on next page . . .*

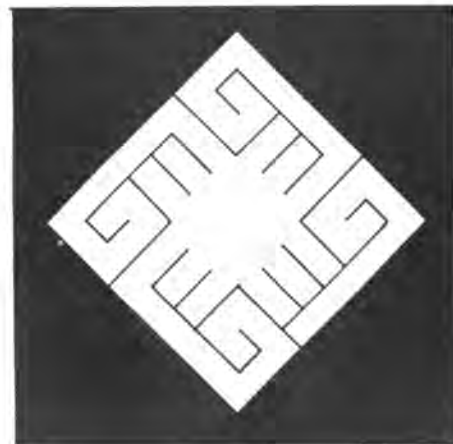
## Troubleshooting (Continued)

However, if one or two of the PCs get killed early in the battle, and things seem to be going badly against the survivors, the GM could have one or more of the Jellies reveal themselves as a double agent – a secret servant of the Society of Thanatos, assigned to infiltrate the CloneMaster's fortress and gather information for the rebels. Any players with dead characters can be allowed to play the turncoats. The false Jellies have no special knowledge – all their intelligence data has already been passed on to the Terminators – but their combat abilities should turn the tide significantly in the Terminators' favor, and allow all the players to stay active until the end of the adventure.

Another way that the final fight might get off track is if the players become caught up in the "loot and pillage" mentality that guides many roleplaying campaigns, and try to steal the CloneMaster's goodies, rather than concentrating on the real objectives of the mission. Looting is not the point of the adventure, and something bad should happen to any character who stops to loot – they should be immediately jumped by several Jellies, or perhaps by a Pacifier fire team.

It is recommended that the GM ignore rules for crippling and advanced wounding in this adventure, to allow the Terminators to keep fighting right to the bitter end.

The "cinematic" style of play described on p. B183 is highly suited for this adventure. If the GM wishes to run the adventure cinematically, he should give each PC 2 to 4 points to use for "flesh wounds" (alternately, the GM can give each Terminator one point at the start of the adventure, and award additional points in the form of earned experience at the end of each encounter, rather than waiting for the end of the adventure). The GM might also want to give each PC 12 additional points to use to design his own combinations (but if the Terminators use combinations, the Jellies should use them too).



the workings of his estate on the monitors on the west wall of Central. The controls for the mansion's PA system and video equipment are located here, in a locked metal cabinet that only the CloneMaster and senior technicians can open.

From Central, the overlook corridor can be reached by either a stairway to the south or a ladder to the north (near the ladder there's also a sliding pole, used mostly by Jellies and the younger techs). A 5-by-5-foot section of floor in the southeast corner of Central is actually a hydraulic lift, capable of lifting objects weighing as much as six tons to the level of the overlook corridor.

The door from the overlook corridor to the upper main corridor is reinforced like the front door. It will be shut at the first sign of trouble.

**14. Jelly Ready Room:** This large room is where the household Jellies conduct their daily training. It has targets, mats, weapons lockers and all the other equipment usually found in a well-equipped dojo. The northeast corner is reserved for weight training.

**15. Computer:** This is the data-processing and communications center of Fidelity. In this room are the main memory banks with all the fief's records, as well as the satellite communications center which allows Garson to communicate with other CloneMasters. The two mainframes in the east wall are primary targets of the Terminators, since their memory banks contain compressed copies of the CloneMaster's brain tapes and DNA codes. Although there are communications stations and computer workstations throughout the mansion, they all link back to these mainframes, and when the computers are destroyed, the mansion will be effectively cut off from the outside world.

Each computer can each be destroyed with a single successful use of the Breaking Blow skill.

**16. Tele-Recording and Processing Center:** This large room is devoted to the incredibly complicated process of braintaping, allowing the CloneMaster to transfer his memories, experience and personality to each new body he grows. Although the walls of the chamber are cluttered literally floor-to-ceiling with monitors, encryption devices and processors, the only piece of hardware the Terminators need concern themselves with is the mainframe located along the far west wall. This computer can be destroyed as the mainframes in 15, above.

**17. Growth Chamber:** This is where the CloneMaster grows and decants his newest bodies, to prepare them for memory transfer. The clone tank that takes up the southeast corner of the room holds a half-finished clone of the CloneMaster. The figure suspended in the clear fluid of the tank is macabre – the musculature is almost done, but they haven't started the skin yet, giving the clone the appearance of something out of a particularly gruesome monster movie. The clone tank is the Terminator's final objective (except for the CloneMaster himself), and can be destroyed as the tanks in 8, above.

**18. Servants' Work Area:** This room is where the clerical work for the fief gets done. In addition to numerous desks and computer work stations, the room holds countless cabinets and shelves full of records on everything from old-fashioned ledger books to optical disks.

**19. Dining Nook:** The CloneMaster can take his meals or informally entertain visitors in this small, comfortable room. Most of the decor consists of curio cabinets displaying the CloneMaster's collection of rare, antique china.

**20. CloneMaster's Bedroom:** This large room looks like something out of the Victorian era. The room is dominated by a canopied, four-poster ebony bed. There's also an entertainment center (TV, VCR, stereo), several wardrobes, curio cabinets, a dresser and a desk with a recessed computer terminal. Every square inch of walls not already covered by furniture is covered by bookshelves.

The bathroom is luxuriant, dominated by a large sunken tub. The commode is kept behind a screen of carved ebony.

**21. CloneMaster's Library/Study:** This is the CloneMaster's work area. It



contains a large desk and computer workstation, several video monitors and duplicates of the video and PA controls found on the overlook corridor. There are also various chairs, tables and a large leather couch. A smaller desk sits in the southeast corner, near the door, in case the CloneMaster wants a receptionist or administrative assistant close at hand.

**22. CloneMaster Exercise and Recreation Area:** This room is decorated with tropical plants and lit by a large skylight. In addition to a complete assortment of weights and exercise equipment, the room contains a sauna, steam room, whirlpool bath and massage table.

### The Loos

All the restrooms in the mansion are built along the same general lines – three toilet stalls to the left of the door, three sinks with mirrors to the right and three shower stalls on the opposite wall. (Instead of a line of sinks, Loo #3 has a large, circular sink in the middle of the room, between the two doors, which sprays water on all sides when a foot-pedal is pressed. It's set up that way to make it easy to rinse off toxic chemicals in case of an emergency.) Loo #4 doesn't have any showers, and Loo #5 is the CloneMaster's palatial private bath – see #20 on page 30.

Water for showers and drinking comes from a well drilled behind the mansion, not from the sewers.

The loos on the upper level are too far above the floor of the sewer to allow an easy means of entrance, but they can be used for a quick getaway into the sewers. Terminators trying to get into the sewers from the upper level must make a roll vs. Jumping or Acrobatics or lose their footing upon landing, taking 1d-3 points of damage in the fall.

### Opposing Forces

At the time of the raid, the mansion is occupied by the CloneMaster himself, ten technicians, four armed senior technicians, 12 servants and a variable number of Jellies (see pp. 38-40). The number of Jellies should be set by the GM based on the strength of the PCs – as a guideline, there should be roughly two or three Jellies per Terminator, with a maximum of 12. The 450-point Jellies should only be used if there are three or more PCs, and there should be no more than one or two 450-point Jellies in the mansion.

There are no Pacifiers stationed within the mansion – the CloneMaster prefers Jellies for his personal bodyguard. However, if it looks like the PCs are having too easy a time of it, the GM can send in a squad of 1d+6 Pacifiers to heat things up a bit (part of the squad guarding the south gate, sent to investigate the gunfire and explosions to the west).

The disposition of the CloneMaster's forces is left to the GM. He should distribute enemies throughout the mansion in a way that will challenge the PCs without confronting them with hopeless odds.

The CloneMaster's forces, particularly the Jellies, should be played intelligently – if a Jelly is in nucleic surgery, and a Terminator bursts into the main biological lab, the Jelly will join the fight in main biological, not kick back and read a magazine until the Terminators come for him.

On the other hand, the CloneMaster's household – Jellies included – are frightened and confused by the Terminators' assault. If the PCs seem to need a break, tactically, the GM should feel free to throw one their way, putting it down to the "fortunes of battle." Such "divine intervention" should be reserved for cases of monumental bad luck, however – it should not be used to make up for bad roleplaying or sloppy tactics on the PCs' part.

Twenty minutes after the Terminators enter the mansion, a large force of Pacifiers will arrive from a larger, neighboring fief. The rescuers will arrive in

### Brian Jurgenson

Age 40, 6', 175 lbs., blond hair, blue eyes  
ST 12 [20], DX 11 [10], IQ 12 [20],  
HT 11 [10].

Basic Speed 5.5, Move 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+2

Dodge 5, Parry 6 (club)

No armor; no encumbrance

Point total: 50

Advantages: None

Disadvantages: Greed [-15]; Jealousy [-10]; Miserliness [-10]; Stubbornness [-5]

Skills: Accounting-10 [1]; Acting-14 [6]; Axe/Mace-12 [4]; Brawling-13 [4]; Carpentry-12 [1]; Professional Skill (Miller)-14 [6]; Fishing-12 [1]; Merchant-13 [4]; Politics-12 [2]; Swimming-11 [1]

Weapon: Club (as small mace), 1d+4 crushing.

When the CloneMasters forbade the common folk any access to metal or technology, society went into a shocked paralysis. In many areas, people had to be forced to work at gunpoint – they simply could not imagine living without technology.

While Richard Garson was trying to deal with this hopeless attitude in his serfs, one of them – Brian Jurgenson's grandfather – went to the CloneMaster with a plan to build a stone-grinding grain mill to the local stream. This was exactly the kind of initiative Garson wanted in his servants, and he built the mill and made the man who suggested it the Miller. Miller Jurgenson passed his job on to his son, and Young Miller Jurgenson passed it on to his son, Brian.

Brian Jurgenson was the stereotypical angry young man. In his childhood he was constantly in trouble with the other villagers, and sometimes with the Pacifiers as well. In his late teens he seemed to come around, though, and when his father died he moved naturally into his position as proprietor of the mill.

Jurgenson had never really lost his youthful anger, though. He'd just transferred it along more disciplined channels. He became a member of the underground people's resistance movement. At first he chafed at the underground's inability to take direct action, but at the same time he enjoyed his status of the most socially important member of the resistance in Fidelity. His mill became the center of regional resistance activity.

When Righteous Wind moved into the area, all that changed. The resistance naturally turned to the Proctor – an experienced, active revolutionary – for leadership, and they started conducting their business at the remote, secure training facility rather than the mill.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Brian Jurgenson (Continued)

Jurgenson had become a second-stringer in the underground. He had never had any particular political ideals, other than a general craving to destroy authority, and he had no particular interest in the underground unless he could lead it. He gradually began to distance himself from revolutionary activities.

About the same time he came to realize that he would not see the fall of the CloneMasters in his lifetime. With middle age rapidly approaching, he began to think about looking out for number one. Eventually, he decided to go to the CloneMaster and strike a deal – in return for his help in eliminating the local chapter of the Society of Thanatos, the CloneMaster would relocate him to a distant fief, where he could become an overseer of a large manufacturing facility, with a good chance of earning a clone of his own some day.

Jurgenson is a morose and humorless man. He never married and has no close friends. He's a good dirty fighter, and can also use a large club for self defense – he keeps the club handy at the mill, and carries it with him when he travels.

## The Society of Thanatos Campaign

The world of the CloneMasters is better suited for one-shot adventures, like this one, than to an ongoing *GURPS* campaign. The difficulty in creating a 600-point martial artist, combined with the high mortality rate among Terminators is a restrictive factor. In addition, the great similarity between Terminators offers little chance for character development in the long term. (An exception to the above might be a game where there is only one player and the GM – in such a case the Terminators' lack of individuality is not a problem, while his high point total gives him excellent survivability for a solo character.)

If a GM does wish to run a Society of Thanatos Campaign, it is suggested that the PCs not be full Terminators. Instead, a starting point value of 200 to 300 points is recommended. The characters should all have some Terminator training, but may also take on other character traits and backgrounds (for example: backwoodsman, thief, traveling entertainer or rogue tech). In this campaign, the PCs would act as special agents, looking for useful intelligence, recommending missions that seem to require Terminators, and dealing with problems that the Terminators don't have time for.

helicopters, and will thoroughly saturate the mansion with a tranquilizing gas before sending the troops in. Any Terminator caught in the gas must make a HT roll every *second* he remains within the gas. If he fails the roll he falls unconscious and will be shot by the first Pacifier who finds him. If he makes the roll, he still takes -1 each to ST, DX and IQ, due to the anesthetic effect of the gas. Once the assault starts it will take the rescuers at least ten minutes to check the sewers, giving a conscious Terminator plenty of time to make an escape via that route.

If they keep fighting steadily, 20 minutes should be ample time for the Terminators to either accomplish their mission or die trying. The PCs should not know how much time they have, but the GM should ensure they're acutely aware that reinforcements are expected *at any moment*, and that time is of the essence.



## Aftermath

If any of the PCs survive the assault on the CloneMaster's mansion (which should mean that they accomplished their mission, since nothing but death could make a Terminator leave an assignment half-completed), read them the following:

*As you slip out into the moonlight, your escort rushes over to you. When you report your success a ragged cheer goes up.*

*But there's no time for celebrating – you can already hear the drone of helicopters bringing reinforcements from neighboring fiefs. Their help comes too late – even as you leave for the rendezvous, your ears are rattled by the explosion of the power plant, the final rebel objective. The fall of the CloneMaster is accomplished.*

*A few minutes later, you and your escort reach the wire fence – harmless now. You clamber over and dash through the wilderness, diving for cover every time an enemy copter buzzes overhead.*

*About midnight, you meet the rest of the rebels. More survived than you had thought possible. Somebody directs you to a secluded corner, and you curl up and rapidly fall into an exhausted sleep.*

*Tomorrow, you know, you'll be met by representatives of the Society of Thanatos, who will start you along the "underground railroad" to a new assignment. Your mission here is done, but you feel no elation in your victory. The CloneMasters still rule, and as long as they remain, your only purpose is to fight and die – if not today, then soon.*

## Character Points

If the GM wishes to conduct further adventures with these PCs, he may assign character points as follows:

If the PCs destroyed the helicopters at the training camp: 1 point.

If they took the children to the mill: 1 point.

If they stopped the executions of the children and the citizens in the town square: 1 point for the children, and one for the citizens.

For the assault on the mansion: 2 points, plus 2 points if they accomplished all objectives.

# CloneMaster Richard Michael Garson

Age 138 (apparent age 45); 6' 1", 145 lbs.; blond hair (shaven head), brown eyes.

**ST:** 12 [20]      **IQ:** 14 [45]      **Speed:** 6.5  
**DX:** 13 [30]      **HT:** 15 [60]      **Move:** 6  
**Damage:** Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+2  
**Dodge:** 6      **Parry:** 8 (Judo)  
No armor; no encumbrance

**Point Total:** 265

## Advantage

Wealth (Filthy Rich) [50]

## Disadvantages

Enemy (Society of Thanatos) [-40]  
Intolerance (Peasants) [-10]

## Quirks

Honestly believes he's a benevolent, enlightened leader [-1].  
Keeps a mistress, to whom he is faithful [-1].

## Skills

Administration-14 [1]; Biochemistry-18 [20]; Chemistry-14 [2]; Computer Operation-17 [4]; Computer Programming-16 [6]; Cooking-16 [2]; Detect Lies-13 [1]; Diplomacy-13 [1]; Driving (Car)-13 [2]; Electronics-16 [6]; Electronics Operation (Medical Equipment)-16 [4]; Engineer-17 [8]; Fencing-12 [1]; Fishing-15 [1]; Genetics-16 [12]; Guns (Pistol)-15 [1]; History-13 [1]; Judo-12 [2]; Law-14 [2]; Literature-13 [1]; Mathematics-14 [2]; Merchant-14 [1]; Physician-14 [2]; Physics-13 [1]; Physiology-16 [12]; Politics-16 [4]; Psychology-14 [2]; Research-16 [4]; Savoir-Faire-15 [1]; Surgery-13 [2]; Swimming-13 [1]; Writing-14 [1]; Zoology-13 [1].

## Weapon

Baretta 92 pistol, 2d+2 crushing.

Richard Garson was born in Denton, Texas, in 1962. In 1985 he graduated from Texas A&M University with a doctorate in biochemistry. He went on to get his M.D. from Harvard Medical School, followed by an internship at Johns Hopkins. By the mid-nineties, he was a central member of the team working to perfect human cloning.

Although he was not a great inventive genius, Garson was probably the most proficient technician on the team, and developed a reputation as the group's troubleshooter, reviving seemingly exhausted lines of inquiry and bringing them to fruition after their originators had given them up as blind alleys.

In November of 2005, Garson became one of the first dozen humans to have his memories and consciousness completely transferred to a new clone body. Garson did not do this for medical purposes – he was a healthy 44 – but in order to demonstrate the safety and reliability of the cloning process.

An ardent social Darwinist, Garson always favored making cloning technology available only to the elite. To Garson, the chaos of the Teens and '20s served as proof that the masses were unworthy to enjoy the benefits of technology. He campaigned relentlessly among his peers for a return to the feudal system, with technology held as a monopoly by the rulers.

Although politically active, Garson was not particularly ambitious, and once the CloneMasters were firmly established in power, he withdrew from public life. He established himself in a

modest fief he dubbed "Fidelity," which he sought to turn into a model of 21st-century governance. Fidelity was barely self-supporting (which was exactly as Garson wanted it); but Garson's personal household was more prosperous, due to the hefty fees he collected as a freelance technical consultant for the cloning operations of more prosperous, less scientific CloneMasters.

Garson sees himself as an enlightened leader, wisely and firmly leading his flock of childlike peasants toward what little enlightenment and fulfillment they are capable of. His subjects see him as a harsh and uncaring tyrant, but thankfully not arbitrary, vicious or depraved. The people of Fidelity hate their CloneMaster, and passively support the Society of Thanatos because of it; however, they seldom take any overt action against him, out of fear that he'll only be replaced with something worse.

By CloneMaster standards, Garson lives a quiet, rather austere life. He entertains barely enough guests to maintain his place in society, and is generally regarded as a dull host. He's respected for his knowledge and for his absolute commitment to the ideals of the 21st-century elite.

Garson's first wife was a Christian Scientist and (rather to Garson's relief) refused to be cloned and divorced him after he transferred to his first clone, claiming that the man she'd married was dead. Since he became a CloneMaster, Garson has kept a series of mistresses, most of whom were drawn from the ranks of his technicians. Some of these he's set up in fiefs of their own; others he's had banished or discreetly assassinated when they became inconvenient. His current mistress is his Senior Programmer, and they appear to have a stable, low-key relationship devoid of unseemly passion.

He's a tall, slender man with a rather imposing appearance. He prefers to dress in Oriental robes (unless he's doing lab work, when he wears white coveralls); and he habitually keeps his head shaven.

Over the years he's made certain subtle modifications in his clone body – his current body is significantly stronger and health-



ier than the one he was born with – but has generally kept his original appearance and capabilities. He makes a new braintape every week, which he updates daily while he sleeps. He prefers, when possible, to keep a clone ready for activation within two weeks, in case of accident. He usually activates his clones at a

physical age equivalent to 22, and replaces them before 45. At the time of this adventure, he was planning on starting a new clone as soon as he had eliminated the Society of Thanatos operation in Fidelity.

## Father Allen Hancock

Age 34; 5' 9", 150 lbs.; black hair and brown eyes.

ST: 10 [0]      IQ: 13 [30]      Speed: 6

DX: 13 [30]      HT: 11 [10]      Move: 6

Damage: Thrust 1d-1, Swing 1d

Dodge: 6      Parry: 8 (Judo)

No armor; no encumbrance

Point Total: 600

### Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]

Charisma +1 [5]

Clerical Investment [5]

Double-Jointed [5]

Empathy [15]

Voice [10]

### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Defend human rights and dignity) [-10]

Pacifism (Self-defense only) [-15]

Sense of Duty (Other peasants) [-10]

Vow (Catholic priest's vows) [-10]

### Skills

Acting-14 [4]; Bard-16 [2]; Climbing-15 [1]; Detect Lies-15 [1]; Diplomacy-15 [4]; Fast-Talk-14 [4]; First Aid-13 [1]; Fishing-13 [1]; Forgery-13 [4]; History-12 [2]; Holdout-13 [2]; Judo-12 [2]; Language (Greek-12) [1]; Language (Latin-13) [2]; Leadership-13 [1]; Literature-13 [4]; Pickpocket-14 [8]; Psychology-13 [4]; Research-13 [2]; Savoir Faire-15 [1]; Scrounging-14 [2]; Singing-13 [1]; Sleight of Hand-13 [4]; Stealth-12 [1]; Swimming-13 [1]; Teaching-14 [4]; Theology-15 [8].

Allen Hancock grew up as a street child in a large Eastern urban fief. He never knew his parents. The only stability in his early life came from Catholic missionaries who ministered to the children of the city.

With his brains and agility, young Allen was an accomplished pickpocket and sneak thief, but as he approached his teens, he became more and more concerned about the condition of his fellow peasants. He also found within himself an unquenchable eagerness to learn.

So Allen appealed to the only concerned, educated adults he knew – the Catholic missionaries. Recognizing his potential, they agreed to educate the boy, in return for plenty of hard work help-



ing with the mission. Eventually, Allen decided to apply for the priesthood. Needing a last name, he asked his favorite teacher – a Father Hancock – if he could use his.

Allen's faith was genuine, but he was also becoming convinced that faith alone would never bring change. Eventually, he found the underground, and became active in subversive activities. After participating in a bloody commando raid on a Pacifier garrison, Allen decided that his priestly vows were incompatible with violence, but the choice was strictly personal. Allen accepts that violent action will be necessary to change society, and will even help prepare for or plan military actions. However, when there's a choice, he always supports the nonviolent option.

In Fidelity, Father Allen soon established himself as a trustworthy, sympathetic leader of the community. Even the CloneMaster respected the young priest, and gave him a good deal of leeway to press for more humane treatment of the peasants. Father Allen became a frequent guest at the mansion – the CloneMaster enjoyed discussing art and literature with the priest.

When the CloneMaster's vendetta against the Society of Thanatos became a threat to children and innocent peasants, Allen decided that the time for pacifism was past. He supported the local resistance's decision to destroy Garson.

Allen is a quick, alert man with dark features (his looks seem to be Italian or Hispanic) and a friendly, open face. He prefers to talk his way out of trouble, but he does know a little bit of judo that he'll use to defend himself against physical attacks.

## Rising Dream

19 years old, 5' 11", 160 lbs.; black hair, blue eyes.

ST: 14 [45]      IQ: 12 [20]      Speed: 7.5

DX: 16 [80]      HT: 14 [45]      Move: 7

Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d

Dodge: 9      Parry: 14 (Karate)

No armor; no encumbrance

Point Total: 600

### Advantages

Alertness +3 [15]

Appearance (Handsome) [15]

Charisma +2 [10]

Combat Reflexes [15]

High Pain Threshold [10]

Iron Hand [10]

Patron (Society of Thanatos) [25]



Toughness 2 [25]  
Trained by a Master [50]  
Voice [10]

### Disadvantages

Enemy (CloneMasters) [-60]  
Fanaticism [-15]  
Poverty (Poor) [-15]  
Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) [-10]  
Truthfulness [-5]  
Vow (Never use weapons or machinery) [-10]

### Quirks

Enjoys being alone in the wilderness [-1]  
Fond of children and animals [-1]  
Likes to argue about politics [-1]  
Sharp dresser (when not in uniform) [-1]  
Still in love with a girl who turned Jelly [-1]

### Skills

Acrobatics-16 [4]; Body Control-16 [24]; Body Language-17 [14]; Breaking Blow-17 [14]; Breath Control-16 [24]; Climbing-17 [4]; Cooking-12 [1]; Drunken Fighting-17 [8]; Fishing-12 [1]; Flail-14 [1]; Hypnotism-16 [12]; Invisibility Art-16 [24]; Judo-18 [16]; Jumping-17 [2]; Karate-18 [16]; Leadership-13 [½]; Light Walk-16 [12]; Meditation-16 [24]; Mountain Heart-16 [24];

Parry Missile Weapons-17 [8]; Power Blow-16 [12]; Pressure Points-16 [12]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-12 [1]; Sex Appeal-14 [½]; Shuriken-14 [1]; Slight of Hand-13 [½]; Staff-14 [1]; Stealth-18 [8]; Survival-10 [1]; Swimming-16 [½]; Tracking-11 [1]; Traps-14 [6]; Yin/Yang Healing-16 [12]

### Maneuvers

(Note: Maneuvers without a point value indicated are defaults.)

Aggressive Parry-14 [6]; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-16 [2]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Parry Hands and Feet [6]; Flying Jump Kick-17 [1]; Hit Location (Karate)-17 [2]; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-19 [1]; Kicking-20 [4]; Knee Strike-17, Roll With Blow-16 [2]; Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17 [1]

Although he's the youngest of Righteous Wind's new graduates, Rising Dream is the natural leader of his fellow Restitutors. He's naturally a cheerful, outgoing type (although his good nature does not extend to his enemies during combat missions). He's a remarkably bad liar, and consequently he seldom tries to hide the truth.

When Rising Dream was 17, a fellow trainee he was romantically involved with washed out of the Society of Thanatos program and turned Jelly. Rising Dream pretended to shrug off this betrayal, and has even cultivated a reputation as a ladies' man, but inside he still loves the girl, and his greatest fear is meeting her in combat (he's reasonably sure that she's nowhere near Fidelity).



## Shadow Lotus

Age 21; 5' 6", 135 lbs.; black hair, brown eyes.  
**ST:** 13 [30]      **IQ:** 13 [30]      **Speed:** 7.5  
**DX:** 16 [80]      **HT:** 14 [45]      **Move:** 7  
**Damage:** Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
**Dodge:** 9      **Parry:** 14 (Karate)  
No armor; no encumbrance

**Point Total:** 600

### Advantages

Alertness +1 [5]  
Appearance (Attractive) [5]  
Combat Reflexes [15]  
Danger Sense [15]  
High Pain Threshold [10]  
Iron Hand [10]  
Luck [15]  
Patron (Society of Thanatos) [25]  
Toughness 2 [25]  
Trained by a Master [50]

### Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]  
Enemy (CloneMasters) [-60]  
Fanaticism [-15]  
Overconfidence [-10]  
Poverty (Poor) [-15]  
Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) [-10]  
Vow (Never use weapons or machinery) [-10]

### Quirks

Collects books of all kinds [-1]  
Cruel to captured prisoners [-1]  
Doesn't socialize much [-1]  
Likes to work with her hands [-1]

### Skills

Acrobatics-17 [8]; Artist-13 [4]; Boating-17 [2]; Body Con-



trol-17 [24]; Body Language-16 [10]; Breaking Blow-17 [12]; Breath Control-16 [20]; Carpentry-14 [2]; Climbing-16 [2]; Drunken Fighting-16 [4]; Escape-16 [4]; Fast-Talk-14 [2]; Flail-14 [1]; Hypnotism-16 [10]; Interrogation-17 [10]; Invisibility Art-17 [24]; Judo-18 [16]; Jumping-17 [2]; Karate-18 [16]; Light Walk-16 [10]; Literature-13 [4]; Meditation-17 [24]; Mountain Heart-17 [28]; Parry Missile Weapons-17 [8]; Power Blow-16 [10]; Pressure Points-16 [10]; Riding-15 [1]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-13 [1]; Shuriken-14 [1]; Staff-14 [1]; Stealth-17 [4]; Swimming-17 [2]; Traps-16 [10]; Yin/Yang Healing-19 [16].

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-14 [6]; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-18 [6]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet) [6]; Flying Jump Kick-20 [6]; Hit Location (Karate)-18 [6]; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-22 [6]; Kicking-20 [4]; Knee Strike-19 [4]; Roll With Blow-18 [6]; Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17 [1].

Shadow Lotus is the most fanatical of Righteous Wind's pupils. When she was a child of 10, her entire family was slaughtered by an insane CloneMaster, apparently just for his sadistic amusement. Ever since, she's hated all CloneMasters and anyone who'll willingly serve them. In battle she fights with a cold-blooded viciousness, and will not hesitate to torture a captured Jelly, Pacifier or tech.

In order to bring her body and spirit into the harmony required of Restitutors, Righteous Wind encouraged her to develop contemplative hobbies – canoeing, horseback riding and sketching. Her normal demeanor tends to be sarcastic and callous of others' feelings, but while engaged in her pastimes she becomes more introspective and subdued.

She tolerates outrageous flirting from Rising Dream, but if any other male tries to make an overt advance her reaction will be angry – perhaps violent.

Shadow Lotus is the only one of Righteous Wind's pupils whose ancestry is mostly oriental.

## Golden Song

Age 22; 6', 165 lbs.; blond hair, blue eyes.  
**ST:** 13 [30]      **IQ:** 14 [45]      **Speed:** 7.75  
**DX:** 17 [100]      **HT:** 14 [45]      **Move:** 7  
**Damage:** Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
**Dodge:** 9      **Parry:** 14 (Karate)  
No armor; no encumbrance

**Point Total:** 600

### Advantages

Animal Empathy [5]  
Appearance (Handsome) [15]  
Combat Reflexes [15]  
Charisma +1 [5]  
High Pain Threshold [10]  
Iron Hand [10]  
Patron (Society of Thanatos) [25]  
Toughness 2 [25]  
Trained by a Master [50]  
Voice [10]



### Disadvantages

Enemy (CloneMasters) [-60]  
Fanaticism [-15]  
Impulsiveness [-10]  
Poverty (Poor) [-15]  
Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) [-10]  
Vow (Never use weapons or machinery) [-10]

### Quirks

Arachnaphile [-1]  
Politically liberal . . . for a Terminator [-1]

### Skills

Acrobatics-18 [8]; Animal Handling-14 [4]; Body Control-16 [16]; Body Language-17 [10]; Breaking Blow-16 [8]; Breath Control-16 [16]; Climbing-17 [2]; Drunken Fighting-17 [4]; Flail-15 [1]; Hypnotism-16 [8]; Invisibility Art-17 [20]; Judo-20 [24]; Jumping-18 [2]; Karate-18 [8]; Light Walk-17 [10]; Meditation-17 [24]; Mountain Heart-16 [16]; Naturalist-15 [4]; Parry Missile Weapons-17 [4]; Poetry-14 [2]; Power Blow-17 [10]; Pressure Points-18 [12]; Psychology-13 [2]; Riding-17 [2]; Running-16

[16]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-14 [1]; Shuriken-15 [1]; Staff-15 [1]; Stealth-19 [8]; Survival [Woodlands]-16 [6]; Swimming-19 [4]; Traps-16 [6]; Veterinary-14 [6]; Yin/Yang Healing-16 [8].

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-14 [6]; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-18 [6]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet) [6]; Flying Jump Kick-20 [6]; Hit Location (Karate)-18 [4]; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-20 [2]; Kicking-20 [4]; Knee Strike-20 [2]; Roll With Blow-18 [6]; Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17 [1].

Perhaps the most naturally gifted of the Restitutors (although older than some of the others because he started his training late, at age 15); Golden Song is also the least fanatical. He does not

## Leaping Dragon

Age 24; 5' 11", 170 lbs.; black hair, brown eyes.

ST: 15                      IQ: 11                      Speed: 7.5

DX: 15                      HT: 15                      Move: 7

Damage: Thrust 1d+1; Swing 2d+1

Dodge: 9                      Parry: 14 (Karate)

No armor; no encumbrance

Point Total: 600

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes [15]  
High Pain Threshold [10]  
Iron Hand [10]  
Night Vision [10]  
Patron (Society of Thanatos) [25]  
Toughness 2 [25]  
Trained by a Master [50]



### Disadvantages

Bloodlust [-10]  
Enemy (CloneMasters) [-60]  
Fanaticism [-15]  
Poverty (Poor) [-15]  
Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) [-10]  
Vow (Never use weapons or machinery) [-10]

### Quirk

Feels unworthy to be a Restitutor [-1]

### Skills

Acrobatics-16 [8]; Body Control-16 [28]; Body Language-16 [14]; Breaking Blow-16 [14]; Breath Control-16 [28]; Climbing-

particularly want to be a Terminator, but he's an idealist, and sees the Society of Thanatos as the place where he can put his natural gifts to the best use for the good of all.

While he sees the need to bring down the CloneMasters' regime, he does not hold the CloneMasters' servants responsible for the deeds of their masters. He's also politically moderate on the question of technology, believing that after the revolution technology should not be destroyed, but should be applied for the general good. Shadow Lotus finds such views infuriating – the others just find him a bit eccentric.

He has a great love of nature, particularly animals. His secret ambition is to some day have a ranch of his own, in some wild, remote place, far removed from the influence of the CloneMasters or any other civilized authority. He finds insects – particularly spiders – fascinating.

16 [4]; Drunken Fighting-16 [8]; Flail-13 [1]; Hypnotism-16 [14]; Invisibility Art-17 [32]; Judo-18 [24]; Jumping-16 [2]; Karate-19 [32]; Light Walk-16 [14]; Meditation-17 [32]; Mountain Heart-16 [28]; Parry Missile Weapons-16 [8]; Power Blow-16 [14]; Pressure Points-16 [14]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-12 [2]; Shuriken-13 [1]; Staff-13 [1]; Stealth-16 [4]; Survival [Mountains]-12 [4]; Swimming-15 [1]; Tracking-10 [1]; Traps-16 [12]; Yin/Yang Healing-16 [14].

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-14 [6]; Back Kick-19, Drop Kick-17 [2]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet) [6]; Flying Jump Kick-17, Hit Location (Karate)-17 [1]; Hook Kick-19, Jump Kick-19, Kicking-21 [4]; Knee Strike-18, Roll With Blow-16 [2]; Shin Kick-19, Spin Kick-19, Sweeping Kick-19, Yawara-18 [1].

The strongest and oldest of the Restitutors, Leaping Dragon is also the least quick and clever – and he knows it. For the last three years of his training, he expected to wash out at any time, yet he kept working to advance his skills. In fact, he worked so hard, that he's actually surpassed most of his fellow graduates in Karate skill. He's still haunted by an unshakable feeling that he somehow was made a Restitutor by mistake.

He's a quiet man with no hobbies – his training occupied 100% of his energies throughout his adolescence and adult life. He's secretly attracted to Shadow Lotus, but has never said anything. She does not even suspect his interest.

Leaping Dragon adheres scrupulously to all the precepts of the Society of Thanatos. He leaves political analysis and argument to sharper minds, like Shadow Lotus and Golden Song.

In battle, he fights with an impersonal savagery that's almost frightening. He never willingly leaves a foe alive.

## Arnie Goldman

Age 21; 6' 2", 165 lbs.; curly dark hair and brown eyes.

ST: 14 [45]                      IQ: 13 [30]                      Speed: 7.25

DX: 15 [60]                      HT: 14 [45]                      Move: 7

Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d

Dodge: 9                      Parry: 15 (Karate)

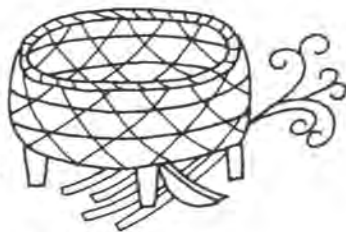
No armor; no encumbrance

Point Total: 600

### Advantages

Absolute Direction [5]  
Absolute Timing [5]  
Combat Reflexes [15]  
High Pain Threshold [10]  
Iron Hand [10]  
Patron (Society of Thanatos) [25]  
Peripheral Vision [15]

Toughness 2 [25]  
Trained by a Master [50]



### Disadvantages

Enemy (CloneMasters) [-60]  
Fanaticism [-15]  
Poverty (Poor) [-15]  
Sense of Duty (Society of Thanatos) [-10]  
Shyness (Mild) [-5]  
Vow (Never use weapons or machinery) [-10]

### Quirk

Feels he must live up to the family name [-1]

### Skills

Acrobatics-16 [8]; Body Control-18 [28]; Body Language-16 [10]; Breaking Blow-18 [14]; Breath Control-16 [20]; Climbing-16 [4]; Diplomacy-13 [4]; Drunken Fighting-17 [16]; Fast-Talk-14 [4]; Flail-13 [1]; Hypnotism-16 [10]; Invisibility Art-17 [24]; Judo-18 [24]; Jumping-17 [4]; Karate-20 [24]; Light Walk-16 [10]; Meditation-16 [20]; Mountain Heart-17 [24]; Parry Missile Weapons-16 [8]; Power Blow-18 [16]; Pressure Points-16 [10]; Running-16 [8]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-14 [2]; Shuriken-13 [1];

Staff-13 [1]; Stealth-17 [8]; Swimming-16 [2]; Teaching-13 [2]; Traps-17 [10]; Writing-15 [6]; Yin/Yang Healing-16 [10].

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-15 [6]; Back Kick-20, Drop Kick-18 [2]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet) [6]; Flying Jump Kick-18, Hit Location (Karate)-18 [1]; Hook Kick-20, Jump Kick-20, Kicking-22 [4]; Knee Strike-19, Roll With Blow-16 [2]; Shin Kick-20, Spin Kick-20, Sweeping Kick-20, Yawara-19 [1].

Arnie Goldman has a Society of Thanatos name – Harmonious Jade – but he seldom uses it. Arnie is the only relative of Lyman Goldman ever to attain the rank of Restitutor, and he feels it's his duty to publicly uphold the family name.

Actually, Arnie's not that closely related to Lyman (who never had children). His paternal great-grandmother was Lyman's sister (in fact, his father's surname was "Hopkins," not "Goldman" – Arnie adopted the name of his famous ancestor when he joined the Society of Thanatos). Nonetheless, he sincerely feels himself to be the receptacle for the Goldman family honor.

To Arnie's credit, for all his self-consciousness, he's not arrogant about his ancestry. He looks on his family ties as a duty to work harder, rather than an excuse for special privilege.

## Jellies

Below are stats for an assortment of Jellies. If more than eight Jellies are required, the GM can use the same template for more than one opponent. There is no attempt to give the Jellies individual personalities or characters beyond their combat skills – they probably won't be necessary, and if they are they can be easily supplied by the GM. Note that the Jellies tend to have slightly lower attributes than Terminators, requiring them to spend more for equivalent skill levels. Thus, the Jellies are less of a match for the Restituturs than their point totals might suggest.

If a turncoat Jelly is needed to provide an emergency PC in the CloneMaster's mansion (see p. 31), the GM should use one of the last two Jellies. Otherwise, these two "level 2" Jellies should not be used unless there are four or more PCs attacking the mansion, or the Terminators seem to be having too easy a time of it for any reason.

### Jelly #1

ST: 13                      IQ: 12                      Speed: 6.75  
DX: 14                      HT: 13                      Move: 6  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
Dodge: 7                      Parry: 14 (Staff)  
No armor; no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 2  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Acrobatics-16; Body Control-16; Body Language-16; Breath Control-16; Climbing-16; Drunken Fighting-16; Flail-13; Judo-16; Jumping-16; Karate-17; Meditation-15; Mountain Heart-16; Shuriken-15; Staff-18; Traps-15; Yin/Yang Healing-16

### Maneuvers

Enhanced Parry (Staff); Yawara-16

### Weapon

Bo Staff, 1d+2 crushing (thrust) or 2d+1 crushing (swing)

### Jelly #2

ST: 11                      IQ: 13                      Speed: 6.75  
DX: 15                      HT: 12                      Move: 6  
Damage: Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+1  
Dodge: 7                      Parry: 13 (Karate)  
No armor; no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness-1  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Acrobatics-16; Fast Draw (Shuriken-17); Flail-13; Hypnotism-16; Invisibility Art-16; Judo-16; Karate-18; Light Walk-16;



Meditation-16; Parry Missile Weapons-16; Shuriken-18; Staff-13; Stealth-16; Traps-13.

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-13; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-16; Enhanced Dodge; Flying Jump Kick-17; Hit Location (Karate)-16; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-18, Kicking-20; Knee Strike-17, Roll With Blow-16; Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17.

### Weapon

12 Shuriken (1d-2).

### Jelly #3

ST: 13                      IQ: 14                      Speed: 7  
DX: 14                      HT: 14                      Move: 7  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
Dodge: 7                      Parry: 10 (Flail)  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Iron Hand  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness-1  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Body Control-16; Breaking Blow-16; Breath Control-16; Flail-20; Judo-16; Karate-16; Meditation-16; Mountain Heart-16; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-16; Shuriken-13; Staff-13; Traps-13; Yin/Yang Healing-16.

### Maneuver

Yawara-15.

### Weapon

2 Nunchaku, 2d+2 each.

### Jelly #4

ST: 13                      IQ: 10                      Speed: 6.5  
DX: 14                      HT: 12                      Move: 6  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
Dodge: 7                      Parry: 13 (Karate)  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Iron Hand  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 2  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Breaking Blow-16; Climbing-16; Flail-12; Judo-18; Jumping-16; Karate-20; Meditation-16; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-16; Shuriken-12; Staff-12; Traps-13.

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-13; Back Kick-16, Drop Kick-16; Flying Jump Kick-16; Hit Location (Karate)-16; Hook Kick-17, Jump Kick-16, Kicking-18; Knee Strike-17, Shin Kick-16, Spin Kick-16, Sweeping Kick-16, Yawara-20.

### Weapon

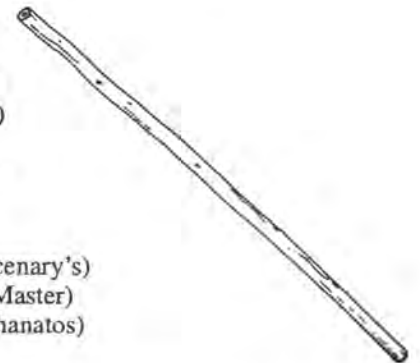
Yawara, 1d crushing.

### Jelly #5

ST: 12                      IQ: 13                      Speed: 7  
DX: 15                      HT: 13                      Move: 7  
Damage: Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+2  
Dodge: 8                      Parry: 14 (Karate)  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 2  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Acrobatics-16; Body Control-16; Body Language-16; Breath Control-16; Climbing-16; Drunken Fighting-16; Flail-13; Judo-18; Jumping-16; Karate-18; Meditation-16; Mountain Heart-16; Shuriken-13; Staff-13; Traps-13; Yin/Yang Healing-16.

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-14; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-16; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet); Flying Jump Kick-16, Hit Location (Karate)-16; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-18, Kicking-20; Knee Strike-17, Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17.

### Jelly #6

ST: 13                      IQ: 14                      Speed: 6.5  
DX: 14                      HT: 12                      Move: 6  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
Dodge: 8                      Parry: 13 (Karate)  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Iron Hand

Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 1  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Acrobatics-16; Body Language-16; Breaking Blow-16; Climbing-16; Drunken Fighting-16; Flail-12; Hypnotism-16; Invisibility Art-16; Judo-16; Jumping-16; Karate-17; Light Walk-16; Meditation-16; Parry Missile Weapons-16; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-16; Shuriken-12; Staff-12; Stealth-16; Traps-13.

### Maneuvers

Enhanced Dodge; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet); Roll With Blow-16; Yawara-15.

### Jelly #7 (level 2)

ST: 14                      IQ: 16                      Speed: 7  
DX: 15                      HT: 13                      Move: 7  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d  
Dodge: 9                      Parry: 14 (Staff)  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 2  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

Acrobatics-16; Body Control-16; Breath Control-16; Flail-13; Hypnotism-16; Invisibility Art-16; Judo-18; Karate-18; Light Walk-16; Meditation-16; Mountain Heart-16; Parry Missile Weapons-16; Shuriken-13; Staff-20; Stealth-16; Traps-15; Yin/Yang Healing-16.

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-13; Back Kick-16, Drop Kick-16; Enhanced Dodge; Flying Jump Kick-16; Hit Location (Staff)-17, Hook Kick-17, Jump Kick-16, Kicking-18; Knee Strike-17, Roll With Blow-16; Shin Kick-17, Spin Kick-17, Sweeping Kick-17, Yawara-17.

### Weapon

Bo Staff, 2d+2 crushing (swing) or 1d+2 crushing (thrust).

### Jelly #8 (level 2)

ST: 13                      IQ: 13                      Move: 7  
DX: 15                      HT: 13                      Speed: 7  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing 2d-1  
Dodge: 8                      Parry: 14  
No armor, no encumbrance

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes  
High Pain Threshold  
Iron Hand  
Patron (CloneMaster)  
Toughness 1  
Trained by a Master



### Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Mercenary's)  
Duty (Defend CloneMaster)  
Enemy (Society of Thanatos)

### Skills

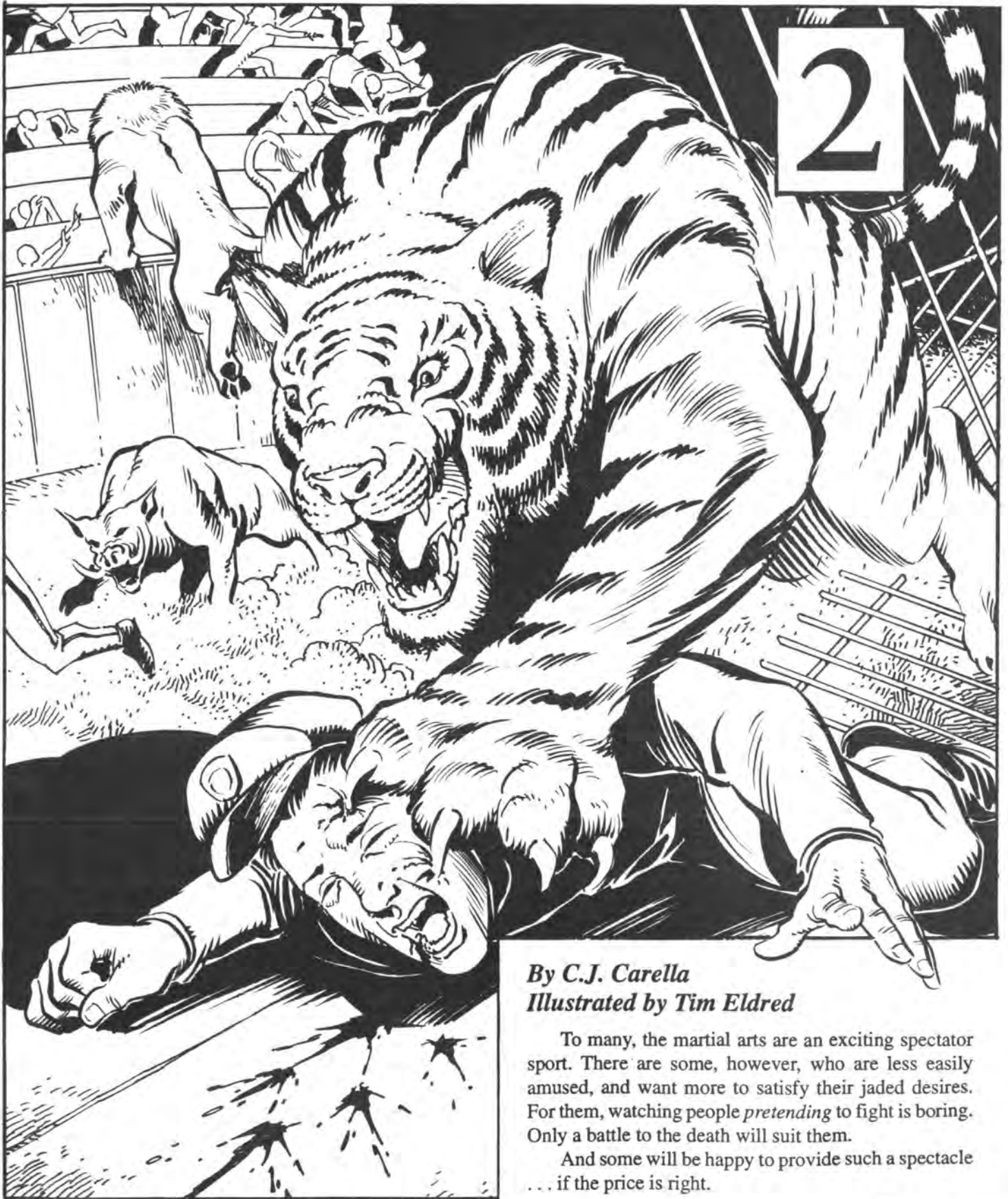
Acrobatics-16; Body Control-16; Body Language-16; Breaking Blow-16; Breath Control-16; Climbing-16; Drunken Fighting-16; Flail-13; Judo-18; Jumping-16; Karate-18; Meditation-16; Mountain Heart-16; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-16; Shuriken-13; Staff-13; Traps-13; Yin/Yang Healing-16.

### Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-14; Back Kick-18, Drop Kick-16; Enhanced Parry (Hands and Feet); Flying Jump Kick-16, Hit Location (Karate)-16; Hook Kick-18, Jump Kick-18, Kicking-20; Knee Strike-17, Shin Kick-18, Spin Kick-18, Sweeping Kick-18, Yawara-17.



# DARK ARENA



*By C.J. Carella  
Illustrated by Tim Eldred*

To many, the martial arts are an exciting spectator sport. There are some, however, who are less easily amused, and want more to satisfy their jaded desires. For them, watching people *pretending* to fight is boring. Only a battle to the death will suit them.

And some will be happy to provide such a spectacle . . . if the price is right.

## About the Author

C.J. Carella has been a *GURPS* fan since the publication of *Man to Man*, and he's never looked back. He has a special spot in his heart for martial arts rules – they launched his writing career.

Born in New York, C.J. has lived in Peru, Venezuela and Connecticut, in that order. His writing credits include *GURPS Martial Arts*, *GURPS Rome* and the upcoming *GURPS Chtorr*, as well as several articles in *Roleplayer* and *White Wolf*. C.J. is preparing to become a full-time writer; besides gaming, his hobbies include reading, movies and building up long-distance phone bills. He lives in New Haven with two masters of the Hungry Cat Stance.

## Different Backgrounds

This adventure is primarily intended for a *Martial Arts* campaign in the 20th-century, but it can be modified.

For a campaign in *GURPS Japan*, PCs could be ronin, fighting monks or commoners with great weapon skills. Lenoir can be an insane nobleman whose samurai are too loyal to question his dishonorable methods. For variety, some characters could be Chinese or Korean, with exotic combat styles.

In a *Supers* campaign, Lenoir wants to pit martial artists against supers for a better spectacle. Some of his henchmen will have super-powers or super-equipment, as will his prison and underground tunnel.

For a *Cliffhangers* or *Old West* campaign, make Lenoir a mobster with connections in the local Chinatown as well as Asia; he could also be a Japanese secret agent. The opening contest will be a boxing match. Some PCs could be professional or amateur boxers, as will be many of the Secret Tournament participants; change the martial arts skills of all Western contenders to Boxing or Brawling. Lenoir wants them mainly for the spectacle of seeing desperate men fight to the death; the spectators are prominent crime lords from around the nation. For the final touch, adjust the NPCs' point totals to match the campaign.

*Dark Arena* could also fit in a *Space* setting. Lenoir's mansion-fortress could become a huge space station orbiting a frontier planet where he has great influence. Aliens with exotic abilities and strange fighting styles would add spice. Throw in zero-grav fighting, vibroblades, force swords and neorolashes for more fun. Either the realistic or cinematic modes would work well.

*Autoduel* or *GURPS Cyberpunk* characters could find themselves in a different kind of arena, stripped of their killing machines and body armor. Realistic levels work best. Most of the campaign can remain unchanged, though Lenoir could be given a few autodueling skills to take the climactic battle to the road.

## Overview

*Dark Arena* is a cinematic martial arts adventure. Characters should all be extraordinary; it is also recommended that some of the reduced injury rules on p. MA51 be used, to keep the bloodshed to a minimum.

The adventure can begin almost anywhere in the world in the 20th century, in a medium-sized or larger city. (For alternate settings, see the sidebar.) An American or Asian setting would work best.

The story involves a full-contact tournament organized by billionaire (and secret crime-boss) Antoine Lenoir. Besides being illegal in most countries, the tournament has two additional complications, both caused by Lenoir's desire to sponsor the most memorable tournament in history. The first is that most of the contestants (including Olympic champions, famous *sensei* and other combat masters) are being forced to participate, through kidnapping, blackmail or extortion. Second, Lenoir does not plan to allow *any* of the contestants to survive!

The action starts with the disappearance of a kickboxing champion right after he wins a championship in the campaign city. The adventure is divided into episodes, presented in the order that the players will most likely go through them; they can be skipped or reshuffled depending on the PCs' actions. Sidebars describe important NPCs, and possible courses of action should the heroes not "stick to the script."

## Characters

This adventure is designed for three to six characters built using 300-350 points each. At least two or three should be dedicated martial artists of some sort with Reputations of 1 or more. Besides combat skills, Streetwise, Criminology and a well-rounded skill repertoire will be useful. Some plot lines would work best if the party has at least one member who is proficient with the katana.

## Changing the Power Level

To fit the adventure into a realistic campaign, some changes must be made. The important NPCs can be scaled down, as per their descriptions. The number of cannon-fodder foes should be toned down; reduce or completely eliminate the number of NPCs armed with firearms, and in general try to lower the lethality of the encounters. Adventurers should have plenty of opportunities to talk and bluff their way out of problems.

For a "four-color" campaign (with characters built on 500+ points), do just the opposite: increase the number of NPCs, and upgrade the major adversaries. If you want to use *GURPS Supers*, give some of the NPCs super-abilities or add some new metavillains (the *Super Scum* supplement is full of interesting foes).

To change the setting of *Dark Arena*, see the sidebar.

## A Night at the Fights

The "Golden Tiger" professional kickboxing championship tournament is being held in the campaign city. With a prize of \$25,000, it has attracted quite a number of contestants from around the world. The favorite contender is "Dutch" McNamara (see sidebar, p. 44), a long-time veteran with an exceptional track record. Two days before the match, martial artists with a Reputation of +2 or better will receive front-row tickets from Asian-American Imports, Inc., the main sponsor of the event. A Research roll will reveal that A.A.I. is a large company specializing in Asian artistic pieces and martial arts supplies, with offices in most U.S. cities, Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Thailand. A Streetwise-6 roll (-3 for anyone with Legal Enforcement Powers or who successfully reaches a Contact with the underworld or the police) will reveal that the company is suspected of

importing less-legitimate items, including guns and drugs, although so far no charges have been filed.

Anyone who would like to participate in the event would have known about it a month in advance. The contest is open to almost anybody with a high degree of martial arts competence in an "external" style (i.e., any style with Karate as a Primary skill). A Reputation of +1 or a Karate skill of 14 is the minimum prerequisite. Elimination rounds will be held during the week preceding the event. Roleplay them if several of the characters are participating, or just assume that all PCs in the tournament made it to the finals. Only one contestant will make it to the final round against McNamara, however. If more than one PC is up for it, resolve through a Contest of Skill (see p. B87), or simply pick the one with the highest Karate skill.



The local stadium is packed on the night of the event. Anyone without tickets will have to endure long lines and aggravation from irate fans. Those who got the front-row tickets in the mail will be seated next to a tall man with Asiatic features, with two attractive girls sitting by him. An IQ-4 roll tells any martial artist that this is Antoine Lenoir, playboy and Kendo expert. If nobody makes the roll, he will introduce himself; another roll, at -2, can be attempted then to recognize the name. Lenoir is friendly and inquisitive, asking about his fellow guests' recent exploits. If questioned about his own martial arts career, he smiles and says it's been "put on hold" for a while. "I have been working on a special project," he explains.

After a few introductory matches, the main event takes place. If no PCs participate, "Dutch" McNamara easily defeats his opponent with a devastating array of blows and an ample store of quasi-legal tricks. If he is battling a PC, play out the fight using the detailed tournament rules on p. MA45. During the encounter, Lenoir will try to make a "friendly wager" with a PC sitting next to him, betting on McNamara. Lenoir will bet an amount roughly equal to 10% of the bettor's monthly income; he seems to be very well-informed about the character's earnings.

### *Reeling the Party In*

Most of the episodes assume that the PCs will be interested in participating in the events outlined. But what if they do not want to attend the kickboxing tournament, or decline to investigate the disappearances, or refuse any of Lenoir's offers?

In a cinematic campaign, it's all right for the GM to use strong-arm tactics. If no PCs visit the kickboxing tournament, have a team of thugs kidnap all their dependents, or even the PCs themselves (see p. 51). Struggling characters might suddenly lose their jobs (Lenoir's doing), facing bankruptcy unless they enter his tournament.

Or try a little subtlety. Maybe another martial artist, an acquaintance or friend of the PCs (or a Dependent or Ally) mysteriously disappears, and the authorities are baffled. Or the trail of an old Enemy leads to Night Dragon (Lenoir) himself. Somebody else might hire the PCs to investigate Lenoir or the suspected blood tournament; that person could then disappear . . .





### C.C. "Dutch" McNamara

Age 32; 5'11", 220 lbs.; heavy-set but trim and powerful martial artist, blond hair, green eyes, extensively tattooed.

ST 13, DX 14, IQ 10, HT 13.

Basic Speed 6.75, Move 6.

Dodge 7, Parry 12 (Karate).

Boxing Gloves (PD 1, DR 2; DR for hands only).

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes; Reputation +2 (to martial artists, recognized on 10 or less); Toughness +2; Wealth (Comfortable).

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper; Bully; Compulsive Gambling; Odious Personal Habit (Taunts opponents when he fights); Stubbornness.

**Quirk:** Collects dragon tattoos – all over his body.

**Skills:** Boxing-17; Brawling-14; Carousing-15; Driving (Car)-13; Driving (Motorcycle)-14; Streetwise-12; Swimming-14; Teaching-11.

**Martial Arts Style:** Kickboxing (12 points). Maneuver Bonus: +3 to Spin Kicks.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Karate-17; Tournament Law (Kickboxing)-12.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Back Kick-14 (1d+3); Jump Kick-13 (2d+1); Kicking-15 (1d+3); Punch-17 (1d+1); Spin Kick-16 (1d+3).

McNamara is a professional fighter; he grew up in the streets, using his fists to make a living. He took up odd jobs and learned more and better ways to fight. His reputation grew steadily, and eventually he became a respected, if not well-liked, pro kickboxer.

*Continued on next page . . .*

If McNamara is the victor, Lenoir will be a gracious winner. If the loser does not have enough cash to cover the bet, Lenoir will accept a check or an IOU; he does not seem overly concerned about the money. On the other hand, should his opponent defeat McNamara, Lenoir's ever-present smile will become strained. "It seems I was in error," he says, as he pays the debt, in cash. "I usually do not make such mistakes." The heroes do not know this, but by winning the bet they have condemned McNamara to death.

After resolving the bet, Lenoir leaves, followed by his two companions.

### The Kidnapping

After the fight, the real action begins. A team of Lenoir's thugs (see sidebar, p. 46) tries to kidnap McNamara from his locker room. There are six men waiting for McNamara when he arrives from the fight; two have tranquilizer guns. (Use Pistol skill. Target must make a HT-4 roll or be knocked unconscious. On a success, he is at -2 DX for 15-HT hours, minimum half an hour.) The rest are armed with Tonfas.

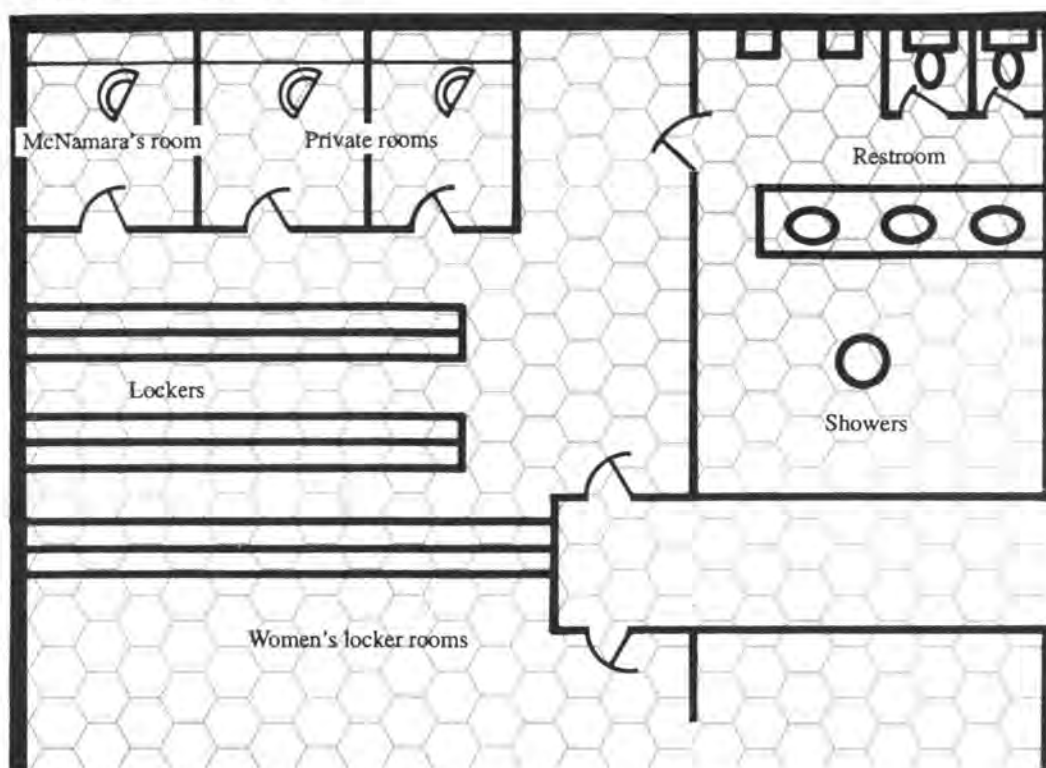
"Dutch" does not have a chance. The moment he steps in he is shot twice at close range and then clubbed on the head. His trainer and two helpers are also quickly subdued. Anyone in a neighboring dressing room must make a Hearing-3 roll to notice anything (the locker rooms are shown on Map 1 on the opposite page). If they do, the thugs will try to quickly knock them out. Only one of them will have a loaded tranquilizer dart, which he will use as soon as possible. As for the rest, two or more will attack each rescuer. One will try to distract the hero while another makes All-Out Attacks, striking at the brain (see p. B109). If they are outnumbered, the thugs still try to gang up on one rescuer at a time.

PCs leaving the contest are more likely to notice something wrong. By a quirk of fate, their vehicle(s) is parked at the back of the stadium, and they arrive in time to see the thugs head toward a black van, two of them carrying a suspicious-look-



## Map 1 – Locker Rooms

1 hex = 1 yard



ing bundle between them. Any queries will receive obscene answers; any direct action will prompt an attack by four thugs while the other two load up McNamara and try to drive away. It will take them 1d+5 seconds to achieve that; if attacked, they will dump McNamara and defend themselves. The thugs will use the same tactics as in the locker room.

If the rescuers defeat two thugs without taking any casualties, the remaining thugs try to escape, running in different directions and abandoning their victim. Otherwise, they will fight until knocked unconscious or killed. If they win, they abandon the unconscious heroes and drive off with the unfortunate kickboxer. Toward the end of the fight, the GM should make a Vision-3 roll for every PC; whoever makes it will notice a dark limo slowly driving away. If anyone makes the modified roll by 4 or more, or rolls a critical success, he will be able to read the plate number on the car: GE-2895.

It will take 2d minutes for the police to arrive at the fight scene; a “mysterious” series of accidents has blocked off most access points, delaying them. The party will have that time to escape, search any prisoners, or nurse their wounds.

## Investigations

Depending on the result of the fight, the PCs will have a number of options. If they captured any of the thugs, they may try to interrogate them (if the thugs are unconscious, a First Aid roll at -2 will revive them). The prisoners will reveal very little in the time the group has. The heroes do not know when the police will arrive, and should be wary; if they torture the prisoners in public, bring in the police more quickly. All the prisoners know is that they were ordered to kidnap McNamara and take him to an abandoned warehouse in the industrial zone of the city. Even if the rescuers manage to elude the police and reach the warehouse, they will be too late to find anything – though the GM can still play up the drama of a late-night race across the city.

### C.C. “Dutch” McNamara (Continued)

His main problem is his gambling; McNamara loses money as fast as he makes it. Now he owes over \$20,000 to the local underworld. He wants to win this fight very badly, and will try anything to get the prize money.

In the ring, McNamara will measure his opponent during the first round with a few Feints (p. B105), staying on the defensive the rest of the round. If he decides his skill is greater (i.e., if the Feints work), he will use a combination of Spin Kicks and punches. He has worked very hard on his Spin Kick – it is his favorite attack. If he believes his opponent has a better skill, he will stay with punches, kicking as little as necessary. He will also try to provoke his opponent with a few choice insults whispered between attacks (GMs are invited to use their imaginations).

In a “real” fight (e.g., the secret tournament), Dutch will be in deadly earnest; he will use all the dirty tricks he knows to come out on top. He is not above kicking a fallen enemy in the head a few times.

*Realistic version:* Reduce ST and DX to 12 and HT to 10. Remove Toughness +2.

*“Four-color” version:* Increase ST and DX to 15, IQ to 12, and HT to 14. Add High Pain Threshold and Alertness +2.

## Lenoir's Thugs

Assorted multinational scum.  
ST 12, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 10.  
Move 5.  
Dodge 6, Parry 10.

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes, Toughness +1.

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper; Duty (to Night Dragon); Fanaticism (Night Dragon); either Greed or Sadism.

**Quirk:** Egotistical swaggering and posturing.

**Skills:** Flail-13; Guns (Pistol)-13; Guns (Shotgun)-12; Knife-14; Staff-13; Stealth-13.

**Languages:** Native-10; English or Japanese-10.

**Martial Arts Styles:** Jujutsu; Kobujutsu.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Judo-13; Karate-14; Tonfa-14.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-14; Back Kick-10 (1d+1); Disarming-14; Punch-14 (1d-1); Spin Kick-11 (1d+1).

**Weapons:** Nunchaku (2d+1); Tonfa (1d-1 or 1d+2).

These trained killers and criminals form the elite of Lenoir's underworld army. Found young in poverty-stricken areas around the world, they are raised to blindly follow their superiors and to love Night Dragon. This conditioning is fairly effective, although some Night Dragon thugs have placed their own safety or monetary gain before their leader's. Discovery of this attitude, of course, leads to severance from the organization – and from life.

In combat, the thugs will try to gang up on the opposition, with some distracting the target while the rest make All-Out Attacks on him. One-on-one, they rely on simple attacks and defenses and may try to run away.

**Realistic version:** Drop ST and DX to 10.

**"Four-color" version:** Increase DX to 13 and HT to 11.



If the police find the fighters still on the scene, their initial reaction will be to treat them as suspects, unless one of them has Legal Enforcement Powers or some sort of Contact with the authorities. Cooperative and cool-headed PCs will be treated fairly; rash and aggressive ones will be arrested on the spot. The thugs will be carted away, the last the adventurers will see of them unless, again, one of them has Legal Enforcement Powers and can question them in the jail.

Over the next ten days, the authorities make little headway in the investigation, and do not seem overly interested in the incident. The official word is that McNamara, a notorious gambler, owes some money to a local Asian tong, and the night's abduction was an attempt to extort the money from him.

If the heroes do not accept this, they can investigate on their own. If they look for similar abduction attempts, a whole day at a local library's newspaper files and a Research roll will reveal that at least six other figures in the martial arts community are missing. A critical success on the Research roll will show that as many as nine or ten other martial artists have disappeared under mysterious circumstances.



## Tea and Kendo at Five O'Clock

Two weeks after the kidnapping (depending on the planned activities; if some of the group are involved in the investigation, give them time to gather some clues), the characters receive an invitation "to have tea with Mr. Lenoir." The invitation is hand-delivered by Lenoir's stolid chauffeur, a tall Japanese man who will not leave without a response. If the PCs accept, the same chauffeur will pick them up at 3:30 that afternoon – in the same limo they saw leaving the scene of the kidnapping (an IQ roll is required to realize this, unless the PCs noted the license plate number). They are driven to a luxurious building in the financial district. After passing some conscientious security guards and going through a metal detector (anyone carrying concealed weapons will be forced to surrender them and subsequently will be eyed suspiciously by the chauffeur), the visitors will be escorted, via elevator, to the top floor.

Instead of the expected offices, the top floor has a beautiful Japanese garden covered by a transparent roof. The grass and plants are all real; any PC making an IQ roll, or with Engineering (Civil Engineering) or Gardening skill, will realize that this garden must be hideously expensive to maintain. The chauffeur will



escort them to a paper-walled enclosure in the middle of the garden. As they approach, they can hear the clatter of wood on wood, and an occasional *kiai*.

Upon entering, the visitors see a large wooden *tatami* where Lenoir, in full Kendo regalia, is sparring against several partners at once. They enter just in time to see him parry two attacks from different adversaries, slip sideways and catch one with a swift blow to the neck. When he notices the visitors, he calls a stop in perfect Japanese and bows to his sparring partners.

"Forgive my appearance," Lenoir says, removing his mask. "I became a little carried away during my afternoon exercise. The art of Kendo, it stirs me most deeply." If any of the group is a known Japanese swordsman, he turns to him. "I am sure you understand."

If anyone agrees with him, Lenoir invites his visitors to join his exercise. "This session so far has left me unsatisfied," he tells them. "Perhaps if I was joined on the *dojo* by an equal, it would not be so." Anyone familiar with Japanese (and Asian) culture will realize that to refuse the implicit challenge is to lose face. Lenoir will only issue the challenge if he knows that one or more of the party is trained in the katana or the staff. If his challenge is accepted, Lenoir will face the character with the best Reputation. The others will fight his three sparring partners (same stats as the Thugs in the sidebar on p. 46, but add Katana-14). Lenoir will provide Kendo armor for everyone; he has a huge supply of different suits and parts that will fit any adult without the Dwarfism, Gigantism or Very Fat disadvantage.

Not all the visitors must join the fray; in fact, Lenoir will not invite to the contest any empty-hand fighter or Chinese fencers, and definitely not any "peasant weapon" practitioners (nunchakus, jo sticks, and so on). These he will politely brush off, saying that he "regretfully cannot provide you with a challenge worthy of your talents."

Lenoir's two beautiful escorts, a short brunette named Cherise and a tall blonde, Helga (see their descriptions on p. 65), will join those not fighting and give them a tour of the rest of the penthouse. This tour can be very illuminating. Besides the garden and the *dojo*, this floor has a small museum with all sorts of historical pieces, from artistic works to ancient weapons and armor. Most weapons are Japanese. Anyone making an IQ roll will notice that some cases are empty. If questioned about it, Cherise will smile and reply that some pieces are undergoing restoration. A successful Detect Lies roll (winning a Quick Contest against Cherise's Acting skill) will reveal that she is lying. A Criminology roll (or the players' own thinking) will suggest that maybe some of the pieces in Lenoir's collection are not meant to be seen by outsiders – stolen, perhaps?

Meanwhile, at the *dojo*, Lenoir prepares to face the challenger; he will consent to face a staff with his *shinai*, but would prefer to face another swordsman. Just before the duel, he will softly ask, "Kendo or Kenjutsu?" If his opponent chooses the former, Lenoir will fight flawlessly and by the book, in a beautiful display of



### Following Other Leads

The party might ignore or miss the clues pointing to Lenoir and try to investigate the criminal gang angle instead. This will require several Streetwise and Criminology rolls as they go through their street contacts. If two Streetwise rolls are made (have the PC or Contact with the highest skill make the rolls), they find an informer. He says that McNamara did most of his betting at Chinatown, and that he owes the money to the Red Cyclone Tong.

A visit to Chinatown and some Streetwise-3 rolls (with a further -5 penalty if no one is Chinese) will reveal more clues.

Any failed roll will mean a fight with a hostile youth gang (use the realistic version of Lenoir's thugs, about two for every PC involved) armed with staffs and nunchakus. They will try to beat the intruders up and dump them in a deserted alley. If the heroes beat this group, another – twice as big – will appear. If the PCs stand their ground, the police will arrive a few seconds after this second fight; they will want to cart *everyone* away.

If the rolls are successful, the investigators learn that whoever kidnapped McNamara must have connections beyond the local Tongs, because the attackers were not *local* thugs. If the modified Streetwise roll was made by 3 or more points, the questioners are told of the mysterious "Night Dragon," a secret underworld leader who exerts a powerful influence in Chinatown and other Asian communities around the world. If they make it this far, Lenoir will try to have them captured or blackmailed as described in the *Bump in the Night* and *Gentle Pressure* episodes.

## Inspector Juan Manuel Espinoza

Age 43; 5'11", 230 lbs.; handsome, dark-haired, has an elegant moustache and impeccable dress and haircut.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.5, Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Appearance (Handsome); Empathy; Legal Enforcement Powers; Patron (K-Net).

**Disadvantages:** Duty (K-Net); Intolerance (Women); Lecherousness.

**Quirks:** Hates terrorists; Likes to fake a French accent when he speaks English; Prefers field work; Respects combat ability.

**Skills:** Acting-14; Administration-14; Boxing-15; Criminology-16; Detect Lies-22; Driving-14; Fast-Draw (Gun)-15; Fast-Talk-15; Guns (Pistol)-16; Guns (SMG)-14; Interrogation-16; Sex Appeal-14; Sport Skill (Baseball)-15; Stealth-12; Streetwise-16.

**Languages:** English-13; French-14; Spanish-14.

**Martial Arts Style:** None (practices Boxing, but not professionally).

Espinoza was born in Cadiz, Spain. His father, a police captain, was assassinated by Basque terrorists; he and his mother moved to the United States when he was 12. He went to college on a baseball scholarship; he learned the sport very quickly, and could have become a professional. But he had other things in mind.

*Continued on next page . . .*



swordsmanship; he will limit himself to normal attacks and parries, with an occasional feint.

Someone who wants to use the *jutsu* mode, however, will get a glimpse of what a swordmaster Lenoir is. He will attack ruthlessly, with numerous feints and counterattacks. He will remain an orthodox fighter, but if his opponent makes an IQ-3 (or Body Language) roll, he will realize that Lenoir is holding back; in a real fight he would not hesitate to use any dirty tricks. The sparring continues for about five minutes (to roleplay the fight, see the tournament rules on p. MA45). If the challenger gives a good account of himself, Lenoir will respect him more (this is not necessarily good). If the hero is better than Lenoir (i.e., has a Katana skill at 24+ and has the Trained by a Master or Weapon Master advantage), Lenoir gracefully acknowledges he has met his match.

After the sparring session, showers and kimonos will be provided, and Lenoir will have tea served. Conversation will be oriented toward the visitors' achievements in the martial arts. If Lenoir is questioned about the events at the tournament, he will shake his head and say, "It is regrettable that such a good contender as Mr. McNamara seems to be involved with the underworld." He goes on to comment that it is common knowledge that McNamara had accumulated high debts and had even received some threats.

Eventually, Lenoir begins to bemoan the fact that "today, there are no true contests of skill. The martial arts have become a sport, a game that has no real thrill . . . no real danger."

Lenoir carefully checks his guests' reactions to this, using his Detect Lies skill. If the adventurers agree, and seem sincere, he will move on. "Of course, a man in my position sometimes hears things; and you must know of full-contact events. By this I mean true full contact, not the gloved and sheltered competitions of today's world. A true test of skill and soul."

Again, he checks reactions. If he is not convinced that his guests agree with him, he will change subjects smoothly. Should anyone then ask him about those full-contact events, he will smile politely and say that he was simply engaging in some wishful thinking. "Those events are, after all, highly illegal and dangerous; why would anyone want to participate in them, let alone sponsor and organize them?"

Should all the guests convince Lenoir that they share his love for danger and that they are "gung-ho" about the idea of such an event, the conversation will still move away from the subject. Lenoir simply says, "Well, I shall inquire into the rumors, and I will contact you if anything comes of it."

A few minutes later, Lenoir excuses himself and has Oni, his chauffeur, see his guests off. Oni drives the adventurers back to their homes, where they can ponder the day's events (or sleep the workout off). (Oni is, in fact, a master of ninjutsu, though no inkling of his talents should be evident yet; he is described on p. 65.)

## Two Invitations

A day after the meeting with Lenoir, the characters receive new visitors. One will try to recruit them to join the authorities against Lenoir; the other will invite them to a very special event.

### Agents of Fortune

At some point during the day, the group is met on the street by two men dressed in conservative business suits and dark glasses, who ask everyone to accompany them. They flash badges and identify themselves as Interpol agents. If any PCs have law-enforcement connections, they will instead be visited at their offices, shown genuine Interpol ID, and asked to bring their friends to a meeting the next day.

If anyone is unwilling to accompany them, the agents will not look very happy, but will leave without incident. If any of the adventurers decides to react violently, the agents will defend themselves, with their fists first, and with their guns should the fight become too bloodthirsty (in this unlikely event, give the agents all stats at 12 and combat skills at 15). The result will be the fighters being arrested for assault. Let them cool off in jail for a day or so, but Lenoir will post their bail eventually (this incident would convince him that they are not working with the authorities).

If the adventurers go with the agents, they are seated in a mini-van and driven to a large office building (in a less affluent part of town than Lenoir's, of course).

### Inspector Juan Manuel Espinoza (Continued)

After getting a degree in criminology, he joined the New York Police Department. He made it to lieutenant in record time and became famous for single-handedly foiling a terrorist plot to bomb JFK Airport. It was at this time that he was offered a position in K-Net (see below), an anti-crime organization; since the position would allow him to fight terrorism, Espinoza readily agreed.

Espinoza is a good boxer and an excellent shot with a pistol. His skill with baseball makes him dangerous if he can find any round, heavy objects (treat his skill as Throwing with respect to rocks). Espinoza has one major weakness, however. He is easily smitten by women, and yet believes they are little good except as romantic objects. He tends to assign women to relatively harmless positions, unless the situation calls for the seduction of a target, in which case he does not doubt their ability.



### K-Net

K-Net is a secret international police organization. It has close ties to Interpol, and may actually be an Interpol division. The GM may substitute any secretive law-and-order force that is important in the campaign.

If the PCs collaborate with Espinoza and K-Net, they may be invited to join it as "consultants." It is a 25-point Patron, but its frequency of appearance is usually low for freelancers.



### Getting There: Alternatives

The least painful way to reach Lenoir's hideout is to go along with his plans. In that case, no kidnapping or blackmail attempts will be made. Instead, the party will travel first class to Hong Kong and then fly on a private plane to Lenoir's fortress (see p. 54). Once there, however, they will be housed with the other contestants – that is, locked up as described in *Behind Bars*.

Anyone who does not have a high martial arts reputation will miss the McNamara kidnapping and Lenoir's invitation. Perhaps they could reach Lenoir's hidden palace as spectators! Rich PCs with a reputation for strange tastes will be discreetly invited. If the adventurers are working for K-Net (or some other law-enforcement agency), they could be given false identities as decadent millionaires to infiltrate Lenoir's organization. Lenoir's involuntary performers could also include secret agents, mob enforcers, special forces soldiers and "gentlemen adventurers." An enterprising GM can split PCs into two groups, one taking the high road (guests) and the other the low road (prisoners).



### The Best Laid Plans

Although Oni, the ninja chauffeur, will do his utmost to succeed with a minimum amount of fighting, his opponents may be smart or lucky enough to escape his attacks or even turn the tables on him. If the ninja is unable to overcome his target, he will try to escape. Should that be impossible, he will fight to the death. He will not let himself be captured alive; he has too much professional pride. A cyanide-filled hollow tooth will take care of it.

If the PCs manage to overcome Oni too easily, consider beefing up the opposition. Lenoir should become extremely wary of these antagonists, and will stack the odds against them on any subsequent move. Among other things, he may tell his thugs to start packing firearms.

There they are introduced to a large, middle-aged man with a French accent, who identifies himself as Inspector Espinoza (see sidebar, p. 48). He represents an "international law-enforcement organization with ties to Interpol and other agencies" – see sidebar, p. 49.

Espinoza questions the PCs about Lenoir. He knows that they met with him on the day before, but will not mention this unless they volunteer the information. He is very interested in their opinions about Lenoir, and will use his Detect Lies skill to make sure they are being candid.

Whether he decides to take the adventurers into his confidence depends on several factors. Make a reaction roll for the whole party, with the following modifiers: all the PCs' Reputations (both positive and negative) if they affect either the world at large or law-enforcement agencies; +2 if they are completely truthful about their dealings with Lenoir, or if Espinoza can detect no lie; +1 if the PCs have already been investigating the disappearances, with an additional +2 if they share their findings with him; -5 if no character has any ties to law-enforcement (either as policemen, private detectives, crimefighters, secret agents or other appropriate occupations); -1 for every female in the party (Espinoza is a chauvinist when it comes to trusting women), unless they have a +1 or better Reputation with law-enforcement groups; -6 if he believes that any of the characters is willing to either join forces with Lenoir or participate in the tournament; other modifiers ranging from +5 to -5, depending on the adventurers' past exploits (if any), and the way the characters are roleplayed. Finally, Espinoza will react at a -2 if none of the adventurers made any attempt to check out his own bona-fides! Of course, Espinoza is perfectly genuine, and can pass any test or check offered.

If Espinoza's reaction roll is Good or better, he decides to try to recruit the adventurers. On any other roll, he decides that they are not trustworthy enough, thanks them for their time, and sees them off.

If he decides to recruit them, the inspector leads the party to a projection room. "Lenoir," he explains, "has a very strong connection with international crime." He shows slides of Lenoir in the company of Italian *mafiosi*, Japanese yakuza members and Marseilleise drug dealers. "He has a large organization of hoods, and some very shady connections, but we can't prove that he is *doing* anything. All attempts to infiltrate his organization have resulted in the deaths – "accidental" deaths – of our operatives. We know that he is planning some sort of illegal martial arts tournament. We even suspect that he may have kidnapped or forced some athletes to participate. But as of now, we have *no* proof."

Espinoza wants the PCs to play along with Lenoir and "volunteer" to enter whatever tournament he is organizing. He does not want to use his own agents because he is afraid that Lenoir will discover them; since no PC has ties to his organization, they will have a better chance to infiltrate Lenoir's group. If the adventurers agree, Espinoza will have them memorize a phone number and a radio frequency, either of which will put them in direct contact with Espinoza's agency. He says they will put the party under surveillance starting that night.

### An All-Expense-Paid Trip

After this meeting, another surprise awaits the adventurers: an invitation to an advanced martial arts seminar in Hong Kong, complete with plane tickets for each martial artist. Included is a note: "This event may be an illuminating and *thrilling* experience for you – Antoine Lenoir." After the seminar, the invitation continues, a small contest of skill will be held, with a purse of \$100,000 to the winner! Fighters with Greed should take note.

This invitation will be issued even if the adventurers were not amenable to Lenoir's overtures. He intends for them to go to Hong Kong – whether they want to or not.

## Bump in the Night

If any of the party seems unlikely to join Lenoir's scheme (judging from his meeting with them), he will send Oni to fetch one or two of them. The ninjutsu master will act carefully; his mission is to take prisoners, not to fight. The night after the meeting with Espinoza, one or more of the group will be attacked by Oni. The target will be the first character who spends the night by himself, or any two characters who can be isolated from the rest. If that is not possible (e.g., if the whole party lives in one place), he will make other arrangements.

Oni will make his entrance before his target arrives, through a bedroom window if possible; otherwise he will pick the door lock of the dwelling (the GM can roll for him, or just assume that he makes it successfully). Unless the target has a very sophisticated security system, he needs critical success on an Alertness roll (or a normal IQ roll if he has Danger Sense) to realize that somebody is in his home.



Otherwise, the unsuspecting victim walks right into Oni's trap – a blowgun full of sleep powder (see p. MA85), followed by a Spin Kick. Even if the sleep powder does not take effect, the victim will be stunned for at least that round. Oni will use his Pressure Points skill and the Binding maneuver to subdue his target, and have his henchmen (see below) take him to the pickup point.

If he faces more than one opponent, Oni will have one helper (use the 80-point stats for Lenoir's thugs on p. 46, but add Shuriken Throwing-11) for every adventurer walking into the ambush area. The helpers are armed with nunchakus, the air guns used in McNamara's abduction, and shurikens covered with a curare-like poison (see p. MA86) without its lethal effects. Oni will hang back, throwing his shuriken at anyone who manages to escape the air guns and physically attacking particularly lively victims. Oni will use this strategy only if he believes that no more than three opponents will be together at this point.

### Gregor Chen

Age 34; 5'7", 140 lbs.  
ST 10, DX 16, IQ 12, HT 10.  
Basic Speed 6.5, Move 6.  
Dodge 7, Parry 13.

*Advantages:* Acute Vision +1; Charisma +1; Combat Reflexes; Wealth (Comfortable).

*Disadvantages:* Agoraphobia (Mild); Duty (Lenoir); Greed.

*Quirks:* Dislikes Americans; Loves Western movies.

*Skills:* Detect Lies-14; Driving (Car)-17; Fast-Draw (Revolver)-16; Fast-Talk-13; Guns (Revolver)-18; Hobby Skill (Western Movie Trivia)-11; Holdout-15; Knife-18; Leadership-15; Philosophy (Zen Buddhism)-10; Shortsword (Butterfly Sword)-17; Streetwise-14; Two-Handed Sword (Staff)-15.

*Languages:* English-12; Japanese-12; Mandarin Chinese-12.

*Martial Arts Style:* Wing Chun Kung Fu.

*Martial Arts Skills:* Karate-19; Judo-18.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Arm Lock-18; Elbow Strike-17; Feint (Karate)-20; Kicking-17; Knee Strike-17; Punch-19.

Chen started his criminal career as a member of one of the many youth gangs of Hong Kong. A competent fighter, he also had the intelligence to know that he could only go so far on his physical skills alone. He worked hard to learn different languages and sharpen his manners as well as his street-smarts. He rose quickly through the ranks, always willing to "help" a careless superior to retire. Eventually, he earned a high position with Night Dragon's organization, where he works both as "front" man for some legitimate operations and as chief nighttime enforcer.

He is completely amoral, loyal only to monetary gain. As a child, he loved American Westerns; his favorite gun is a .357 magnum that he uses like a gunslinger while muttering lines like, "This town is only big enough for one of us, stranger." When guns are not appropriate, he depends on his considerable Karate and Knife skills. Like most Wing Chun practitioners, he prefers to fight at close range.

If the PCs capture Chen, they will have to get past his Fast-Talk; he will try to lead them into a Hong Kong warehouse full of Night Dragon thugs. Upon hearing a special code word, they will charge the PCs and capture or kill them. Torture will make an enemy of him; a large bribe (\$15,000 or more) might buy his (temporary) loyalty.

## The Prisoners

Unless noted otherwise, all the prisoners have:

ST 13, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 12.

Pertinent advantages are mentioned in the descriptions. All the Primary Skills for the prisoners' styles are at 15-20 (roll 1d+14 or decide arbitrarily); Secondary skills are 13-18 (roll 1d+12). Optional and other skills can be picked at will, in addition to the ones noted in the descriptions. If any of the prisoners needs to use a non-combat skill, he might have it. Roll 2d-8 and add or subtract the result from the appropriate stat; if the resulting number is lower than the minimum skill level (Stat-3 or -4), then the character does not know the skill.

### The "Mole"

One of the prisoners is actually an agent of Lenoir's, placed among the contestants to prevent escape attempts. He (or she) will go along with any plan until Lenoir can be contacted, unless the agent decides he *must* intervene. Pick one (or even two) of the characters below to be the plant; the stories given for them are their covers. They are really dedicated pawns of Night Dragon. (Alternatively, they could have been coerced to help Lenoir, and might be turned against him.) The plant has Duty (to Night Dragon) and Acting-15 in addition to the listed stats.

The mole will be treated like the other prisoners, even in the arena – but when the full-contact matches start, he will be given byes, or paired against wounded opponents or weaklings like the actor Vaughn. Only at the finale does Lenoir plan to pull out his agent . . . and the tournament probably won't last that long.

### "Dutch" McNamara

"Dutch" is described on p. 44.

*Continued on next page . . .*



If the intended targets stay in groups of four or more, Oni will not try to capture them all; instead, he will arrange a distraction. Oni will invade the PCs' home or headquarters beforehand (all characters entering the home get one roll, as above, to notice the intrusion). His target will be the smallest person in the party.

As soon as the adventurers are indoors, a group of thugs will start screaming and throwing rocks at their home. Some will also start knocking on their door, taunting and daring the PCs to come out and fight them. Oni, using Invisibility Art, will enter the house and throw two poisoned shuriken at the selected target. He will then toss a stun grenade (see p. MA85) amidst the rest of the group (for this, Oni will be wearing eye and ear protectors). Three or four thugs, similarly protected, will throw more grenades and jump through the windows a second later; each will be armed with a dart gun and a nunchaku. The ninjutsu master will grab the victim (who should by now be paralyzed or unconscious) and drag him outside, while the thugs attack the rest with nunchakus. If any other fighter is knocked out, Oni's henchmen will try to drag him out as well. A black van will drive by; Oni will jump in with his prisoner and the van will drive off. The rest of the thugs will try to escape by foot to where another van (very similar to the first one; pursuers will probably be fooled into thinking they are the same) will be waiting for them.

Oni's captives will find themselves bound, gagged and blindfolded on a moving vehicle; a few seconds afterward, they are injected with a powerful drug that renders them completely unconscious. They wake up in an underground cell, in the company of several other martial arts figures.

*GM's note:* The prisoners will not be able to dig out any information of use to their fellows, so overhearing what is going on with the kidnap victims will not affect the other group too much. However, to heighten tension and anxiety, the GM could split up the groups if he has the logistics to do so, and keep them apart until the characters are reunited.

If the group agreed to work with Espinoza, a call will lead him to check on his surveillance team. They will be found at their assigned spots – dead, both of apparent heart failure.

## Behind Bars

The kidnap victims will wake up in a large square room, to find themselves lying on some of the many cots that cover the area (see Map 2). The walls have three windows about 10 feet up; they are covered by steel mesh. The fourth wall is a thick metal grille with a door. Another ten or so prisoners share the cell. Looking out of the cell will reveal a featureless corridor leading to a solid metal door on one end. Sitting on chairs are two guards armed with Remington shotguns (p. B209) and batons. They completely ignore the prisoners.

Some notable prisoners are described in the sidebars, pp. 52-61. The others could include friends or acquaintances of the newcomers; they are all highly skilled martial artists. If someone has a martial artist Enemy, he may be there; unless their rivalry is really intense, this will probably not lead to more than harsh words. In fact, this could be a good opportunity for the two to work together, if only briefly. This would be good roleplaying for characters who *respect* each other. The prisoners may also attempt to escape (see p. 57).

## Gentle Pressure

The day after the abduction (or attempted abduction), the remaining PCs receive a call. The unidentified caller will politely ask, "Will you be leaving for Hong Kong as scheduled?" If the heroes try to avoid the question, or reply negatively, there will be a short pause, and then, "Oh. It bodes ill for your friend (or friends), then." The line will go dead immediately.

Neither the normal authorities nor Espinoza will be able to help regarding the kidnapping. There are no links to Lenoir, so trying to have him arrested will be useless.

If the heroes continue to look for their missing friends, Lenoir's organization will increase the pressure. Dependents will be targeted for kidnapping; anonymous phone calls will describe elaborate Chinese tortures, without mentioning any names.

All this, of course, only happens if the party does not get on the plane to Hong Kong. *If Lenoir believes that the lure of danger (or the attempt to infiltrate his organization) is enough to bring the party to Hong Kong, he will not resort to either the kidnapping or the extortion.*



### *The Prisoners (Continued)*

#### *Bart Clayton*

Clayton is a disgraced Mob "mechanic"; his specialty is hand-to-hand murder. Lenoir took him off the hands of the Las Vegas Mafia, who were about to execute him for seducing the wife of an important *capo*. Clayton is sure that Lenoir will have him killed during or after the tournament, so he will seize any opportunity to escape. He will have no compunction about killing or abandoning his fellow prisoners if he thinks doing so will improve his chances. This will change if the PCs do something that makes him consider them "friends."

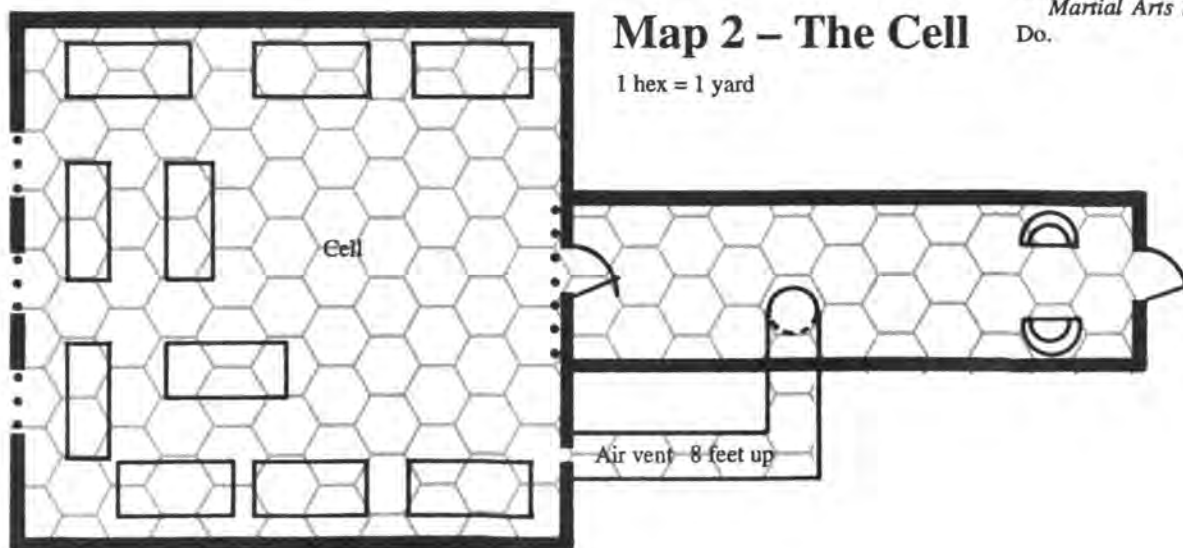
Clayton's IQ is 12.

*Advantages:* Alertness +2; Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold; Toughness +2.

*Disadvantages:* Bully; Greed; Sense of Duty (Friends); Enemy (Las Vegas Mob).

*Skills:* Garrote-15; Guns (Pistol)-14; Stealth-16.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Karate; Jeet Kune Do.



## The Prisoners (Continued)

### Hiroshi Shugen

This small old man is the most dangerous fighter in the cell. He took out half a dozen of Lenoir's men and sprained Oni's arm before a volley of tranquilizer darts and poisoned shuriken brought him down. He is calmly biding his time before taking action. Shugen speaks only Japanese, and will not participate in any escape plan that will not help *all* the prisoners.

His ST is 11 and his IQ 14.

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes; Empathy; High Pain Threshold; Trained by a Master.

**Disadvantages:** Honesty; Sense of Duty (Mankind); Vow (Vegetarian).

**Martial Arts Styles:** Aikido, Jujutsu, Karate.

**Martial Arts Skills:** All Primary skills at 22, Secondaries at 18, Optional at 16. Breaking Blow-16; Immovable Stance-19; Mental Strength-20; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-20; Push-20; Stealth-19.

In a cinematic campaign, Shugen-sensei will have most or all of the cinematic skills appropriate to his styles. He will also act so much like the archetypal Wise Old Martial Artist that nobody will believe him. He has no Reputation at all; he has trained all his life without ever competing publicly. He will have a +2 reaction to anyone who behaves "properly" in these difficult circumstances. Should he survive the tournament, he might consent to teach anyone who particularly impressed him.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## Stopover in Hong Kong

One way or another, the PCs head for Hong Kong. The flight should be uneventful, but things pick up very quickly after the plane lands. The characters are met at the airport by Gregor Chen (see sidebar, p. 51), who identifies himself as one of the organizers of the seminar. He profusely apologizes, explaining that there has been a change in venue; the seminar has been moved to Taiwan! He is there to lead the group to a small private plane that will fly them there.

If the PCs refuse to go, Chen's manner will become cool. If anyone has been kidnapped, he will say, "That would be discourteous, and unwise." He will not explain further, or try to force the group to go, however; if they continue to refuse, he will walk away. If Chen is attacked, he will defend himself and scream for help; unless he is subdued in a very inconspicuous way, he will be rescued by the airport police (average stats, armed with batons, pistols and submachine guns wielded with skill 12).

The private plane is a fair-sized jet, holding ten other martial artists. The PCs will know or at least have heard of several of them (IQ roll to recognize each); again, some may be Allies, Enemies or other acquaintances. They are all here to participate in the seminar, but none of them seems very talkative.

Also aboard are Gregor Chen and eight Night Dragon men (see p. 46). The thugs are armed with dart guns and Beretta 9mm pistols with Glaser safety bullets (treat them as hollow-point ammunition, but they cannot penetrate any solid obstacle), making them safe to use inside the plane. Chen and six of the thugs are sitting in the front of the plane; the other two are sitting in the back.

Fifteen minutes after takeoff, characters with Absolute Direction will realize on an Area Knowledge (Asia, China, Hong Kong or Taiwan) roll that the plane is not headed toward Taiwan. It is headed toward mainland China!

Anyone with Common Sense will realize that the interior of a small plane is *not* the right place to start trouble. Should someone attempt to rebel, Chen and his men will threaten with their guns – and use them, if necessary. If a real fight





develops, Chen or the pilot can activate hidden sleep-gas nozzles and knock all the passengers unconscious. (The GM might permit a fight first, and then gas the fighters just when they think they've won.)

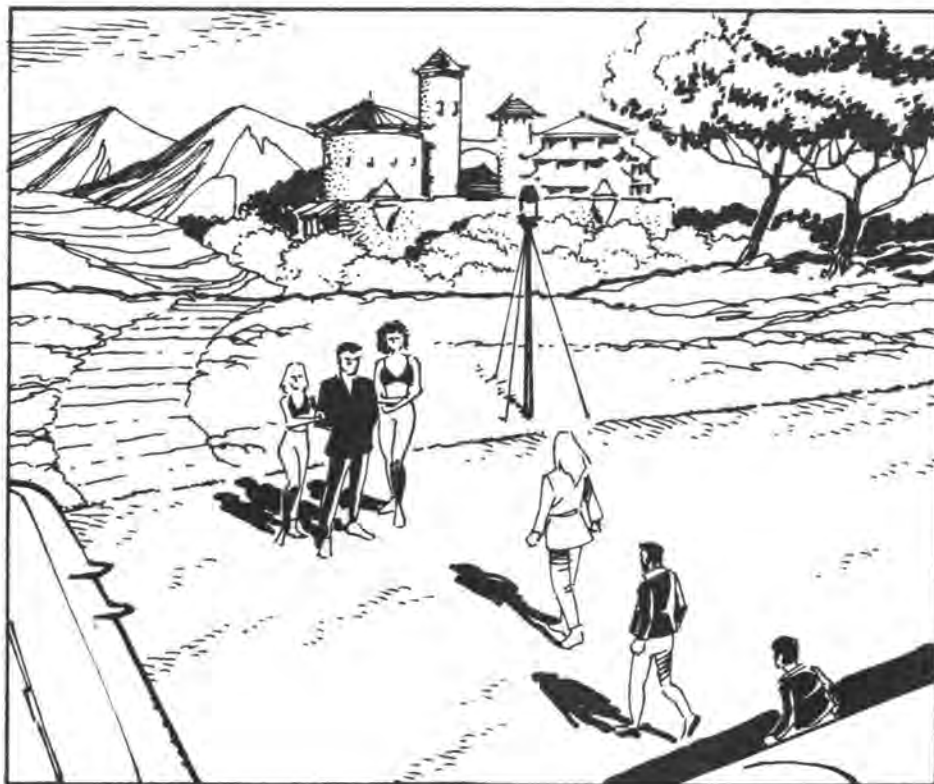
Chen and his henchmen do not kill anyone unless they have to. Every un-wounded passenger who participated in the attack is hog-tied (-5 to Escape rolls) and dumped across two seats. Badly wounded passengers will be bandaged but not treated in any other way. Chen may decide to interrogate the prisoners to see if they are police agents. He will use torture; anyone interrogated thus will take 1d+1 damage. If his interrogation reveals nothing, he lets them be. If they confess a police connection, they will be part of the next day's special attraction (see p. 58).

## Arrival

The plane will land at a small airstrip next to a fortress-palace: Lenoir's secret headquarters (see Map 3, next page). Conscious, free passengers can look out the window; show them Map 3 for about 30 seconds, upside down, from a distance too great to allow them to read the captions. (Later, Helga will provide the prisoners with a complete map.)

Lenoir will be waiting to greet them. If there has been no trouble, they are welcomed warmly by Lenoir. "I am so glad you could make it," he says. "I am sure the entertainment I have prepared will be to your liking." If they have made trouble, they are just frog-marched off the plane past Lenoir.

After that, the "guests" are taken through a courtyard to a large house (Building 1). An elevator leads down to a long, twisting corridor that ends with a solid metal door. About that time, even cooperative captives will note that they are being escorted by a number of guards with submachine guns! The door is opened and they are taken into the cell described in *Behind Bars*, p. 53. There they meet all the other prisoners. Once everyone is in the cell, Lenoir makes a little speech, telling them that the moment "we have all been waiting for" has finally arrived.



## The Prisoners (Continued)

### Taro Ishono

Ishono-san is a Jujutsu expert, deceived into participating in the tournament. He thinks this is simply a full-contact event and that the complicated travel itinerary is meant to protect its secret.

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes; Toughness +1.

*Disadvantages:* Bad Temper; Intolerance (non-Japanese); Overconfidence.

*Languages:* English-8; Japanese-12.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Jujutsu; Karate.

### Johnny P. Barlett III

Barlett is a rich kid with a penchant for the martial arts. He is an international champ at Sports Karate, due to his great speed. He is also arrogant, loud, obnoxious and a sore loser. As a result, his total Reputation is 0: +2 among fans, -2 among martial arts pros. McNamara dislikes him intensely; the two would have come to blows already, except that Barlett has no stomach for *real* combat. Faced with a situation where his dad's money will not help him, Barlett will be a liability to everyone (if he lasts long enough).

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes; Luck; Reputation (+2 among fans); Wealth (Wealthy).

*Disadvantages:* Cowardice; Reputation (-2 among pros); Squeamishness (Severe).

*Skills:* Only knows Karate Art.

*Martial Arts Style:* Karate.

### Diane Lu

An attractive Chinese woman in her mid-30s, Diane was trained by her father in secret Wushu techniques as she grew up in Communist China. She defected to the United States ten years ago and found work as a "judo instructor." Lenoir has told her that if she participates, he will use his contacts to help Diane's sister escape from China (in reality, she died years ago).

Diane has ST 10 and DX 15.

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes; Trained by a Master.

*Disadvantages:* Sense of Duty (Family); Vow (Never take an innocent's life); Shyness (Mild).

*Skills:* Breaking Blow-15; Power Blow-14; Pressure Points-16; Pressure Secrets-17.

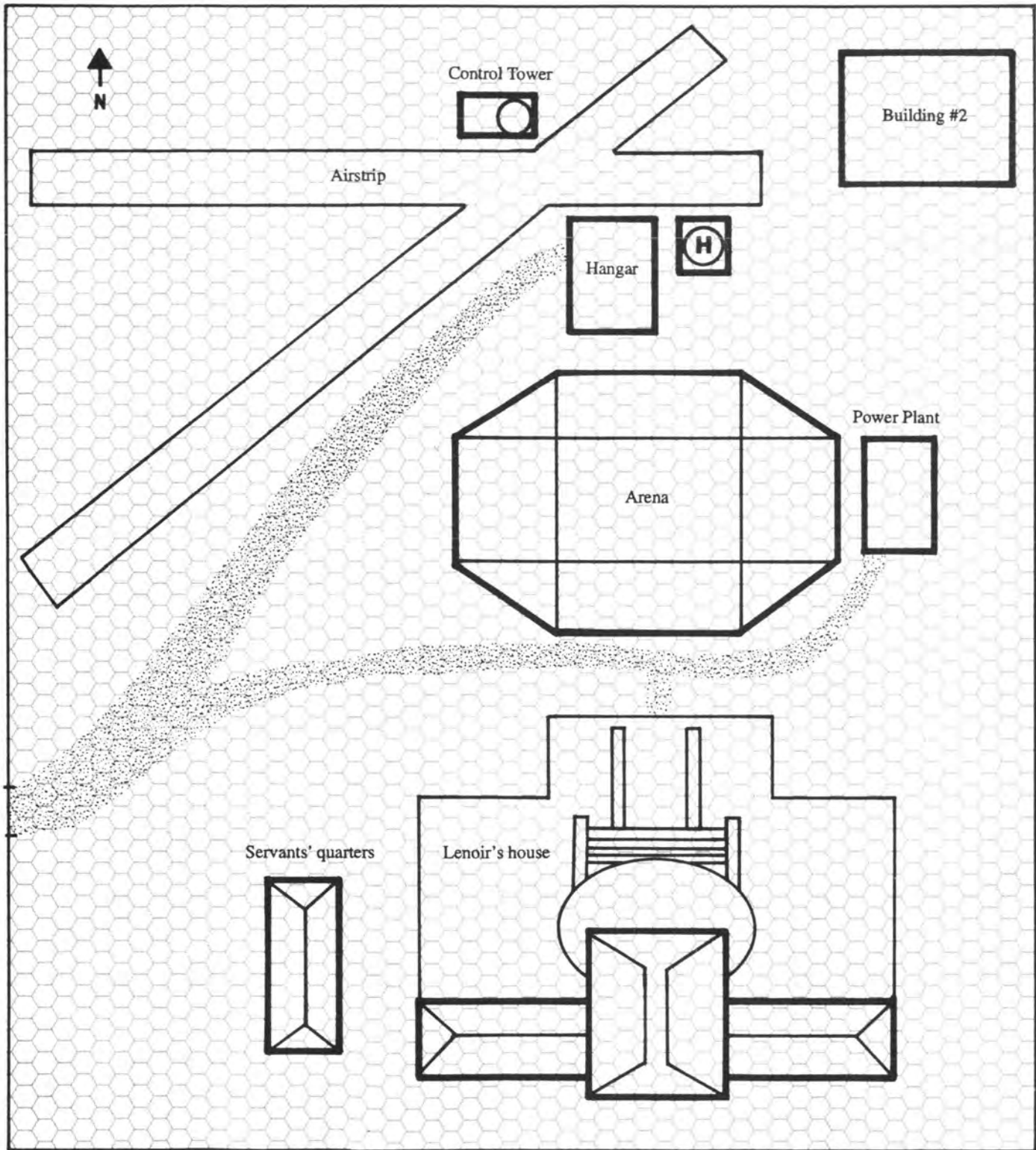
*Languages:* Chinese-11; English-12.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Chin Na; Wushu.

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# Map 3 – Lenoir’s Hideout

1 hex = 5 yards



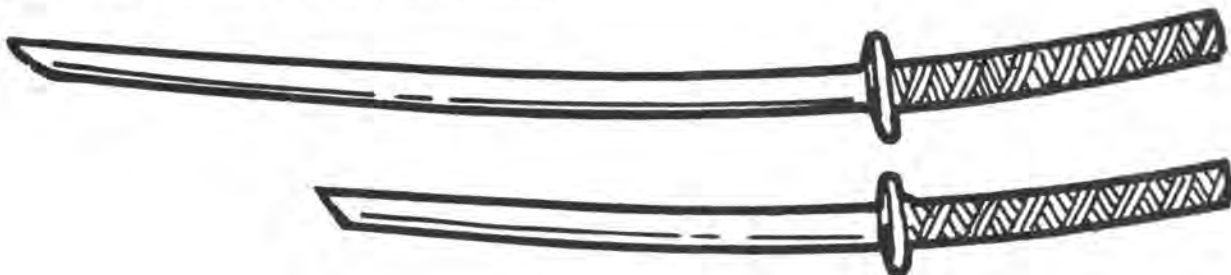
Tomorrow morning, he says, the tournament will begin; he trusts that everyone will do his best.

"It would be most regrettable if you do not cooperate," he finishes. "Recalcitrant contestants will be shot on the spot."

### Escape Attempts

The prisoners will be left to their own devices for the rest of the night; Lenoir is throwing a party for the spectators he has invited for the event. It is likely that the adventurers will try to escape: it will not be easy. For starters, the metal bars of the door have DR 8 and HT 80. The steel grille covering the air-vent is less durable; DR 4, HT 16, but the vent is too small for almost any normal adult. Someone with the Skinny or Dwarf disadvantage could crawl through it by making DX rolls every 10 seconds. On a failed roll, the crawler gets stuck and must make a DX-4 or ST-2 roll (whichever is better) to get loose; on a critical failure, he is stuck for good and cannot get free without help. The lock on the door is electronic; Lockpicking is useless against it. Instead, an Electronics (Security Systems)-4 roll is required to open it.

Throughout the night, there are two guards on a desk at the end of the corridor. They change shifts every two hours. In the event of a disturbance, one guard will walk to the cell door, without his shotgun; the other will remain by the chairs, with his shotgun ready. If a shotgun is fired, the next guard post may be alerted (the two awake guards at the barracks get to try Hearing rolls at +3; the eight sleeping guards get no rolls). If the prisoners overcome the first two guards, they are confronted with the solid metal door (DR 16, HT 80). There is no lock on the side facing them; the door is bolted and padlocked on the outside. The relieving guards will wait for a special password (different for every shift); if the wrong password is given, they will raise the alarm and call for reinforcements.



Escape, thus, is almost impossible. All this also does not account for the presence of Lenoir's agent among the contestants (see sidebar, p. 52). The "mole" will bide his time very carefully; he will not risk himself carelessly.

### The First Day

The contestants are awakened at 9 a.m. by a dozen heavily-armed guards. They are divided into five-person teams and taken out a group at a time. Each group is led to a dressing room, where the team members are handed some colorful and skimpy silk-and-leather costumes (offering absolutely no protection); anyone refusing to wear the costume is warned once, and shot on the second denial. One NPC could be sacrificed in this manner, to impress upon the adventurers that their captors consider them expendable property. Each team has suits of a different color: blue, red, white and black.

After the team is fully outfitted, it is led to the Arena (Map 4) and placed in one of the four cages around it. The same procedure is repeated for each team. One prisoner will be missing – the unlucky fighter who Lenoir has singled out for the opening event. The map hexes marked with a G represent guards. The G1 guards are each equipped with a shotgun loaded with slugs; the others have batons. There

### The Prisoners (Continued)

#### "Kat" Pongsakorn

This top Muay Thai contender is best known for his ferocity and ruthlessness. Pongsakorn was offered an enormous sum of money by Night Dragon, and volunteered for the tournament. He is not happy about being locked up, but he believes that the only way out of this prison is by winning the contest. He will not help in any escape attempt, and if he hears about it will try to alert Lenoir's men. Of course, if he is convinced that Night Dragon plans to kill everybody, he will join the heroes. He speaks only Thai.

Kat's DX is 15.

*Advantages:* High Pain Threshold; Toughness +1.

*Disadvantages:* Greed; Intolerance (non-Thai); Overconfidence; Wealth (Struggling).

*Skills:* Knife-16.

*Martial Arts Style:* Muay Thai.

#### Paul Lavasierre

Lavasierre is a Savate silver-glove and Karate expert. A day after he refused the invitation to the tournament, his wife disappeared and the offer was repeated. He behaves in a sullen way and suspects everybody; his fear for his wife will cause him to oppose any attempt to thwart Lenoir.

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes; Wealth (Comfortable).

*Disadvantages:* Bad Temper; Overconfidence; Dependent (Wife).

*Languages:* English-12; French-13; Japanese-11.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Savate; Karate.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## The Prisoners (Continued)



### "Mack Truck" Donovan

This not-so-famous wrestler was spotted by one of Lenoir's lieutenants when Donovan put an opponent (and two other people) in the hospital by tossing him 10 feet into the crowd after beating him unconscious. Donovan accepted Lenoir's invitation readily after being offered a few thousand dollars. During the flight, he will consider the PCs' charges against Lenoir as ploys to "rip me offa my money." All reaction rolls will be at -2.

Donovan is ST 18, DX 12, IQ 9, HT 13.

**Advantages:** Toughness +1; High Pain Threshold.

**Disadvantages:** Berserk; Bloodlust; Overconfidence.

**Skills:** Boxing-15.

**Martial Arts Styles:** Professional Wrestling.

*Continued on next page . . .*

are 15 guards in all, five of them armed with firearms. There are 30 other guards elsewhere in the fortress.

After the contestants are locked in the cells (these have the same stats as the bars on the main cell), the spectators are seated. A small orchestra plays classical pieces until everyone is accommodated. Then Lenoir speaks through a microphone, welcoming spectators and contestants; he is quite long-winded and repetitive. He ends by saying, "Let the Games begin!"

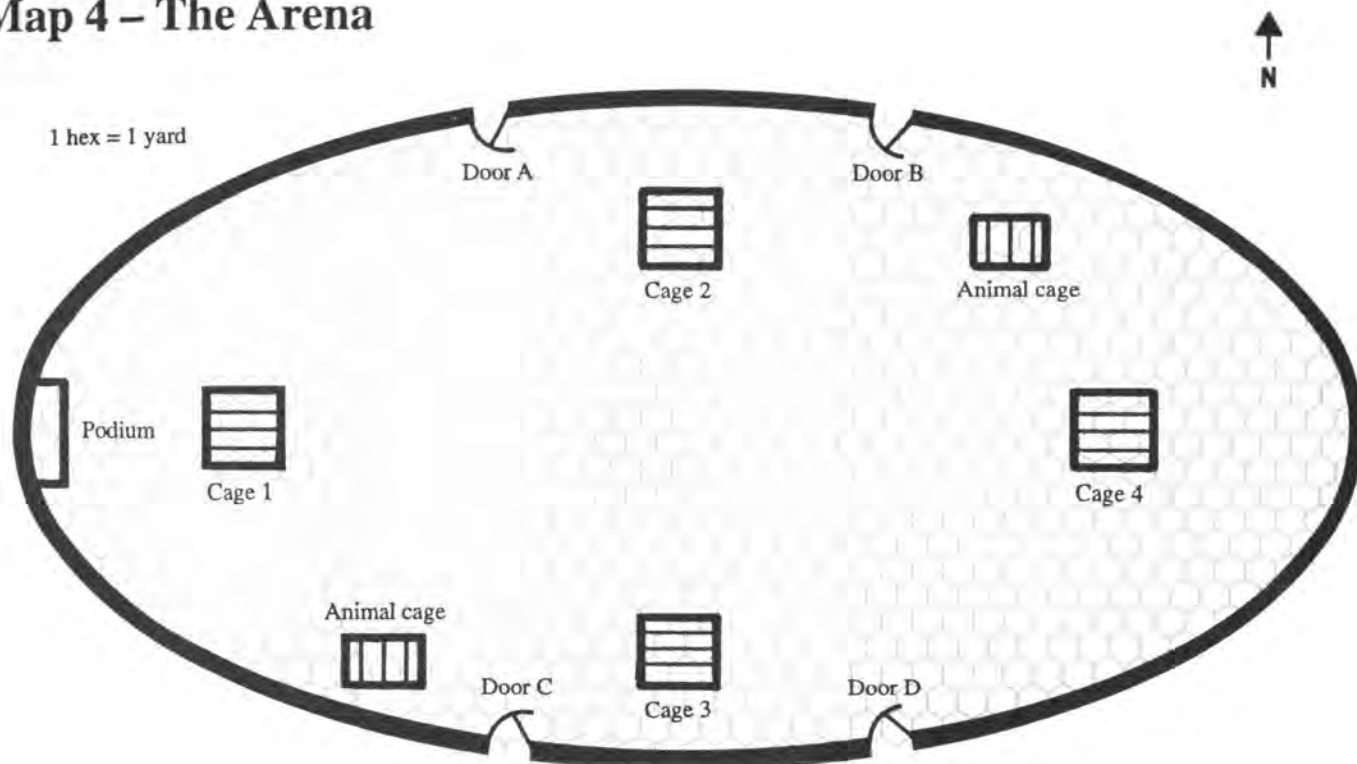
A fighter is thrown into the arena. This could be one of the "nameless NPCs." It will be "Dutch" McNamara if Lenoir lost his bet on him, or a PC if he tried to take over the plane or did something to thwart Lenoir. "This man has not entered fully into the spirit of my game," Lenoir says. "He will have the undeserved honor of participating in our first event." The huge sumo wrestler Osawa (see p. 66) walks into the ring. If his foe is an NPC, the fight is soon over. The victim lands a few punches for little effect, and then Osawa gets a grip on him and methodically beats him to death. Fright Checks should be rolled for all the other contestants.

If a PC is the target, play the fight out. Osawa will fight to kill. If Osawa loses, Lenoir will not be pleased, but will spare the winner for the time being. Osawa, if he is not dead already, will be shot at Lenoir's command. (For this and other executions, the victim will be held between two guards and a third one will shoot him in the back of the neck.)

After servants have removed the body, the cages for Teams Black and White are opened (all the PCs should be in either of those teams; fill the rest of the teams with some of the characters described in the sidebars). They are curtly ordered by the guards to line up facing the opposing team; no PC should face another on this occasion. "We'll have a bout of sparring," Lenoir says. "Show us your skills, but don't hurt each other too badly." This first fight is not very violent, and lasts about



## Map 4 – The Arena



five minutes (use the tournament rules on p. MA45). All the contestants are pulling their punches, doing only half damage, or “marking” their attacks for no damage. The opponents *must* fight each other, however; if Lenoir is dissatisfied with anyone’s performance, he tells them through the microphone. If the fighter’s performance does not improve, he will be Osawa’s (or his replacement’s) next foe.

After five minutes, a giant gong marks the end of the fight; the combatants are told to return to their cages, and Red and Blue spar. After this match, the first part of the contest is over. The prisoners are left in the cells and given lunch. They have two hours respite; they can rest, talk with the other prisoners, and perhaps prepare a escape plan. If the prisoners need help, they could have a visitor (see p. 60). Then the second session starts.

This time, Team Blue is lined up in the center of the arena. “Now we shall proceed to a more serious stage,” Lenoir announces. “I believe some incentive is necessary to bring the best out of the contestants. A chance at survival should do nicely.” A second later, Doors A and B open and four screaming men come running out of each entrance. These eight attackers have the same stats as other thugs, but they have been drugged and hypnotized into a state of frenzy. Treat this as the Berserk disadvantage, except it does not affect their skills and is only directed toward targets in bright-colored clothing – like the prisoners. Allot one or two attackers to each member of the team. The thugs fight for 12+2d seconds unless killed or subdued; then they fall unconscious.

The procedure is repeated for each team; the PCs, in teams Black and White, will be able to prepare strategy. The drugged fighters will attack in a very simplistic fashion, so the PCs should survive this. A few “faceless” NPCs and perhaps one or two of the “personality” NPCs for whom the GM has no further use should be badly injured or killed. Any fighter who is too badly injured to continue will be dragged to the side of the ring and given a bullet in the head.

### *The Prisoners (Continued)*

#### *Peter Vaughn*

The star of a few bad movies, Vaughn is a glory hound who is always trying to bolster his reputation. Lenoir’s organization kidnapped him; he woke up in the airplane. Lenoir wanted him mainly for entertainment value rather than his skills. Vaughn will talk a good fight, but his talents are nowhere near the levels he pretends.

*Advantages:* Appearance (Attractive); Charisma +2; Wealth (Comfortable).

*Disadvantages:* Impulsive; Weak Will -4.

*Skills:* Karate Art-16 (does not know Karate); Acting-11; Fast-Talk-15; Performance-12; Running-16.

*Martial Arts Style:* Karate.

*Continued on next page . . .*



### The Prisoners (Continued)

#### Evelyn Lee

A famous martial-arts movie star and stunt-woman who was kidnapped from the set of her latest movie, *Killer Nun of Shaolin*. She will join in any reasonable plot to escape; her father and brothers (all deceased) were veterans of many Tong wars, so she is smart enough to see flaws in most plans.

Her ST is 10 and her IQ is 13.

**Advantages:** Appearance (Attractive); Common Sense.

**Disadvantages:** Stubbornness.

**Skill:** Acting-14.

**Languages:** Chinese-13; English-13.

**Martial Arts Style:** White Crane Kung Fu.

*Continued on next page . . .*



This second set of fights finishes the day. The spectators, however, are not as impressed by the performance as Lenoir would wish; other than a few gratuitous murders, Lenoir really hasn't done anything especially impressive. On a Psychology or Body Language roll, anyone observing the audience will see that they're a bit bored; anyone observing Lenoir will see that *he* is upset. The logical conclusion is that he will try to make tomorrow an even bloodier spectacle.

## A Visitor

If the prisoners fail to escape the first night, and it seems unlikely they will survive a second attempt, introduce this bit of *deus ex machina*.

Shortly after a frugal supper is served, Helga (see p. 65) comes to check out the prisoners. A guard rattles the bars of the cage and orders some of the prisoners (the ones who had dependents kidnapped) to line up by the door. At least one PC is called out even if he had no Dependent abducted; this is Helga's doing. The Nordic woman hands out letters written by the Dependents, which say they are being well treated but that they will be killed if Lenoir is disobeyed.

One of the letters to the PCs has more than that, however. It includes a message from Helga, identifying the "mole" and saying that at the end of the next day Lenoir will start using savage animals against the prisoners. The letter also includes a map of the complex (see p. 56), and says that the dependents are being held in the other prison building (Building 2). It advises against sharing the information with anyone not completely trustworthy, because there may be other informers she is not aware of. Finally, Helga warns, they should be ready to act tomorrow evening, although she gives no details about what is going to happen.

The rest of the night goes by like the one before.

## The Second Day

Lenoir has decided that today's events will truly impress his guests. The day begins with individual, full-contact fights among members of different teams. Each fight lasts four minutes without a break. The PCs' opponents can be eager or reluctant; choose from the characters in the sidebars. A PC can also end up facing another PC, or an Ally or Enemy. These fights are not to the death (although severe injuries are a possibility when experts use their skills without protection). Any prisoner who pulls his punches (unless he can make Acting-4 rolls to make it look convincing) is matched with Osawa, who will fight to the death. (If Osawa is dead, introduce an equally formidable thug.) Injured fighters will be taken to Building 2 for the best medical care or "mercifully put down," depending on whether Lenoir turns thumbs up or down. He will make a big play of this, asking the audience's advice each time, but doing just as *he* pleases.

This round takes all the morning. The prisoners get a few hours of rest in their cell during the afternoon, and are not returned to the arena until late in the evening. This is the event Lenoir has been leading to: a fight to the death between men and beasts.

The indoors arena is very well-lit; powerful spotlights add to the illumination, focusing on each cage. Lenoir, dressed in a simple silk kimono, stands for his speech – and is interrupted by the sound of explosions and the sudden darkness that invades the arena. Helga's plan (see her description on p. 65) is working beautifully.

The cages holding the contestants open automatically; regrettably, so do the ones holding the animals (see sidebar, p. 62), as well as the doors leading to the spectators' area. Pandemonium erupts. Lenoir's guests panic and rush to the exits. Many of the drugged beasts, further excited by the fear and noise, attack them and the guards, who soon expend their ammunition defending themselves.

Every turn, roll one die to determine what happens to each PC. On a 1 or 2, the character is free to do as he pleases; on a 3, he encounters a guard armed with a hand weapon; on a 4, he runs into a hysterical guest who tries to cling to him; on a 5, he is targeted by a shotgun-wielding guard (his Shotgun skill at -8 for the darkness); on a 6, he is attacked by an animal.

Anyone who tries to reach Lenoir or who makes a Hearing-4 roll will hear Helga yell, "He's getting away!" Heroes who manage to reach the podium find Helga clutching a wounded arm. "I tried to stab him, but he got away," she says. She points to a secret exit hidden under the podium. If any escapee has a captured Dependent, or an appropriate Sense of Duty or other disadvantage requiring him to save the hostages rather than track Lenoir, the party may split into two groups. Helga will suggest this if no one else thinks of it.

## Rescuing the Hostages

When chaos broke loose, Gregor Chen, Cherise and Osawa were among the first to get out (thanks to Cherise's Danger Sense, they were heading for an exit before the lights went out). They believe the Chinese authorities have discovered Lenoir's base and that their best option is to secure some hostages before attempting to escape. Thus, they arrive at Building 2 before anyone else. The three criminals and two surviving guards in that building take four or five hostages – the ones with the highest Status or Wealth levels. The hostages are handcuffed and used as a shield. Unless the rescuers can somehow surprise Chen and his friends, negotiation may be the best way to prevent a hostage from being hurt. Chen is willing to strike a deal if the PCs can guarantee immunity or will not interfere with their escape plans. If someone with an appropriate Sense of Duty somehow causes a hostage to be killed, his behavior will be affected as if he had killed the hostage and had the Pacifism (Cannot Kill) disadvantage (see p. B35).

## In Pursuit of Lenoir

Those following the villain's trail will find themselves in a yard-wide, winding corridor. A phosphorescent growth gives some light (-4 to Vision rolls), but there is no electrical lighting (which would have been useless in any case). The ceiling is about 10 feet up. Oni is waiting for the pursuers.

Oni was caught as unprepared as a ninja can be; he has *only* a tanto knife, a wire garrote, six shuriken, and two night nageteppo. He will use Invisibility Art in hopes that the party will walk past him (he is hanging from the handholds described below), then will attack the rearmost person with the garrote. If the attack is successful, the victim will not be able to alert his friends; the rest of the group must make Hearing-3 rolls to realize something is wrong. If the target manages to defend himself, Oni will abandon the garrote and throw his shuriken at any oncoming fighters while dealing with close-in attackers with his hands and knife. If the odds are too great, he will throw a nageteppo and disappear.

After getting through Oni, the hunters will travel another 100 feet before encountering Lenoir's second line of defense. Unless the point man makes a Traps/TL7 roll at -4, he will trigger a battery-powered electronic sensor built into the wall. (Oni, who knows about this trap, may lead his foes into it during combat; in that case, rolls to sense it are at -6.) The alarm will open cages located beyond the next bend, releasing trained attack dogs (see sidebar, p. 62). It also triggers an ultrasonic call designed to drive the dogs into a murderous fit. There is one dog for each of Lenoir's pursuers, plus two. If the hunters have any firearms, *double* the number of dogs; this will force them to exhaust their ammunition.

Oni will have no problem with the dogs; there are hidden handholds on the ceiling of the cave (a Vision-5 roll is necessary to spot them, and is allowed only

## The Prisoners (Continued)

### Gina Vitalli

An Italian model, bodybuilder and martial arts enthusiast, Gina has appeared in several kung fu and sword-and-sorcery movies. Her boyfriend owes a lot of money to the Sicilian Mafia; Lenoir has offered to wipe his slate clean if she will participate in the competition.

Gina has ST 15 and HT 14.

*Advantages:* Appearance (Beautiful); Combat Reflexes; Rapid Healing.

*Disadvantages:* Honesty; Sense of Duty (Friends); Stubbornness.

*Skills:* Acrobatics-14; Acting-11; Performance-13; Sex Appeal-18.

*Languages:* English-9; French-10; Italian-13; Spanish-9.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Karate; Judo; Kendo.



## Dealing With Death

*Dark Arena* is a dangerous scenario; even if the optional Stun rules are used, fighters who charge headlong into battle may not survive long.

A player with a dead character might be allowed to play one of the NPCs. Perhaps the player will have gained a bit of wisdom this time around.

Although the ruthless Lenoir will generally execute badly-injured competitors, he might instead save a victim for torture (public or private) later. He takes no personal interest in female prisoners, but might save a toy for his guards. (This could lead to a few guards with broken necks, if the prisoner isn't hurt as badly as Lenoir thinks.)

## Arena Beasts

Lenoir has acquired several wild animals for the climax of this tournament. They include three lions (see p. B143), four tigers (p. B144) and two boars (p. B144). The animals are drugged into a berserk state; as soon as the cages open, the beasts will rush out.

Anyone unwilling to hurt the animals may try to calm them. Make a reaction roll for each creature, at -5 (-8 if the animal has been injured). Animal Empathy grants a +2 bonus, as does a successful Animal Handling roll. On a Poor or worse reaction, the animal will attack; on a Neutral reaction, it will try to flee; Good or better will cause it to quiet and return to its cage. Only on an Excellent reaction (and only in a cinematic campaign) would a creature fight "for" the heroes.

## The Attack Dogs

Lenoir also keeps a pack of killer dogs: ST 12, DX 13, IQ 5, HT 13/10. They attack in close combat by biting for 1d-1 cutting damage. These dogs are savage: reaction rolls are at -8 (-10 if the dog has been injured). Animal Handling rolls to get a reaction bonus are at -5.



if someone is purposely searching the ceiling). The handholds may be reached by making a 5-foot jump and a DX roll, or making a Climbing-5 roll to crawl up the wall. To move from one handhold to the next, make a Climbing-1 or DX or ST rolls every second. Failure causes a lost grip (a ST-2 roll is necessary to keep the other hand on the hold); a critical failure means a fall, for 1d-2 crushing damage. Move while swinging from the handholds is 1.

The dogs have been trained to ignore anybody moving on the ceiling. If they were fighting with the climber before he reached the ceiling, a roll against their IQ+4 is necessary; on a failed roll, they continue to jump and snap at the climber's feet, though this will probably have little effect.

After this, there is but one adversary left: Lenoir. His escape attempt thwarted by Helga (see p. 61), he has decided to kill all his enemies or die trying. He will position himself at the narrowest point in the tunnel and wait. He is not stupid, however; if his pursuers have guns or ranged weapons, he will use his own and fire from cover. Otherwise, he will face them squarely. The tunnel is now so narrow that Lenoir can take on his adversaries one at a time. Lenoir will first extend a challenge to the PC he fought in the Kendo match (see p. 47). If that person refuses or is not there, or if that person fights and is defeated, Lenoir will challenge others, in this order of preference: any katana-wielder; any swordsman or staff user; any other armed character; and, last, unarmed fighters. He will use his katana to the last moment.

If Lenoir is mortally wounded, he will smile and nod toward his enemy before expiring.

## Aftermath

The death or disappearance of Lenoir will be too much for his men and his guests. The guards and spectators will fight over the three jets in the compound, only to find that they have all been disabled (by Helga; see p. 65). If any of the escapees manage to organize the rest of the prisoners and rally them against their captors, the guards will surrender quickly. All that is left is to make a call to Espinoza or the Chinese authorities. They will soon arrive, cart away the criminals, and fly the victims to Hong Kong. Lenoir's guests will be in deep trouble; not



only are they illegally in China, but they were accessories to serious criminal acts. Only the wealthiest and most influential of them will escape justice, and then just barely. This will not endear the PCs to them (see below).

The PCs will receive little thanks from the Chinese authorities, but Espinoza will hold them in high regard if they behaved well. If they are inclined toward law enforcement, he may offer them a freelance position with his organization.

## To Be Continued . . .

*Dark Arena* can provide seeds for new adventures. Even with Lenoir apparently dead and his organization beset by the authorities of five continents, a number of loose ends remain.

If Oni escaped, he will not rest until he pays back everyone he blames for the downfall of Lenoir. Helga and the PCs will be high on his list. He might start killing NPCs involved in the breakout, giving the adventurers some warning. Even if Oni died, he could have a brother or other relative. Perhaps his whole clan will seek revenge!



Many of the spectators at the tournament are powerful men and women; they may feel some resentment toward those who inconvenienced or even destroyed their lives. These will include mobsters and Yakuza bosses, Third World dictators, eccentric millionaires and perhaps even more sinister personages (members of the Cabal – see *GURPS Horror* – could have been among Lenoir's guests). The possibilities for danger and adventure are endless.

Last but not least, Lenoir may not be dead after all! The man the PCs fought could have been an impostor covering Lenoir's escape. Or perhaps he didn't die – when the authorities checked his corpse, they found only a bloody track leading to yet another secret exit. Lenoir will devote all his resources to hunting his foes; he will make a fearsome Enemy.

## The Masquerade

Prisoners who escape on the night before the tournament will probably end up crashing the party Lenoir is throwing for his guests. The party is a masquerade, and the costumes are elaborate. Should the heroes prove ingenious enough to escape, reward them with an interesting time at the party.

The real guests, who have come to watch human beings kill each other, are a varied group whose common trait is wealth. There are about 60 of them. Roughly half of them are underworld figures from around the world, all associated with Lenoir in one way or another. Lenoir, following the tradition of the *shogun* of old, requires his underlings to visit him at least once a year. Since that leaves them at his mercy, they are less likely to attempt to betray him.

The other half are thrill-seekers, men and women willing to try anything and rich enough to afford it. Lenoir has offered them the opportunity to experience a real gladiatorial contest, with men dying to satisfy the whims of the powerful. Lenoir loves the attention and admiration of wealthy people; he is also charging them hugely "for travel expenses." The main reason for inviting them, however, is that in the future he will ask all his guests for favors, blackmailing them with videos of their participation.

Tournament escapees prowling the fortress grounds will run into half a dozen guests who have slipped out for more privacy. Costumes include a gorilla suit (made with real fur), a couple dressed like the title characters of the movie *Beauty and the Beast*, and another dressed as Darth Vader and Princess Leia. All these costumes have masks covering most of the faces. Of course, the outfits are perfect or near-perfect fits for heroes who manage to dispatch the guests (this is, after all, a cinematic adventure).

There are metal detectors on the entrances to the ballroom; Lenoir (in real samurai armor) does not trust his guests enough to allow firearms. All the guards in the ballroom are armed only with primitive weapons (they are dressed like medieval Japanese soldiers, with breastplates, loincloths and headbands; their weapons are spears and short swords). There are 12 guards scattered throughout the hall.

There are two dance bands – one in the style of the 1950s, one 1970s – and a variety of attractive hosts and hostesses to make sure every guest has a good time. The party is noisy enough that nothing short of massive gunfire will attract the other guards.

All in all, this could be an excellent opportunity for some swashbuckling mayhem. Heroes who create a good enough diversion – or who skip the party and run a ninja-style raid on the airfield – will have their choice of three small jets to escape in. All are fueled and ready to go; if none of the escapees can fly a plane, there will be a co-ercible pilot at the airfield.

# Antoine Lenoir

Age 38; 5'10", 170 lbs.; dark brown hair, golden brown skin, hazel eyes, handsome features, striking and powerful physique.



ST 13 [30]      IQ 16 [80]      Speed: 7  
DX 15 [60]      HT 13 [30]      Move: 7  
Damage: Thrust 1d; Swing d-1  
Dodge: 8      Parry: 13 (Karate), 13 (Katana)  
No armor; no encumbrance.

Point Total: 450

## Advantages

Acute Vision +3 [6]; Appearance (Handsome) [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Eidetic Memory (First Level) [30]; Wealth (Filthy Rich) [50]; Weapon Master (Katana) [20].

## Disadvantages

Delusion (Thinks he is a Japanese Shogun) [-10]; Enemy (Law Enforcement Agencies, 9 or less) [-30]; Intolerance (Everybody!) [-10].

## Quirks

Only chooses the elements of Japanese culture that suit him and discards the rest; Wants to be "More Japanese than the Japanese."

## Skills

Administration-16 [1]; Area Knowledge (Asia)-18 [2]; Area Knowledge (America)-18 [2]; Area Knowledge (Europe)-17 [1]; Body Language-16 [2]; Detect Lies-18 [4]; Driving-14 [1]; Economics-16 [2]; Fast-Draw (Katana)-17 [2]; Guns (Pistol)-17 [1]; Guns (SMG)-17 [1]; Katana-23 [56]; Katana Art-20 [default from Katana]; History (World)-16 [2]; History (Japanese)-18 [4]; Judo-19 [32]; Karate-19 [32]; Leadership-16 [1]; Meditation-17 [6]; Merchant-16 [1]; Philosophy (Zen Buddhism)-16 [2]; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-17 [1]; Savoir-Faire (Japanese)-16 [½]; Savoir-Faire (Western)-16 [½]; Stealth-15 [2]; Streetwise-16 [1]; Tactics-17 [4].

## Languages

English-16 [1]; French-16 [1]; Japanese-17 [1]; Vietnamese-16 [1].

## Cinematic Skills

Power Blow-21 [7].

## Martial Arts Styles

Jujutsu; Kenjutsu.

## Martial Arts Maneuvers

Arm Lock-21 [1]; Back Kick-16 (1d+3) [1]; Disarming-21 [2]; Enhanced Parry (Karate)-13 [6]; Enhanced Parry (Katana)-13 [6]; Feint (Katana)-25 [2]; Hit Location (Katana)-22 [2]; Kicking-17 (1d+3) [default]; Spin Kick-17 (1d+3) [1].

## Weapon

Very Fine Katana, 2d+3/4d impaling, 3d+3/6d+2 cutting (includes bonuses from Weapon Master and blade quality).

Lenoir was born to a wealthy Vietnamese warlord and a French fashion model, shortly after the French government gave independence to Vietnam. His father was allegedly killed by Communist guerrillas when Antoine was four; Lenoir's only father figure was his father's former bodyguard, a former Japanese soldier who had transferred his loyalty to the Vietnamese warlord after Japan surrendered at the end of World War II. The bodyguard, who called himself Asano, taught Lenoir Japanese and swordsmanship, and instilled in the impressionable youngster a love for all things Japanese.

Lenoir inherited his father's money and power; Asano, a Yakuza member before the war, advised him to channel that power into crime, while keeping a facade of respectability. Thus was Night Dragon born. Lenoir proved to be an apt pupil; he studied in America, Europe and Japan, acquiring several degrees in business administration, economics and history (including a Ph.D. in Japanese history). Lenoir quickly realized that Vietnam would eventually become a Communist country, and concentrated on expanding his organization elsewhere in Asia. With his intellect, knowledge and ruthlessness, he single-handedly built an underworld empire before his 30th birthday.

Antoine retains his French name, but considers himself a true Japanese warrior. He knows that most Japanese would never accept him, but he disdains modern Japanese anyway, believing (as Asano told him) that they have abandoned true Japanese tradition. Above all, Lenoir wants to become a modern-day daimyo, a powerful lord able to command hordes of fanatical warriors. At the same time, he is a decadent pleasure-seeker who hates to lose and always gets what he wants. How he manages to reconcile these opposites is only known to him.

In combat, Lenoir will be torn between his streetwise tendency to end any fight quickly and decisively, and his desire to relive the glories of the samurai. If he believes he is his opponent's superior, he will toy with him and try to win in an honorable, storybook way. Otherwise, he will do battle in a completely businesslike manner.

*Realistic version:* Reduce ST to 10, DX to 12, IQ to 14 and HT to 10. Remove Handsome, Weapon Master. Remove all cinematic skills. Add Stubbornness.

*"Four-color" version:* Increase ST to 15, DX to 17; Increase Power Blow skill to 25; add High Pain Threshold.

## Helga and Cherise, Lenoir's Bodyguards

Blonde and brunette, respectively, both beautiful and deadly.

ST 12                      IQ 11                      Speed 6.5  
DX 13                      HT 13                      Move 6

**Damage:** Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+2

**Dodge:** Helga 7, Cherise 6

**Parry:** Helga 11, Cherise 10 (Karate)

No armor; no encumbrance.

### Advantages

**Helga:** Appearance (Beautiful); Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold.

**Cherise:** Appearance (Very Beautiful); Danger Sense.

### Disadvantages

**Cherise:** Duty (Lenoir); Enemy (Police); Greed; Lecherousness.

**Helga:** Duty (Lenoir); Enemy (Police); Vow (Destroy Lenoir).

### Martial Arts Styles

Jujutsu.

### Skills

Acting-15; Driving-13; Fast-Talk-15; Guns (Pistol)-15; Judo-17; Jumping-13; Karate-16; Savoir-Faire (Dojo)-13; Sex Appeal-18; Stealth-14; Streetwise-14. Helga also has Acting-20; Demolitions-16; Mechanic (Cars)-14; Mechanic (Planes)-14; Piloting-14.

### Martial Arts Maneuvers

Arm Lock-18; Back Kick-12 (1d+2); Disarming-18; Kicking-14 (1d+2); Spin Kick-14 (1d+2).

**Cherise** is a highly trained bodyguard/escort for Lenoir; she is in it for the money and the love of adventure, and little else.

**Helga** is another story. Her husband, a German police detective, was murdered by Lenoir when he came too close to discovering one of Night Dragon's operations. Helga was almost killed in the same attack, but was rescued from a burning car by a passerby, who happened to be a doctor. After recovering from her injuries under the doctor's private care, Helga decided to remain dead and extract her revenge on Lenoir. It took her years to build a new identity in the underworld, and more years to finally reach a position close to Lenoir, only to be blocked by the vigilant Oni. Helga hates and fears the ninja, and has waited for an opportunity to make her move.

## Oni, the Ninja

5'6", 140 lbs.

ST 12                      IQ 14                      Speed: 7  
DX 15                      HT 13                      Move: 7

**Damage:** Thrust 1d-1; Swing 1d+2

**Dodge:** 8

**Parry:** 13 (Karate)

No armor; no encumbrance.

Point Total: 365

### Advantages

Combat Reflexes; Night Vision; Trained by a Master.

### Disadvantages

Appearance (Unattractive); Extremely Hazardous Duty (To Lenoir); Fanaticism (To Lenoir); Sadism; Social Stigma (Asian and member of the Eta class).

### Quirks

Dresses in conservative suits; Only gives his opinion to Lenoir in private; Prefers to fight with his bare hands; Very quiet.

### Style

Ninjutsu.



The secret tournament presented the opportunity. Helga has managed to place explosives in the arsenals of Lenoir's fortress and its power generator, and has removed essential spare parts of every plane as it arrived; she only managed this because Oni and Lenoir are so busy preparing the tournament. On the second night of the event, she plans to set off her explosives, free the prisoners, and see Lenoir dead.

## Skills

Karate-19; Judo-17; Stealth-18; Shortsword-17; Sai/Jitte-16; Acrobatics-15; Climbing-16; Jumping-16; Swimming-15; Breath Control-15; Blowpipe-17; Disguise-13; Acting-13; Staff-14; Power Blow-15; Throwing-16.

## Cinematic Skills

Blind Fighting-15; Breaking Blow-13; Invisibility Art-18; Light Walk-12; Power Blow-15; Pressure Points-16; Pressure Secrets-14; Throwing Art-17.

## Maneuvers

Aggressive Parry-10 (1d/2d+2); Arm Lock-17; Back Kick-15 (1d+2/3d); Dodge-8; Ear Clap-13; Elbow Strike-17 (1d/2d+2); Feint (Karate)-20; Ground Fighting (Karate)-15; Head Butt-13 (1d-3/2d-2); Hit Location (Karate)-16; Jump Kick-15 (2d/3d+3); Kicking-17 (1d+2/3d); Knee Strike-17 (1d+2/3d); Spin Kick-16 (1d+2/3d).

*Note:* Oni has three Karate attacks and parries per turn.

# Hiroshi Osawa

7', 420 lbs.; Sumo wrestler, shaven head.

ST 18                      IQ 10                      Speed 7.5  
DX 14                      HT 16                      Move 7

Damage: Thrust 1d+2; Swing 3d

Dodge: 7                      Parry: 10

Leather armor (PD2, DR2); no encumbrance.

Point Total: 350

## Advantages

High Pain Threshold; Luck; Strong Will +1; Toughness +2.

## Disadvantages

Bad Temper; Compulsive Gambler; Duty (To Lenoir); Fat; Gigantism.

## Quirks

Dislikes Oni; Enjoys challenges; Likes tall women; Wants to open his own casino.

## Style

Sumo.

## Skills

Brawling-16; Driving-15; Interrogation-12; Gambling-15; Philosophy (Shinto)-16; Stealth-14; Sumo Wrestling-22; Swimming-14; Tournament Law (Sumo)-15.

## Martial Arts Maneuvers

Kicking-17 (2d+1).

## Weapons

Bladed gloves, 2d cutting.

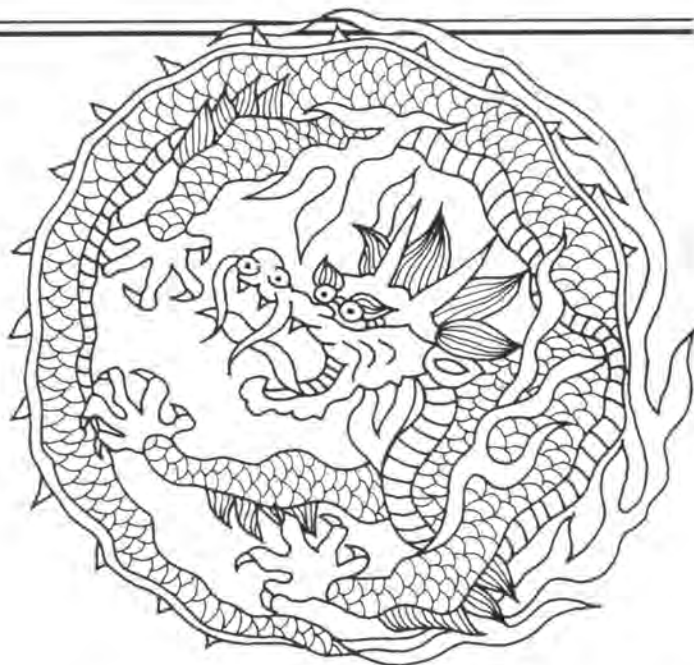
Osawa is one of the few willing participants at Lenoir's tournament. A former Sumo champion, his fondness for gambling caused him to accumulate large debts to the Yakuza. His behavior caused him to be expelled as a Sumotori, just as the Yakuza started threatening him for repayment. Lenoir literally saved his

Oni's story is shrouded in mystery. He arrived in the United States shortly after the mysterious deaths of a number of prominent Japanese businessmen and politicians. Lenoir's organization hired him and provided him with a new identity. Oni (his nickname refers to the giant goblins of Japanese legend) has worked as Lenoir's bodyguard ever since. For some mysterious reason, Lenoir absolutely trusts the silent little man.

In combat, Oni will usually attack unexpectedly, using Feints and Pressure Points attacks. If he has the opportunity, he will withdraw to another area and try to use his Invisibility Art to regain the advantage of surprise. He is not a suicide fighter; if he decides that the odds are too great against him, he will try to escape – and the PCs should sleep with an eye open from then on.

*Realistic version:* Reduce DX to 14 and HT to 12; drop the Trained by a Master Advantage; eliminate all cinematic skills.

*"Four-color" version:* Increase ST to 15, DX to 16 and HT to 14; add Toughness +2 and Weapon Master; increase Pressure Points to 18; increase Stealth to 20, Invisibility Art to 19, Power Blow to 20 and Throwing and Throwing Arts to 20; add Off-Weapon Training +4 for the Sai/Jitte.



life, repaying his debts and taking Osawa under his wing. He has served Lenoir well, as an enforcer and sometimes executioner.

Osawa will be wearing an outlandish costume made of heavy leather, covered by shiny studs (PD 2, DR 2), complete with weighted gloves with cutting blades. In combat, Osawa will try a few punches with them, but if the foe proves too nimble, he will try to pin him to the ground and then proceed to cut him up. With his toughness and insensibility to pain, he will be very difficult to defeat.

Osawa does not feel any real loyalty to Lenoir. He considers his boss an employer, nothing else – making Osawa a very unusual Japanese man. He also continues to gamble continually, spending the generous allowance Lenoir gives him with happy abandon.

*Realistic version:* Reduce ST to 15, DX to 12 and HT to 14. Drop Toughness.

*"Four-color" version:* Increase ST to 20, DX to 15, IQ to 11 and HT to 18; add Alertness +1; remove Bad Temper; increase Brawling skill to 20.

# RIGHTFUL POSSESSION

# 3



*By Stephen Dedman  
Illustrated by Bryant Velez*

*Rightful Possession* is an adventure for three to six 200- to 250-point characters. It transports the heroes into an unashamedly cinematic (but low-mana) version of 15th-century Japan featuring ninja, yakuza, ronin, monsters, ghosts, magic and superstitious peasants. Useful skills include martial arts (including the noncombat skills), Savoir-Faire (Japanese), History (Japanese), Language (Japanese), Stealth, Swimming, Occultism, Survival (Mountains), artistic skills, social skills, magical skills and Escape.

*GURPS Japan* and *GURPS Magic* are not required, but will be useful in running this scenario.

## About the Author

Stephen Dedman is a freelance writer, gamer and Kurosawa fan who lives and works in Western Australia. His other writing credits include *GURPS Space Atlas 4* and the *Villains & Vigilantes* adventures *Pre-Emptive Strike* and *The Great Iridium Con*. His short stories have appeared in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* and *Pulphouse*.



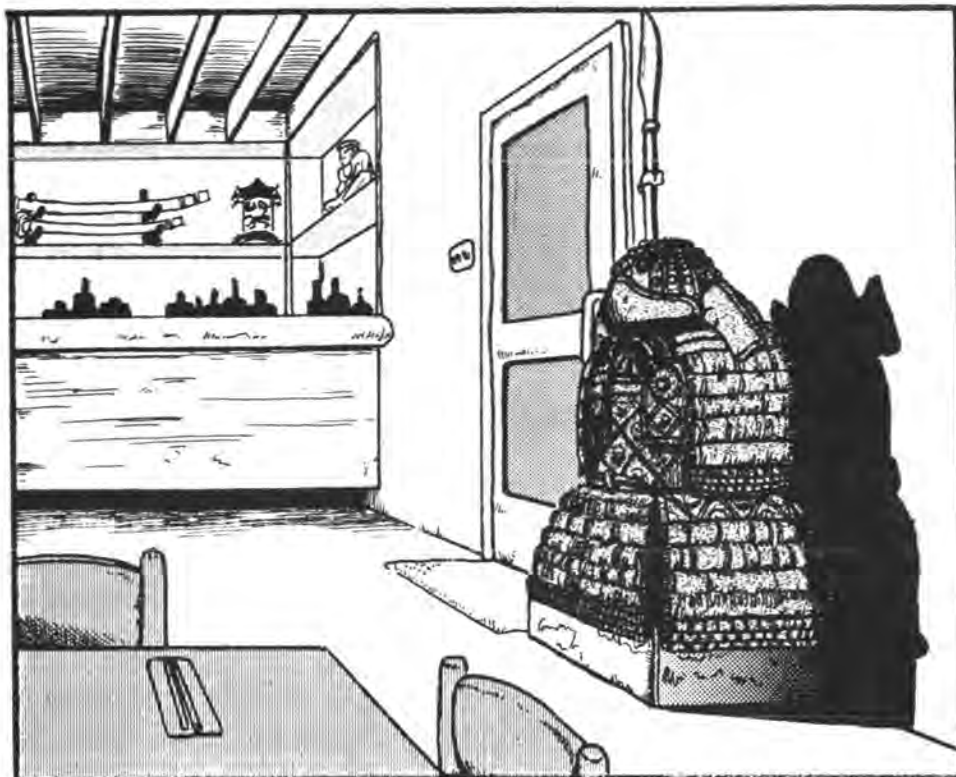
## Locale

The Jade Gate Restaurant can be located in any Western city with a Chinatown or other identifiably Asian district (e.g., New York, L.A., London, Vancouver, Sydney, etc.). The martial arts supplier across the street has a window display of nunchaku, tonfa, shinai, sais, naginata, spears, kendo armor, butterfly swords and assorted knives. Breaking the window sounds an alarm.



## Bystanders

When the adventure begins, the Jade Gate has 35-40 patrons present. Apart from the Yakuza loan sharks (see p. 96), all the Jade Gate's clients are ST 10, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10. The waitresses (ST 10, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10, Appearance (Attractive) or better) are all Asian, as are approximately half of the clients. Everyone except the heroes will automatically fail their Fright Checks when they see the shi-ryo, and will be Stunned for 2d turns. None of the clients are armed, or have any significant combat skills.



## The Kick-Off

One night the group is gathered at the Jade Gate, a small Japanese restaurant. Suddenly, between the appetizers and the entree, the figure of an old woman wearing a long white kimono and carrying a sheathed wakizashi walks purposefully through the wall and toward one of the PCs (one with Japanese ancestry or, failing that, a Japanese sensei, patron or ally).

Anyone who makes his Fright Check should make a Vision roll to notice that the old woman's feet aren't touching the floor. Anyone who succeeds should try an Occultism roll to recognize the figure as a shi-ryo, a Japanese ghost. The ghost will continue to approach the chosen person until she has touched him. If anyone tries to stand between the shi-ryo and her target, that person will disappear as soon as he and the ghost touch.

The only effective defense against the ghost is to dodge, which will only postpone the inevitable. The ghost can walk through walls, floors, cars, etc. – and though her Move is only 6, she can teleport (preventing her target escaping by car or similar means). Despite the long, tangled black hair that obscures much of her face, she is able to see (or sense) her target through any obstacle, disguise or degree of darkness. Weapons pass through her without damage; punches, kicks, parries and attempted grapples count as touching (though the GM may give character points for style or ingenuity).

The ghost does not draw the wakizashi, but continues to approach the target until she touches him. If he is the last of the group to be touched, he disappears. If some members of the party remain, the target becomes possessed. He then attempts to touch the rest of the party, saying (in Japanese, whether he knows the language or not), "I am honor-bound to go, but please, I need your help." Anyone with Empathy will realize that their comrade is possessed, but not lying; Detect Lies will also reveal that he believes what he is saying. His touch has the same effect as the shi-ryo's, and can be dodged but not parried; he can be killed, but not stunned or stopped. Anyone with a Sense of Duty to the possessed should allow himself to be touched.

## The Jade Gate

The Jade Gate is a small, not-too-expensive, Japanese restaurant, a few blocks from Chinatown. The owner and chief cook, Suishu Motogi, prides himself on his samurai ancestry, and insists that clients remove their shoes in the foyer, use chopsticks instead of knives and forks, etc. The floor is covered with tatami and the tables are separated by shoji (paper screens; light visual cover, DR 0, HT 1). The only decorations are a full suit of samurai armor by the door, naginata in hand; a small statue of Buddha, an ad for Kirin beer and a dai-sho (a sword rack holding a katana and wakizashi), all on the top shelf over the bar; and an Ikebana display in an alcove.

The naginata is good quality and only a few years old (purchased from a nearby martial arts supplier), and the armor is made up of assorted pieces (some steel, PD 3, DR 4; some lacquered leather, PD 2, DR 2). If anyone tries to touch the wakizashi, Motogi will recover from his fright and forbid them to draw it, claiming that family tradition says that whoever wields it will be cursed; the katana Motogi will insist on using himself. The kitchen knives (large and small) are fine quality, but not designed for thrusting or throwing.

Anyone who gets a good look at the wakizashi should make an IQ or Armoury roll to notice that the shi-ryo is carrying a wakizashi identical to Motogi's! (The shi-ryo's interest in the wakizashi is discussed in the sidebar.)

## A Private Audience

After disappearing from the Jade Gate, the party will (simultaneously) find themselves sitting naked in a communal bath in a bathhouse. A mist surrounds the bath; they see nothing beyond the mist.

Before they can do more than notice their immediate surroundings, the mist in front of the character targeted by the shi-ryo roils and becomes denser. After a few seconds, the shi-ryo glides forward through the disturbed area. She speaks only to her chosen subject. Her speech patterns seem a bit strange; she is actually speaking Japanese, but the heroes may not notice this yet.

*"We have not much time; heed me, my son. Our family owes a great debt of honor, represented by this wakizashi, to the House of the Lotus. The burden of the debt falls to you, the last of our line, to repay. Seek the symbol, but beware the curse. Blood and blade should not mix before their time. Your quest will begin in this bath. Our family honor goes with you."*

Then the shi-ryo will give a small bow and disappear into the mist as the air clears around the bathhouse.

## Turning Japanese

As the mist surrounding them fades, the party finds they share the bath with 2d+2 equally naked Japanese. None of the Japanese seem startled by their appearance. The heroes should deduce that, though they see each other as they were, they now occupy pre-existing Japanese bodies. These bodies have the same attributes and physical advantages/disadvantages as the heroes' own bodies (apart from being 5" shorter – 7" for women – and 30 lbs. lighter), but nothing non-Japanese or distinctly 20th-century will have traveled with them (Shaolin brands, yes; baldness or birthmarks, maybe; blond hair, bullet wounds, contact lenses or prosthetics, no).

Anyone lacking Japanese language skill will find that they can now understand Japanese and be understood; they can't speak English without it being heard as Japanese. They will also be illiterate. Those with 8+ in Japanese will retain English, and be literate in the Japanese syllabaries (katakana and hiragana). Characters with 11+ in Japanese language will also know the 2,000 Common Ideo-

## Background

The motivations of a ghost can be difficult to decipher; the chosen characters may not even know the right questions to ask. However, a successful Divination might reveal some of the following information.

The shi-ryo who appears at the Jade Gate was a proud woman in life – too proud. Many generations before her time, her family, the House of the Dragon, owed a debt of honor to the House of the Lotus. As the symbol of this debt, her house gave the Lotus clan possession of her family's greatest treasure – a beautiful wakizashi (see sidebar, p. 95, for its origin). They were also told the legend of its curse, which made a marvelous story for inquisitive visitors – the wakizashi was always prominently on display, of course. The symbol of the debt strongly united the two houses.

At the time of Keiko-san (who later became the shi-ryo), the second son of the Lotus family acquired massive debts to the Yakuza before his father realized it. Hating to beg, but not wishing to see his family thrown out of their house to starve, the head of the family came to the House of the Dragon to clear the debt simply by exchanging the wakizashi for money.

Keiko-san, head of the House of the Dragon, was insulted, saying that she could not absolve her family's debt with mere money. The argument became heated, but finally the desperate man withdrew.

Two days later, the old woman awoke to the news that the Yakuza had killed the gambler, along with his father and several brothers who tried to intervene, and had thrown the rest of the family out to starve.

Realizing her grave error in judgment, the guilt-ridden woman took the survivors in. She spent a great deal of effort and money tracing the wakizashi – from the Yakuza (Teruo, p. 74, was its first possessor) through its subsequent owners – until she could return the symbol of the now-greater debt owed the family. Then she vowed that no member of the Lotus family would ever be reduced to such a state again.

Upon her death, the old woman's vow caused her to become a shi-ryo. Knowing more than she had in life, she intends to make sure that the tatsu is never released, or that no innocent bystanders are killed if it does escape its captivity. She has watched for some way to repay her family's debt, and atone for her prideful mistake. Aware that Motogi – who has inherited the wakizashi without knowing about the debt it represents – has become desperate enough to take his life (see p. 95), and that a member of her line frequents the Jade Gate, she has decided that Fate is giving her the chance she has so long awaited.

## Suishu Motogi

ST 11, DX 13, IQ 10, HT 11.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 6 (Katana).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantage:** Charisma +1.

**Disadvantages:** Dependents (Employees, children); Overweight; Secret (In hock to Yakuza, -5); Stubbornness.

**Quirks:** Despises Muzak and karaoke; Soft-hearted.

**Skills:** Accounting-8; Administration-9; Cooking (Japanese)-15; Diplomacy-11; Savoir-Faire (Japanese)-11.

**Languages:** Chinese-8; English-10; Japanese-10; Korean-8.

**Martial Arts Style:** Kendo.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Katana-9; Katana Art-12.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Feint (Katana)-11; Hit Location (Katana)-8.

Motogi has a son and daughter at college, is overpaying his staff and undercharging his clients, and is seriously in debt to Yakuza loan sharks. He has no idea what his wakizashi represents (see sidebar, p. 69), but he does know the legend of the curse.

## Masae the Horse

ST 14, DX 10, IQ 9, HT 14.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 8 (Brawling).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Alertness +2; High Pain Threshold.

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive); Dependents (Wife, son and six unmarried daughters); Gullibility; Illiteracy; Lecherousness.

**Skills:** Agronomy-11; Axe/Mace-12; Brawling-13.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Head Butt-12; Knee Strike-15.

**Equipment:** Cheap cotton kimono; straw hat; 20 silver pieces, 50 copper (\$22).

## Kadoya no Kenji

ST 10, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 9.

Basic Speed 5.5, Move 5.

Dodge 5.

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Acute Vision +3; Appearance (Attractive); Charisma +2.

**Disadvantages:** Combat Paralysis; Honesty.

**Skills:** Appreciate Beauty-11; Area Knowledge (Tsu)-12; Artist-11; Diplomacy-12; Merchant-13; Origami-12; Professional Skill (Hatter)-14; Savoir-Faire-13.

graphs, and those with 13+ will know the Complex Ideographs as well. Other language skills will not be affected.

The newcomers will be unable to remember their real names, or those of their companions, without an IQ roll (unless they have Eidetic Memory), but they will know the names that fit their new bodies. They will be able to remember the 20th century and their TL7 skills, but not such details as the recipe for gunpowder.

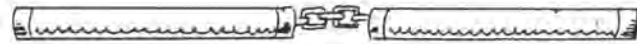
Conversations overheard while in the bath will reveal:

(a) that the adventurers are in Tsu, a middle-sized city in Ise Province;

(b) that Teruo (p. 73), the heavily tattooed old sumotori taking up a large percentage of the bath, is trying to hire an exorcist, a porter or two, and an unspecified number of yojimbo (bodyguards), all of whom must be willing to travel into the mountains;

(c) that approximately half an hour remains before the curfew; and

(d) that being caught out after curfew without a lantern is a capital offense. Most of this conversation occurs between Kadoya no Kenji, a successful local hatter, and Masae the Horse, a farmer on a pilgrimage and enjoying his first visit to a city (see sidebar).



## Professions

The heroes' "new" professions should be determined by their martial arts style(s), attributes and appropriate 20th-century skills.

Anyone trained in Kendo, Kenjutsu, Kuk Sool Won and/or Kyudo, with Katana or Bow at 12+, will be ronin; their possessions (waiting for them when they emerge from the bath) will include a fine katana, wakizashi and kozuka, a long-bow and quiver of 24 arrows, a small obi-hung pouch containing a letter of recommendation from their previous master (can hold 1/2 lb.), a pair of geta (wooden or straw sandals; PD 1, DR 1 to soles of feet only), and a rather worn silk kimono, cloak and fundoshi (loincloth).

Those trained in Shaolin Kung Fu, Wing Chun Ku Fu, Chin Na or Shorinji Kempo styles will be itinerant Buddhist priests, owning only a bo, a black robe (priestesses also wear a white wimple), geta and an inro (first aid kit, +1 to First Aid/TL3, weighs 1 lb.). They also have the Clerical Investment advantage.

Martial artists trained in Ninjutsu, or An Ch'i, Military Hand-to-Hand or Pentjak Silat and have Stealth at 13+, will be ninja, traveling disguised as entertainers, courtesans or merchants (depending on gender and skills). Their possessions include a reversible cotton kimono, geta and loincloth, a forged letter of recommendation, 1d furoshiki (cotton squares twisted into a sack, and stored in the kimono sleeve; holds 15 lbs. and 1 cubic foot), and at least one weapon or ninja gadget (for entertainers, a samisen that becomes a half-bow, and a flute that conceals a tanto; for courtesans, a hishi and 1d shuriken disguised as hair ornaments, a combat fan, and 1 dose of fugu poison; for merchants, a good wakizashi with bamboo snorkel and 1 dose of masuizaki powder concealed in the sheath).

Adventurers with ST 14+ and trained in Sumo style will be sumotori. Their possessions consist of an elaborate cotton kimono and a mawashi (see p. MA76).



Yin-Yang Healing at 13+ will indicate those who should be Physicians. They own an acupuncture set, an intro, a fine wakizashi, a silk kimono and cloak, geta and loincloth, and an inkcase with inks, brushes and paper.

Characters with the Blind disadvantage remain blind in the past. They will be assumed to be masseurs or shampooers, but will actually be ninja in disguise, regardless of their martial arts style. (Blind Fighting skill – p. MA31 – would, of course, be valuable.) Their equipment includes a silk kimono and cloak, a bo (which may be a chain-staff or conceal two small knives, depending on the carrier's skills), loincloth and geta, and a 9-year-old boy, Jiro, trained in Ninjutsu, who acts as a guide (see sidebar).

Peasant hunters will have Survival (Forest or Mountains), Tracking and an appropriate weapon skill at 11+. Each owns a good tanto, a brown cotton kimono, a cotton loincloth, and a straw hat, raincoat and geta.

Training in Kobujutsu, Aikido, Judo, Karate and/or Jujutsu, without any of the above skills, will be appropriate for peasants on a pilgrimage: farmers, fishermen, artisans, woodcutters or unsuccessful merchants, depending on their other abilities. In any case, their only possessions are a cotton kimono and loincloth, and a straw hat, raincoat and geta.

Those with Acrobatics, Hypnotism or Sleight of Hand at 14+ and Performance at 11+ may be traveling entertainers (with even lower status than peasants, but a better chance of making money in a city or en route). Actors, artists, bards, dancers, musicians, poets and singers will need a firm grounding in Japanese culture and language (GM's decision) as well as artistic skills. Their possessions include a cheap wakizashi, peasant clothing and the necessary tools of their trade (ink and brushes, musical instrument, etc.).

Group members who possess none of the abilities listed above will be casual laborers, without professions, owning only a shabby cotton kimono and loincloth.

Though naked, bathers may be able to determine their profession and social status with a successful roll against Savoir-Faire (Japanese) or History (Japanese). Samurai have two names and their hair braided into a queue, commoners have one name, Buddhist priests and nuns have shaven heads, sumotori wear their hair in a topknot, and so on. (See pp. J22-27, MA76.)

### Savoir-Faire (Japanese)

Savoir-Faire (Japanese) defaults to Savoir-Faire (Dojo) at -2 for anyone trained in a Japanese martial art, or History (Japanese) or Anthropology at -3. Anyone who has lived in Japan will have it at IQ-4. Without it, mistakes may cause automatic bad reactions in others (-3 to all reaction rolls). Gaffes might include forgetting to remove geta when walking into a house, asking for meat with food, addressing a superior without the appropriate honorifics (“-san” or “-sama”), carrying or using the wrong weapon (see below), or showing teeth when smiling or laughing. Note that for armed samurai, every encounter is a potential combat situation; a Very Bad or worse reaction will provoke an immediate attack.

Sword etiquette defaults to Katana Art or Savoir-Faire (Japanese) at -2. Only samurai are permitted to wear the katana; for anyone else to touch it, or even the scabbard, is considered grounds for speedy execution (or, if the culprit is another samurai, a duel). Because Fast-Draw (Katana) is not possible when the katana's curved blade is cutting edge down, it is considered a hostile act to wear the sword cutting edge upward (one extra action to turn it around). Entering a house without removing the katana is also considered hostile.

Knives, wakizashi, naginata, sais, jittes, spears, sticks and staffs are used by people of all social classes. Kusari, kama, nunchaku and axes are considered peasant weapons; samurai or ronin seen using them will suffer a -1 reaction (-4 from other samurai). Anyone seen using a ninja weapon will suffer a -3 reaction.

### Jiro, Guide

ST 7, DX 8, IQ 8, HT 8.

Basic Speed 4, Move 3.

Dodge 3, Parry 4.

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantage:* Night Vision.

*Disadvantages:* Duty; Secret.

*Skills:* Blowpipe-6; Climbing-9; Knife-9; Stealth-8; Swimming-9.

*Martial Arts Skills:* Judo-6; Karate-6.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Arm Lock-8; Elbow Strike-6; Feint (Knife)-10; Ground Fighting (Knife)-6; Hit Location (Knife)-7; Knee Strike-7.

*Weapon:* Kozuka.

Jiro is a young ninja in training, sent out with the “masseur” to get some experience of the outside world. He will answer most questions from his master, but will never admit to being ninja, or do anything that might jeopardize their cover.



### Social Hierarchy of Japan

Status +5 or higher – Imperial Noble or minor high priest

Status +3 or higher – Daimyo (lord of province), abbot

Status +2 – Samurai, physician

Status +1 – Wealthy farmer, ronin, yamabushi, yojimbo, Shinto priest, Sumo wrestler

Status 0 – Craftsman, peasant (farmer, woodsman, fisherman)

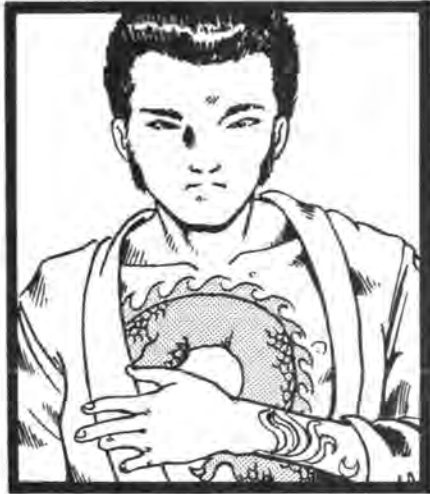
Status -1 – Merchant, servant, katari-be, ninja, geisha, courtesan

Status -2 – Gambler (including yakuza), magician, bandit, thief, casual laborer

Status -3 – Eta (untouchable caste; includes beggars and handlers of dead bodies)

All women suffer from Social Stigma (Valuable Property); -1 to Status.

Savoir-Faire (Japanese) may also be used to notice mistakes made by companions and to try to protect them with Fast-Talk ("Please excuse my poor cousin, he hasn't been the same since a sumotori landed on his head in Hiroshima."). Savoir-Faire (Japanese) may be learned along the way, and adventurers may spend up to half a point per day on acquiring or improving it (see pp. B82-83).



### The Yakuza

Like the Mafia to whom they are often compared, the Yakuza claim to have originated as the defenders of the peasants against an oppressive ruling class – in effect, Japanese Robin Hoods. History, however, suggests that they were more often gangs of thugs who derived their income from gambling (the name may come from *ya ku sa*, the lowest score possible in a game of *hanafuda*), selling stolen or inferior goods, loan sharking, forgery, labor and protection rackets, and looting during riots and revolts.

Yakuza were of *heimin* (peasant) ancestry, as were most of their victims. Forbidden to carry katana, they usually armed themselves with *wakizashi*, knives and *jo* sticks. Jujutsu and Sumo are appropriate martial arts styles for historic or legendary yakuza (many *kobun* hired sumotori as bodyguards, strong-arm men and status symbols, and probably paid a few to throw their fights instead of their opponents).

The yakuza began organizing into clans in the early 18th century. One of their strengths was the intensely loyal *oyabun-kobun* (father-son) relationship between clan leaders and gang members. Other notable Yakuza traditions include *yubitsume*, the ritual amputation of a finger-joint as a gesture of atonement, and *irezumi*, elaborate tattoos often covering much of the body. Even today, it is believed that most yakuza are tattooed, and modern *oyabun* are often recognized by their mutilated fingers.

## Inns and Outs

When everyone leaves the bath, they will be given their possessions, and discover that night has fallen. None of them has any money. Anyone without a profession will also lack travel passes, which are absolutely essential to leave the city.

The group will have to decide quickly whether to investigate the sumotori's rather vague offer of employment, risk being caught on the streets at night, or try some other method of raising money. Some possibilities for the latter include "borrowing" from Masae or Kenji (Contest of Fast-Talk vs. Will); gambling with Teruo, the sumotori (very risky); picking a pocket or two (even more risky); or trying to sell an innkeeper a sketch or poem (Contest of Skill between Artist, or Poetry and Calligraphy skills, and the innkeeper's Merchant skill of 12; -5 for those without a background in Japanese culture). Telling the bath-house keeper that someone stole their cash while they were in the bath and shaming him into paying them back will require a roll against Acting+3, Fast-Talk and Savoir-Faire (Japanese); failure may mean arrest.

Teruo will hire one Buddhist priest; if more than one applies for the position, he will hire the one to whom he makes the most positive reaction roll.

Fighters interested in becoming Teruo's *yojimbo* will have to demonstrate their skills; ronin will have to show a letter of recommendation and display their Katana Art, and sumotori will have to fight Teruo and win two times out of three. Other feats likely to impress Teruo include punching or kicking through a 1" wooden slab, successfully parrying a thrown rock, or hitting a 1' target (-5) with a thrown knife at 12 hexes in poor light (-4).

Would-be porters (a job well-suited to applicants lacking professions) will have to show their strength by lifting Teruo's 350-lb. bulk (see p. B89 and Power Blow skill, p. MA33). Though he appears slightly desperate, Teruo will not hire anyone to whom he has a Bad or worse reaction, which includes anyone he suspects of being a *ninja*.

Teruo is prepared to pay half a month's salary for a journey of a few days – \$10 (10 silver pieces) for porters, \$50 for bodyguards, \$55 for exorcists. He will admit, if asked, that the work is likely to be unusually hazardous. To obtain more details, interested parties will have to question Teruo while he is less than sober (Contest of Carousing skills). Drinkers with Body Control skill may try to flush the alcohol out of their system without damage (see p. MA31). For every point by which they win, the questioners will gain more information.

*-2 to 0 points:* Teruo is down to one companion, his maidservant and masseuse (O-Mitsu). (Note that although Teruo does not know it, O-Mitsu is a large part of his problem; see p. 77.)

*1 point:* Teruo's previous *yojimbo* have been dying at the rate of one a night since he returned to Ise Province.

*2 points:* Teruo believes his *yojimbo* were killed by the ghost of a merchant he and his *yojimbo* killed four years ago, near a small Shinto shrine a few miles away. He is traveling into the mountains to have an exorcism performed over the grave.

*3 points:* There have been reports of ghosts being seen near the shrine for several years, but he didn't worry until his *yojimbo* started dying.

**4 points:** The “merchant” and his “porters” were armed with ninja weapons and gimmicks.

**5+ points:** Teruo has buried a few valuables (stolen property too hot to sell, or that he didn't want to declare to his oyabun) near the bodies, hoping the ghosts would scare any searchers away. (He won't mention the “cursed” wakizashi he included in the cache; see sidebars, pp. 69 and 95.)

A successful Divination will reveal that danger follows Teruo everywhere, and that an attempt on his life will be made the next night by one who walks unseen: “A deadly hand will strike him down, to avenge a murder that has not been forgotten.”

## A Night on the Town

Adventurers who do not wish to take their chances with Teruo, and who have some money, may sleep on the floor of a nearby Buddhist temple for one copper (\$.04); Buddhist priests or nuns will be admitted free. Alternatively, they may sleep under a bridge near the city wall (it will rain heavily for most of the night). Either way, they will be sleeping with beggars, and will hear them beseeching passersby to have mercy on those in need, however unworthy; they will also suffer horrible dreams of the shi-ryo (-2 to Fright Checks).

Transients who sleep under the bridge or are caught roaming the streets will be arrested. If they do not fight off the police (see sidebar, p. 75), they will be forced to spend the next day carrying sewage out of the city and dumping it on the rice fields.

If the misplaced heroes still don't get the hint, delay Teruo's departure and make life difficult for them until they accept his offer (nocturnal attacks by



### Tosa no Teruo

Age 26; 5'9", 350 lbs.; black hair, brown eyes.

ST 14, DX 12, IQ 13, HT 9.

Basic Speed 5.25, Move 2.

Ninja ring-mail (PD 1, DR 3, 20 lbs.); heavy encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Alertness +3; Wealth (Wealthy).

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive); Bad Temper; Fat (-20); Gluttony; Sense of Duty (Yakuza clan).

**Quirks:** Homosexual; Spendthrift; Mild paranoia when sober.

**Skills:** Acting-12; Brawling-12; Carousing-11; Fast-Talk-15; Forgery-14; Gambling-16; Knife-12; Knife Throwing-13; Merchant-14; Shortsword-12; Streetwise-15.

**Martial Arts Style:** Sumo (Realistic).

**Martial Arts Skills:** Sumo Wrestling-14; Tournament Law (Sumo)-13.

**Weapons:** Wakizashi, 2d cutting, 1d impaling; tanto, 2d-2 cutting, 1d impaling.

**Equipment:** Elegant cotton kimono (over ring-mail). Carries 3 gold and 13 silver pieces (\$133) in a furoshiki in his sleeve. Locked backbox (5 lbs. empty) contains his spare kimonos and loincloths; an abacus; a guidebook of Ise province (Area Knowledge-13); a pair of chopsticks; an inro; a dice cup and dice; and an inkcase with ink, brush and paper.

Tosa no Teruo is a merchant and retired Yakuza enforcer. A skilled gambler, forger and administrator, he would probably have become oyabun of Ise Province but for his having incurred a blood feud with a ninja clan.

*Continued on next page . . .*





### *Tosa no Teruo (Continued)*

In his youth, Teruo was one of the men sent to deal with the family which had the wakizashi (see sidebar, p. 69). Everyone knew it was supposed to be cursed, so it was given to the most junior member of the enforcing party – Teruo – as his reward. Although Teruo professes not to believe in the curse, he has avoided drawing the wakizashi. Eventually, he grew paranoid enough about it to bury it with the rest of the treasure he secreted near Hidemasa's grave (see sidebar, p. 80). Teruo has recently returned to Ise Province to reclaim his treasure.

Teruo lived comfortably and fairly peacefully as an unaffiliated gambler and merchant until O-Mitsu found him en route to Tsu, joined his party, and began furtively slaying his yojimbo (see her story on p. 77). Teruo has no ethical objections to violence (or to very much else, for that matter), but he acknowledges that he isn't as good at it as he once was, and will use other methods if possible – bluff, bribery, even magic.

Teruo is homosexual by preference; like most Japanese, he married once, but his wife died in childbirth. His relationship with O-Mitsu is strictly professional.

Teruo is large, and gives a vague impression of oiliness. His hair is receding, the little finger on his left hand is missing, and the irezumi on his chest and shoulder is disfigured (by a slash from Hidemasa's wakizashi).

swarms of rats, becoming involved in a Blood Feud because of mistaken identity – anything that will make them eager to leave the city).

Anyone arrested for a serious crime (such as adultery, murder, traveling at night without carrying a lantern, or robbery without a cutpurse's license) will be interrogated until they confess, and then tried. Interrogation usually includes torture; treat as a daily Contest of Interrogation skill and subject's HT, modified by Strong Will or High Pain Threshold. If the subject wins, he doesn't talk. If found guilty, samurai (including ronin) will be permitted to commit seppuku; peasants will be crucified.

### **In Case of Death**

If an adventurer dies before the tatsu is released from the wakizashi (see p. 93), his consciousness will simply be returned to his body in the Jade Gate. He may be traumatized by the death, and will have to make a Will roll or acquire a 10-point mental disadvantage (20 points for a critical failure; Necrophobia, Aichmophobia, Entomophobia or Overconfidence might be appropriate, depending on the manner of death), but he will not be physically harmed. He will also have lost 3d points of fatigue, and will not notice Motogi's argument with the yakuza (p. 95). Of course, it is important that the others also be unaware of this discussion; the easiest way is not to tell any of the players what is happening until they all return to the restaurant.

### **On the Road**

Once Teruo's offer of work is accepted, the yakuza will insist on heading for the shrine immediately after breakfast. Those who feel they need more weapons for the trip may try to borrow money from Teruo. On a critical success on Sex Appeal (from a man) or Fast-Talk, he will lend them up to half their wages in advance – just enough for a cheap jitte, knife or spear.

The pressed dirt road between Tsu and the village nearest the shrine is bad (see p. B188), over mostly bad terrain; Teruo is heavily encumbered by his own bulk, and the intermittent rain will slow travel even further. The slow pace will give weaponless travelers time to find pieces of wood suitable for light clubs or for carving into jo sticks or staffs while they walk (Armoury/TL4, -5 for bad tools). Alternatively, they may meet a heavily-laden woodcutter, who will be glad to cut them suitable lengths of wood for a few coppers.

Another method of providing weapons would be an encounter with overconfident bandits armed with exactly what the party needs (naginata, wakizashi, mankirigusari, jo, etc.). The bandits have ST 12, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 9; they are trained in Kobujutsu or Kenjutsu, with their Primary Skills at 14. There should be one bandit for every female or priest (whom the bandits will only fight in self-defense), and two for everyone else. Their leader is armed with a katana, wears a leather cuirass, and has the Combat Reflexes advantage, Leadership-12 and Tactics-11. The bandits will flee if outnumbered.

The road rules of medieval Japan are simple: the person or party with higher status has the right-of-way (see sidebar, p. 71). Travelers who don't step aside for a mounted samurai will be unceremoniously trampled (or worse). Teruo is already suspicious, and any encounters en route may provoke him into paranoia – wandering peasants and peddlers will be suspected of being ninja assassins, animals of being shapeshifters, etc. These encounters should be played to the hilt.

Of course, some travelers might be ninja; woodcutters and peasants may be trained in Jujutsu or Kobujutsu; an old priest could be a retired samurai, wielding his staff with Two-Handed Sword-18; etc. Fighters who insist on attacking everyone they see should eventually meet someone who can beat them.

## The Inn of Bounteous Fortune

A day of travel will take Teruo's party to the edge of the mountains, and a small inn and teahouse. A quarter-mile away from the road, upwind from the inn, lie a village (population 308) and a small temple honoring the Amida Buddha.

The innkeeper, Ishii the Lucky, runs the occasional (fairly honest) game in the inn, while his wife, O-Haru, works as serving girl. The only other guest is Kenzo Yagamata, who Ishii employs as a bouncer during games.

On arriving at the inn, Teruo will ask Ishii if he can hire a guide to take them to the shrine of Koreyoshi the Yama-no-Kami. Ishii will recommend Inoshiro, the strongest and most adventurous of the village youths. Teruo will also try to hire Okada Tomonosuke (the abbot of the temple) as an exorcist and Kenzo Yagamata as a yojimbo. Unfortunately, Okada doesn't trust Teruo, and Yagamata is not interested in any job which requires him to leave the inn. After attempts to bribe Yagamata fail, Teruo will privately offer \$60 to anyone who can convince the bouncer to join them (with Yagamata's fee, if any, to come out of the \$60).

If anyone who accepts this deal attempts to challenge Yagamata to a duel, Yagamata will suggest a drinking contest instead (see p. B87), with the loser paying for the sake or shochu. Use the Quick Method of roleplaying tournaments (p. MA46), with each "round" costing the eventual loser 10 copper pieces. On a critical failure, the drinker passes out. If the challenger wins, Yagamata will agree to accompany the party for \$50. The winner is free to haggle (Contest of Fast-Talk or Merchant vs. Will; \$2 on or off the fee for every point by which he wins or loses).

To talk Yagamata into a duel of Katana Art, make a reaction (or Fast-Talk, etc.) roll. Yagamata will decline on a Bad to Good result, agree on a Very Good or Excellent result, and strike out with his bokken on a Very Bad or worse result (-3 to roll if he is hung over). If the challenger suggests a side bet, Yagamata will agree to accompany the party if he loses; if he wins, the loser will have to pay his tab at the inn, currently \$110. (Ishii will be happy to arrange a loan if the loser has anything worth pawning, such as a wakizashi.)



### City Police

ST 11, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5, Move 5.

Do armor (see p. MA88) and leather helm (PD 2, DR2); no encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Legal Enforcement Powers (5 points); Status +1.

*Disadvantages:* Duty; Greed or Honesty.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Police Hand-to-Hand; sometimes Jujutsu or Kenjutsu.

*Skills:* Area Knowledge (City)-13; Diplomacy-10; Savoir-Faire-11; Shortsword-13; Staff-12.

*Martial Arts Skills:* Jitte/Sai-13; Judo-12; Katana-12.

*Martial Arts Maneuver:* Arm Lock-14.

*Weapons:* Wakizashi. Roll 1d for other weapons: 1-3 jittes; 4 mankirigusari; 5-6 sodegarami (barbed staffs designed to entangle kimono sleeves). Sodegarami can be used as a bo, or for a Grapple attack (Contest of Staff skill vs. DX) which does no damage unless resisted. A successful sodegarami Grapple can be resisted as a Contest of the user's Staff skill against the victim's ST. The victim must also make a DX roll. If successful, he tears his clothes; if unsuccessful, the barbs catch his skin and do 1d cutting damage. Reach 1, 2; weight 4; ST 6.

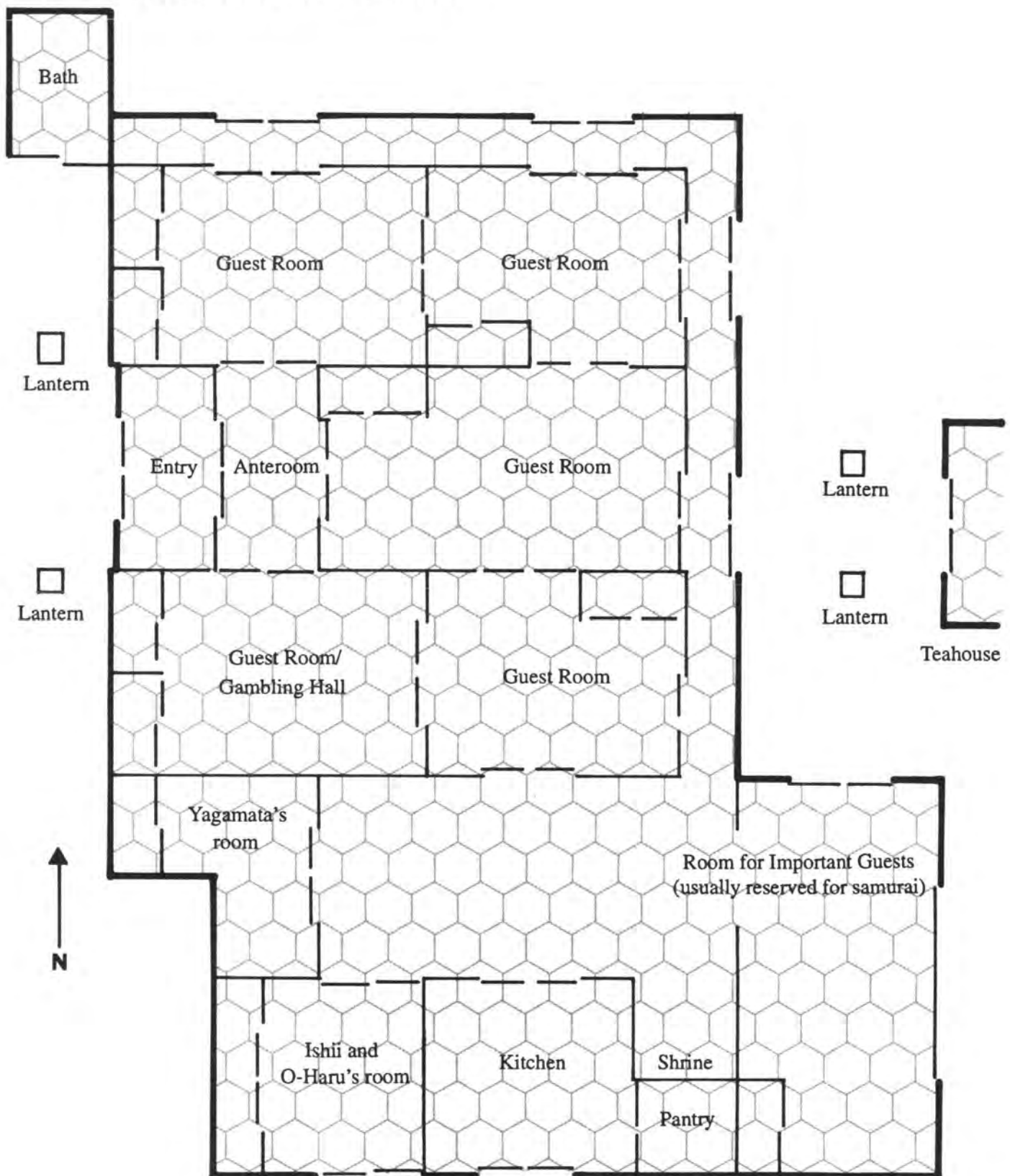
Japanese city police are usually low-ranking samurai or former peasant foot-soldiers. They will be reluctant to tangle with high-status individuals or to continue a losing fight.

### City Encounters

Roll 1d every hour; on a 1-5, no encounter occurs. On a 6, roll 3d on the following table:

- 3 1d ninja in disguise, armed with gimmicks and concealed weapons.  
Trained in Ninjutsu: 1d+12 in Primary skills.
- 4-5 1d-2 police.
- 6-8 1d craftsmen or apprentices.
- 9 1d-3 samurai or ronin.
- 10 Merchant with 1d-2 clerks.
- 11 1d priests (Buddhist or Shinto).
- 12 2d-1 eta beggars.
- 13 1d-3 Street vendors (may be yakuza).
- 14 1d entertainers - musicians, actors, jugglers or acrobats (may be ninja in disguise).
- 15 1d-2 geisha or courtesans.
- 16 1d pilgrims, of various professions.
- 17 1d-3 sumotori (may be drunk).
- 18 Pickpocket tries to steal a PC's travel pass.

# The Inn of Bounteous Fortune





If Yagamata is attacked or threatened, he will draw his bokken and attempt to break his assailant's limbs. He will probably succeed.

## The Village

The village near the inn consists of 19 single-story, thatched cottages, a well, a storehouse and barn, a mill with a water-wheel, a small Buddhist temple and an even smaller Shinto shrine, all surrounded by a dense grove of cedars and bamboo. These provide shade (+3 to Stealth; -2 to vision rolls for those without the Night Vision advantage), and are surrounded in turn by a fire ditch. A few oxen are kept as plow animals.

Apart from the four priests in the temple, all the villagers are farmers with few combat skills. If asked, they will sell their kama, masakari, nata and nunchaku for several times the list price (×1.5 for monks and nuns, ×3 for peasants, ×6 for ronin or merchants).

An alert adventurer who makes a successful roll against History (Japanese or Military) will guess that the peasants probably have a few samurai weapons scavenged from battlefields hidden under their floors or in their crawlspaces. Attempting to buy these (two wakizashi, two naginata, seven yari and five yarinage) will require Savoir-Faire (Japanese) and a roll against Fast-Talk or Merchant-5; the would-be purchaser will get one attempt only. Stealing them will require a roll against Scrounging-10 and Stealth or Invisibility Art (+5 if they make a successful Architecture roll) for every hour of searching. 1d weapons will be found with every successful scrounging attempt; a critical failure may mean an attack by the peasants or monks, a bite from a poisonous snake hiding under the house, or something equally nasty. A failed Stealth roll will put the peasants on guard for the rest of the night.

## Death in the Family

After a fine meal of rice, bamboo shoots and raw fish (prepared by O-Haru) Teruo will become more expansive. If any of the party win a Contest of Carousing skill, he will answer most questions put to him about the Blood Feud with biased but fairly accurate accounts. Then, suddenly, Teruo's head will part company with his neck and roll onto the tatami (-2 to Fright Check). Standing behind him is the figure of a man wearing the drab brown kimono of a merchant. The figure (the shi-ryo of Hidemasa, O-Mitsu's father) will glance at O-Mitsu for a few seconds, but will disperse instantly if attacked and will not re-appear until the next night.

O-Mitsu will be as astonished as everyone else (though she will try to hide it). She is responsible for the deaths of Teruo's yojimbo and has been planting a fear of the vengeful ghost in Teruo's mind. She has only been waiting for him to reveal the location of her father's grave before killing him; she did not expect Hidemasa to take a hand.

However, O-Mitsu will take advantage of this new turn by using her Fast-Talk and Sex Appeal skills to persuade the party to travel with her to Koreyoshi's shrine. She will claim to be doing this out of loyalty to her employer's last wishes, and fear of the shi-ryo. Inoshiro – as always, searching for adventure, and who has

## O-Mitsu

Age 29; 5'1", 104 lbs.  
ST 13; DX 16; IQ 13; HT 15.  
Basic Speed 7.75, Move 7.  
Dodge 7, Parry 12 (Judo).

*Advantages:* Ambidexterity; Appearance (Attractive); High Pain Threshold; Night Vision; Strong Will +2; Trained by a Master.

*Disadvantages:* Greed; Sadism; Ninja; Vow (To avenge father).

*Skills:* Acrobatics-15; Acting-16; Blow-pipe-15; Breath Control-13; Climbing-17; Disguise-16; Escape-14; Forgery-13; Garrote-16; Hypnotism-15; Jumping-16; Knife-20; Occultism-13; Poisons-15; Psychology-15; Sex Appeal-16; Stealth-19; Streetwise-14; Swimming-17; Throwing-18; Traps-14.

*Martial Arts Style:* Ninjutsu (Cinematic).

*Martial Arts Skills:* Blind Fighting-12; Breaking Blow-12; Invisibility Art-14; Judo-18; Karate-17; Light Walk-16; Power Blow-13; Pressure Points-15; Throwing Art-16.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Aggressive Parry-19; Arm Lock-19; Back Kick-15; Binding-20; Ear Clap-12; Elbow Strike-16; Feint (Knife)-22; Ground Fighting (Knife)-17; Head Butt-11; Hit Location (Knife)-18; Jump Kick-15; Knee Strike-18; Roll with Blow-16; Spin Kick-15.

*Equipment:* Tanto; 4 shuriken; endama; hidama; 4 doses masuizaki powder; 4 doses fugu poison; 9 doses lacquer; inflatable shoes.

O-Mitsu is the vengeful daughter of Hidemasa, a great jonin of the Iga-based Venomous Hand ninja clan (his description is on p. 80). O-Mitsu has been responsible for the deaths (by poison or Pressure Point attacks) of Teruo's yojimbo, but has refrained from killing Teruo in the hope of discovering where he has buried her father – and his treasure. She is, technically, on a mission for her clan, which has heard that Teruo has buried a weapon of great power near the site and are also eager to see the yakuza dead.

When not posing as a maidservant or courtesan, O-Mitsu travels in the guise of a middle-aged Buddhist nun. O-Mitsu is careful not to carry any items which may incriminate her, but she keeps a small black pearl worth \$200 concealed in her obi with her gageets.

## Road Encounters

Roll 1d twice daily; on a 1-5, no encounter occurs. On a 6, roll 3d on the following table:

- 3 Encounter a wild boar.
- 4-5 1d ninja in disguise, armed with gimmicks and concealed weapons, trained in ninjutsu; 1d+12 in Primary skills.
- 6-7 2d pilgrims of various professions, armed with staff or wakizashi.
- 8 Samurai messenger on horseback. He is trained in Kenjutsu and Kyudo; 1d+10 in Primary skills, plus Riding (Horse)-14. Armed with katana, wakizashi, yari and longbow; wears leather helm, face mask and cuirass (PD 2, DR 2, covers 3-5, 9-10, 17-18).
- 9 Woodcutter, with masakiri and nata.
- 10 1d priests.
- 11 1d+1 bandits. Leader wears steel helm (kabuto) and cuirass (PD 3, DR 4); others wear leather cuirass. All armed with katana and wakizashi, plus longbow (1-2) or yari (3-6).
- 12 Traveling peddler with backbox (may be a yakuza).
- 13 Merchant with 3d porters.
- 14 1d-3 wandering ronin, armed with katana and wakizashi.
- 16 Encounter fox or badger.
- 15 1d katari-be (wandering entertainers); may be ninja.
- 17 1d deer.
- 18 Brown bear or 1d wolves.



been paid in advance – will be eager to accompany them. Anyone who decides not to travel to the shrine will suffer from nightmares of both shi-ryo. If necessary, O-Mitsu will poison one of the group with fugu during the night, to persuade the others that the exorcism must go ahead.

Teruo's possessions will remain in safekeeping with Ishii. Convincing the innkeeper that any item of Teruo's actually belongs to a former retainer (including any pay not received) will take a Contest of Fast-Talk or Sex Appeal vs. Ishii's Will, at -4 for items worth more than \$50.

## Koreyoshi's Shrine

The journey to Koreyoshi's shrine will be a slow one, even with Inoshiro's guidance. The paths through the mountains are very bad roads over very bad terrain, and the heavy rain will double the travel time. Earthquakes and mudslides have changed many of the landmarks, and much of the ground is treacherous.

The path is only one or two yards wide at its broadest, requiring the party to walk in single file for much of the journey. The overconfident Inoshiro, as guide, will insist on taking the lead; the rest of the marching order is up to the party. Encounters in the mountains are especially hazardous; even two individuals trying to walk past each other will have to make a DX or Climbing roll, with a critical failure meaning a fall of 2d×10 feet. Anyone thrown or taking knockback damage during a fight on the path is also in danger of falling.

If no member of the party has more than medium encumbrance, the band should reach the shrine shortly before sunset. Otherwise, they will spend the first night in a woodcutter's hut, and will reach the shrine shortly before sunset the next day.



The Shrine has become Unlucky since Teruo's last visit; the torii (gateway) have been utterly demolished by an earthquake, the stone vat of water has been upset, and the worship hall has partially collapsed. To add insult to injury, eight Yama hito (see p. 85) now shelter in the ruins. The ground around the shrine is muddy, crisscrossed with fissures, and generally treacherous (use the "outdoor" map from the *Basic Set*). The Yama hito are hungry and foul-tempered, and will attack immediately, throwing rocks until the group is within melee range.

Inoshiro will charge the Yama hito at once, unless forcibly held back. O-Mitsu will stay out of the fight if possible, using her tanto when necessary but keeping her gimmicks in reserve. She has no wish to reveal her ninja skills; also, the fewer people left to share in Hidemasa's treasure, the better. During the night she took the liberty of smearing lacquer (see p. MA86) on the hilts of any swords, knives and similar weapons; this will take 10 seconds to take effect.

### Making It Through the Night

The sun will set just as the last of the Yama hito is slain, subdued or fleeing. O-Mitsu will try to convince the party to search the area immediately, rather than spending the night near the graves. (Of course, her real reason is that she doesn't want to have to dig up the entire plateau herself.) If the heroes refuse, O-Mitsu will try to sabotage or kill them quietly through the night. If she is permitted to prepare the food, she will add a dose of masuizaki powder (p. MA85) to each meal. She will not attempt to kill any undrugged victim in his sleep, but if the rest of the group is foolish enough to let her take a turn on watch alone, they may wake to find their weapons missing or sabotaged. (For example, she may remove the motagi – the ornamented peg fastening the hilt to the tang – from any katana or wakizashi, so that fast-drawn swords will leave the blades in the scabbard.) She will also "lose" any mamori brought along.

If any of the men have the Lecherousness disadvantage, O-Mitsu will attempt to seduce them during their watch after having smeared fugu poison (p. MA85) on her fingers and other strategic portions of her body.



### Ishii the Lucky

Age 48; 5'3", 150 lbs.; short, plump, left-handed, with the first joint of his right little finger missing.

ST 11, DX 11, IQ 12, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.25, Move 5.

Dodge 5, Parry 6 (Knife).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Charisma +1; Lightning Calculator; Luck; Wealth (Comfortable).

*Disadvantages:* Dependent (Wife); Overweight; Sense of Duty (Yakuza clan).

*Skills:* Brawling-11; Fast-Talk-13; Forgery-12; Gambling-15; Go-14; Holdout-14; Knife-13; Knife Throwing-11; Merchant-16; Origami-14; Poetry-14; Sleight of Hand-13; Streetwise-12.

*Equipment:* Tanto, 1d-1 cutting, 1d-1 impaling; elaborate cotton kimono.

Ishii is indifferently honest, as yakuza go. He runs an occasional game in the inn and sends tribute to his oyabun, but is careful not to let any villager lose more than he can afford, and will lend money interest-free to anyone in danger of starving (normally, of course, he charges the standard 100% minus status). He is fairly well-liked by the farmers, but not entirely trusted.

Ishii's clan is on neutral terms with Teruo's, and he will treat Teruo and his retinue accordingly; after Teruo dies in his inn, Ishii will be eager to help the former retainers, hoping to clear his own name.

Ishii is the second-oldest man in the village, after Okada Tomonosuke. His wife, O-Haru, is an inch taller, 15 years younger and beautiful – one of Ishii's reasons for employing the deadly Kenzo Yagamata.



O-Mitsu will call on Hidemasa shortly before sunrise, beseeching him to help her slay the remaining travelers in the dialect of her ninja clan (only the word "father" will be in normal Japanese).

## The Scene of the Crime

Should the able-bodied among the party respond to O-Mitsu's prodding, a search of the area around the shrine in the dark will take 20 minutes and a Vision roll (-6 for anyone without Night Vision or a light source). A successful search will reveal a rusty shuriken and a few small, slightly weathered bones at the bottom of a fissure. A successful roll against Physician or Forensics skill will indicate that the bones belonged to a human hand, recently exposed by erosion. Scraping away the soil at the side of the fissure will reveal the ends of a radius and ulna (the bones of the forearm).

If the bones are disturbed, five figures wearing pale gray kimonos will suddenly appear near the fissure, hacking about themselves with their wakizashi. They are the ghosts of Hidemasa's ninja followers and Teruo's yojimbo re-enacting their last battle; they are only yokai (illusions) and pose no physical threat to anyone – but make Fright Checks at -1. They can be exorcised (Theology-3 for anyone with Clerical Investment), but cannot be attacked.

Buried under 3 cubic yards of hard soil (see pp. B90-91 for digging rules), and just above the skeletons of the three ninja and two yakuza, are some of the ninjas' possessions and Teruo's loot – several shuriken and tetsubishi, all too rusty to be useful; a slightly rusty (treat as cheap quality) oh-gama; a tetsubo; a painted inkcase (worth \$6, 1 lb.) containing 12 silver pieces, three gems worth \$50 each, a set of good lockpicks and a set of climbing spikes (p. MA86); a pint sake bottle containing assorted small gems and pearls (worth \$5d each; total value \$300); a furoshiki containing a small jade figurine of the goddess Kannon, worth \$200; and a book of death poems, wrapped in a rotting greenish-gray cotton kimono. There is also a very fine wakizashi, with a tatsu (Japanese dragon) depicted on its beautifully carved tsuba (itself an artwork worth \$600); its scabbard is inscribed with the following haiku in Hiragana:

*Who wields the shoto  
Takes the quest. Who bloods the blade  
Must not fear dragons.*



The PCs should recognize this as the wakizashi that the old woman's shi-ryo carried – the object of their quest. An IQ or Armoury+2 roll is required to notice that this is *also*, somehow, the same weapon that Motogi displays on the shelf over the bar at the Jade Gate (see p. 69). Anyone who noticed, during the initial confrontation with the shi-ryo, that she carried the same sword (p. 69) makes this observation automatically.



## Hidemasa (Shi-ryo)

ST 17, DX 15, IQ 14, HT 13/00.

Basic Speed 7, Move 7.

Dodge 8, Parry 13 (Karate).

*Advantages:* Combat Reflexes; Night Vision.

*Disadvantages:* Bloodlust; Duty.

*Skills:* Acrobatics-17; Detect Lies-15; Fast-Talk-16; Karate-18; Tactics-16. *While in possession of a body, add* Acting-16; Escape-16; Judo-17; Knife-16; Shortsword-17; Stealth-18; Throwing-16; Swimming-17.

*Spells:* Fear-16; Mass Daze-14; Permanent Possession-13 (5 minutes to cast, resisted by IQ).

*Martial Arts Style:* Ninjutsu.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Back Kick-16; Elbow Strike-18; Feint (Karate)-20; Hit Location-17; Jump Kick-16; Knee Strike-19; Spin Kick-17. *While in possession of a body, add* Aggressive Parry-11; Arm Lock-19; Ear Clap-14; Ground Fighting (Karate)-15; Head Butt-13.

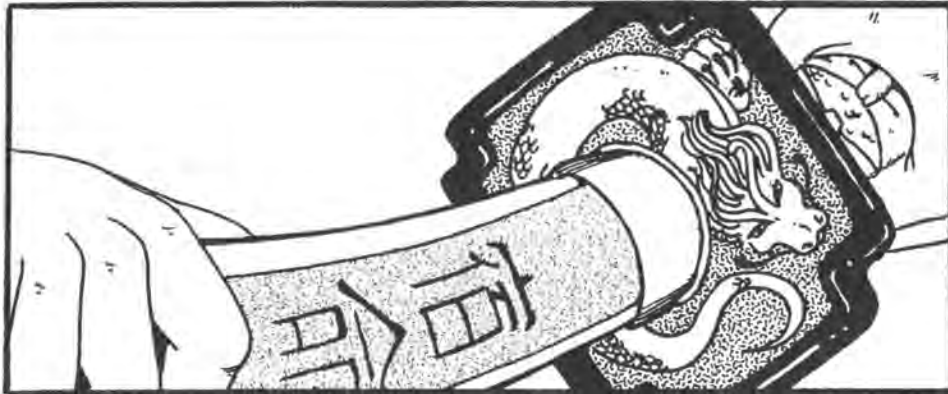
Hidemasa was a powerful jonin of the Venomous Hand ninja clan. While traveling from Nara to Tsu disguised as merchants, he and his companions were attacked by bandits. Hidemasa and the two genin routed the bandits, but were badly injured, and sought shelter in Koreyoshi's shrine while they bandaged their wounds.

Unfortunately, the fight was witnessed by peasants, and a report reached the local yakuza enforcer that ninja spies were in his territory. Yakuza converged on the shrine, and the genin were slaughtered. Hidemasa was taken alive, but stabbed to death by Teruo. The bodies were buried near the shrine, without any rites.

Stories of the shi-ryo of the mountains soon spread, inspiring the arrogant Teruo to bury much of his treasure – including his "cursed" wakizashi – nearby. But even Teruo avoided the area by night, until eventually he left for a more profitable region.

Hidemasa has returned to avenge his murder and protect his daughter. He usually manifests as a seriously wounded merchant (his form at death), but may appear in ghost form and cast spells. He will continue to fight until his grave is exorcised, or until O-Mitsu is killed.

If the diggers begin to uncover the middle skeleton at night, Hidemasa's shi-ryo will appear. O-Mitsu, having used the cover of darkness to poison the blade of her tanto with fugu, will cry out in the dialect of her ninja clan. She and the shi-ryo will then attack.



## The Tatsu in the Tsuba

If Kenzo Yagamata was persuaded to join the journey to the shrine, and if he and Inoshiro have survived the various hazards along the way, Yagamata will ask that the unearthed wakizashi be given to Inoshiro, as he intends to teach the boy Kenjutsu and peasants are not permitted to carry katana. Yagamata will read the haiku on the scabbard and comment on it favorably, then admire the tsuba, but he will not suggest any use of magic to determine the wakizashi's quality.

Anyone who feels uncomfortable about giving the wakizashi to Inoshiro will have to give a good reason not to do so. The heroes should roll against Savoir-Faire (Japanese) or IQ-4 to keep from blurting out that they are on a quest for a shi-ryo; average Japanese will look unfavorably on having anything to do with ghosts, or with people who do the bidding of ghosts. Revealing this information will cause reactions at -4 to the one making the statement as well as anyone who is obviously a friend of the crazy one. The listeners can be Fast-Talked – to believe the statement was a mistake, a joke, the result of a blow to the head, or whatever – on a roll at -4. The party will be abandoned by their local comrades on a Bad reaction; the locals will spread the story throughout the community, so that *everyone* will shun them, on a Very Bad reaction; a Disastrous reaction will provoke an immediate attack. Preventing the use of the cursed wakizashi will be difficult in this last situation. If the blade is used, see below for the results.

If Yagamata is not with the party, the travelers must decide among themselves who gets the wakizashi. If the group has somehow missed finding the weapon, a heavy fog will descend over the mountain, stranding them until they dig enough to find the wakizashi, when the fog will miraculously lift.

The group *should* be motivated to find out what they can about the wakizashi before doing anything else about it. An Analyze Magic spell cast on the wakizashi will reveal the sword to have been enchanted with an ultra-complex combination of spells, including variants of Loyal Sword, Magic Resistance, Soul Jar, Shatterproof and Steal Health. (Name one spell for every point by which the caster makes his spell roll; a critical success will show that the tsuba is the source of all the magic.) Divination attempting to prophesy the results of drawing the wakizashi will reveal that the sword will not return to the scabbard once wielded, but will remain permanently bonded to the wielder's hand until blooded. It will also give Magic Resistance+10. (This is all the information that Okada Tomonosuke will be able to provide; see p. 84.) Attempting to prophesy the results of blooded the

## Exorcism

If Hidemasa possesses one of the heroes (or Inoshiro), he will be able to use all of that person's abilities as well as his own. Exorcising him from someone's body will require an Exorcism spell, though anyone with Philosophy (Buddhist) skill may attempt to fool Hidemasa into believing that he is being exorcised with a Contest of Fast-Talk-4 vs. Detect Lies. Hidemasa will lose control of the body at sunrise, but may return to plague the party unless a Buddhist funeral service is performed over his grave. This service takes an hour, and defaults to Philosophy (Buddhist)-3 for characters with the Clerical Investment advantage (-7 without). On a critical success, or a successful roll if the remains are cremated, Hidemasa will be banished to the afterlife until reincarnated. If the remains are not cremated, he will be banished for 2d months.



## Kenzo Yagamata

Age 33; 5'10", 145 lbs.; well-built and fairly tall, has long, shaggy, graying hair and moustache.

ST 15; DX 17; IQ 14; HT 15.

Basic Speed 8, Move 8.

Dodge 9, Parry 18 (Katana).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes; Danger Sense; Style Familiarity (Jujutsu, Kendo, Kobujutsu, Ninjutsu); Trained by a Master; Weapon Master (Katana only).

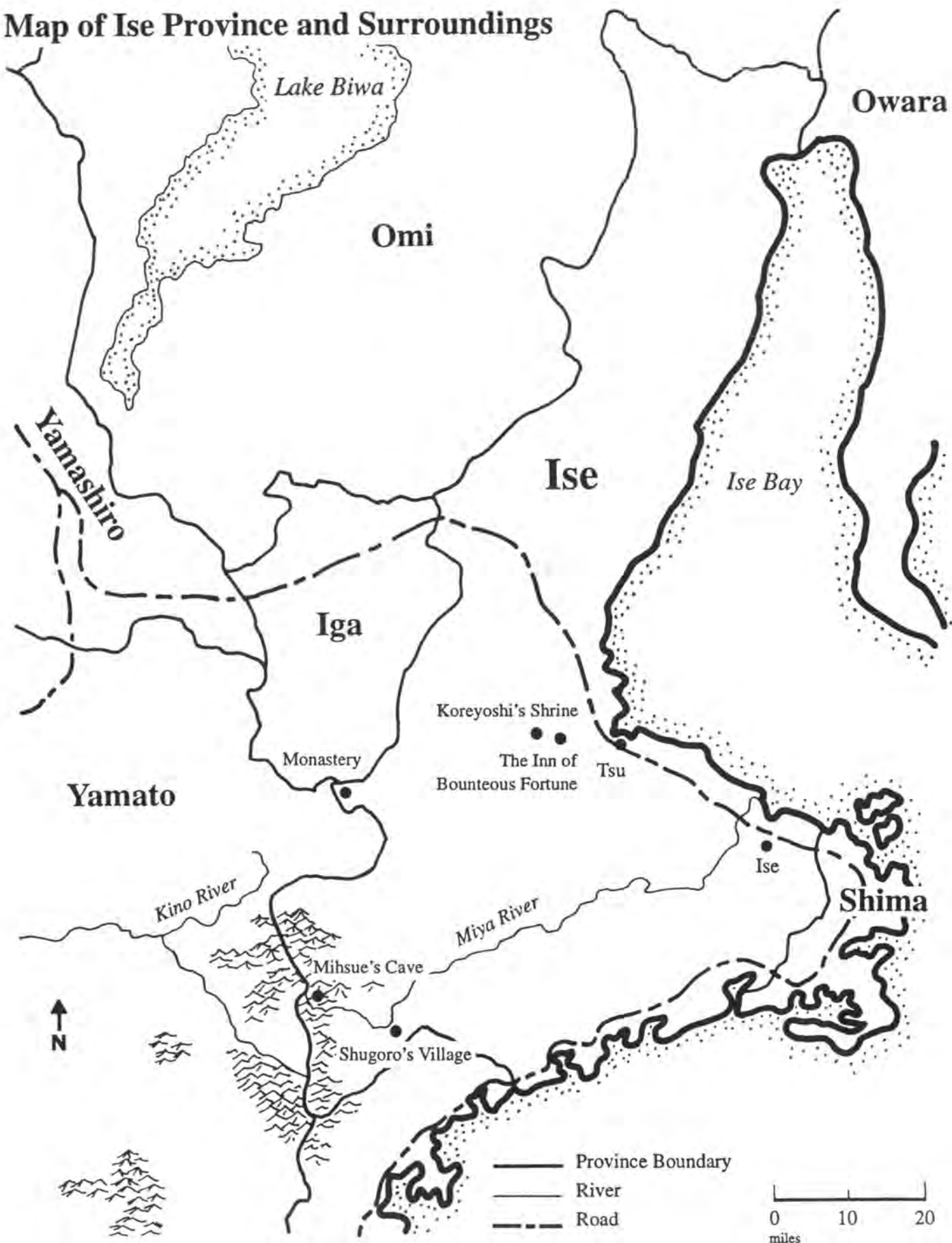
**Disadvantages:** Odious Personal Habit (Doesn't Wash, -3 to reaction rolls); Poverty (Dead Broke); Vow (Celibacy).

**Quirks:** Not an alcoholic, but working on it; Prefers bokken to katana.

**Skills:** Breath Control-15; Carousing-15; Diplomacy-12; Fast-Draw (Katana)-19; Gambling-13; Philosophy (Zen Buddhism)-16; Physician-13; Poetry-13; Running-14; Swimming-15.

*Continued on next page . . .*

# Map of Ise Province and Surroundings



blade (see p. 84) will reveal only a mistiness followed quickly by a sensation of passing out.

Treat anyone bonded to the wakizashi as having the One Hand disadvantage (-4 to DX), with a -2 on reaction rolls except in potential combat situations, where he receives a +1 from allies and enemies alike. Dispel Magic may release the wakizashi from the victim's hand, but a critical failure will release the tatsu, and the spell cannot transform him back to a sword.

If the wielder is killed, or his sword arm is severed, there is a 50% chance that the wakizashi will drop from his hand; someone holding the scabbard can re-sheath it without touching the hilt with a roll against DX-5. There is, however, a 1-in-6 chance that a drop of blood will touch the blade in the process – see p. 84.

The motagi may be removed, and hilt, tsuba and blade separated, unless the hilt has already bonded to someone's hand, in which case the motagi will remain immobile. (Characters with Armoury/TL4 skill 10+ or Katana 16+ will think of this automatically, even if the players don't.) The wakizashi's blade will become cheap quality if fitted with another tsuba; any blade, of whatever quality, to which the tsuba is later fitted will become very fine, but this is merely a side-effect of the true spell. The new sword will also attach itself to the wielder's hand, and transform to its living form when blooded. Removing the tsuba from the sword will not return the adventurers to the Jade Gate.

### The Rite of Tsujigiri

Whichever direction the party takes from Koreyoshi's shrine, they will encounter an insolent peasant armed with a bo, on a treacherous stretch of path barely one hex wide. The peasant is suffering from smallpox; ignorant of the fate of Koreyoshi's shrine, he is going there to pray for a quick and painless death. On meeting the group, he will begin to insult them; if they do not attack, he will attempt to strike the leader. A successful roll against Psychology or Savoir-Faire (Japanese) will reveal that the peasant is suicidal, and hopes to be killed for his insolence.



### Kenzo Yagamata (Continued)

*Martial Arts Style:* Kenjutsu (Cinematic).

*Martial Arts Skills:* Body Language-16; Katana Art-24; Katana-25; Meditation-16; Mental Strength-15; Parry Missile Weapons-16; Power Blow (Katana)-16.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Enhanced Parry (Katana); Feint (Katana)-26; Hit Location (Katana)-24.

Yagamata is a duellist whose fame and skill have been his downfall: everyone in the cities and the samurai clans knows him too well, and only the most hot-headed and arrogant will challenge him. Yagamata is always either fleeing blood feuds, or trying to drown his reputation in small and inaccessible inns.

Yagamata is tall for his culture, but well-proportioned. The shagginess of his hair and moustache reveal the fact that he trims them occasionally with his tanto. His drinking has led to some near-permanent physical characteristics – his eyes are slightly bloodshot, but perpetually alert, and he looks 20 years older than his actual age. He constantly sits with his back to the wall, and sleeps (or feigns sleep) with his bokken in his hand; his katana and wakizashi are usually kept in his room with his formal clothes.

### Okada Tomonosuke

Age 52; 5'10", 130 lbs.; very tall for ancient Japan, with wide shoulders and long arms, white eyebrows and no teeth.

ST 11, DX 13, IQ 14, HT 11.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 7 (Staff).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Acute Vision +2; Charisma +2; Clerical Investment; Magery 1; Reputation (+3, in village only).

*Disadvantages:* Age; Hard of Hearing; Vow (Devout Buddhist, -5).

*Skills:* Diplomacy-15; Fishing-13; Judo-13; Literature-12; Naturalist-11; Occultism-13; Philosophy (Buddhist)-18; Physician/TL4-14; Staff-15.

*Spells:* Aura-15; Detect Magic-15; Enchant-13; Exorcism-15; Lend Strength-13; Lend Health-14; Sense Spirit-15; Spirit Ward-15.

Tomonosuke is the oldest man in the village, and highly respected – almost venerated. For 15 years he has given the villagers medical care, wise counsel and lessons. He is neutral toward the ruling Fujiwara clan, since their rule barely touches "his" remote village, and will react at -1 toward any ronin.

Tomonosuke likes to lean on his bo when he walks, but he doesn't really need it.



### Inoshiro

Age 15; 6'9", 215 lbs.; thick, black, wavy hair, scarred arms.

ST 16, DX 10, IQ 9, HT 15.

Basic Speed 6.25, Move 6.

Dodge 7, Parry 7 (Katana).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold; Will +4.

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive); Gigantism; Stuttering; Youth.

**Skills:** Agronomy-10; Axe/Mace-11; Brawling-10; Spear-12; Tracking-9.

**Martial Arts Skill:** Katana-9.

**Equipment:** Cheap yari; kama; cotton kimono, with viper-skin obi; straw hat and raincoat.

Inoshiro is the rather simple-minded son of a farmer. He suffers greatly from a poorly-focused hero-worship and a longing for adventure. His exploits so far have consisted of killing a viper with his kama (he now wears an obi made from its skin), and hunting down and killing a bear that had been terrorizing the neighboring villages. Inoshiro will tell the story of his fight against the bear, and how his bamboo spear broke after the first strike leaving him with only the kama, to anyone patient enough to listen (or drunk enough to simply sit there and grunt occasionally).

Callow as he is, Inoshiro is undeniably brave, and will be resolutely loyal to the party.

Inoshiro has thick wavy hair (considered an unattractive feature in Japan) and a permanent five-o'clock shadow. He proudly wears the scars of a bear's claws along both of his arms.

If Yagamata is with the party, he will not wait for the peasant to physically attack; after the first insult, he will tell Inoshiro to blood his sword by killing the peasant (literally *tsujigiri* – killing to test a new blade). Inoshiro will turn the wakizashi around with his first action, draw it with his second and strike with the third. Before the wakizashi is drawn, however, the shi-ryo from the Jade Gate will appear before the peasant, visible only to the PCs.

If this visitation doesn't inspire the witnesses to stop Inoshiro and find another way to resolve the situation, the blade will be blooded. As soon as that happens, the wakizashi will disappear, and Inoshiro will find himself holding a hungry tatsu by the tail. If there is nothing else around worth eating (it won't touch carrion), the tatsu will attempt to devour the party before flying back to the dragon realm. (*Note:* A thrust from the wakizashi will kill any victim immediately as the sword expands inside him; a slash will do only normal damage.)

If the tatsu is unleashed, the group may attempt to fight or negotiate with it. If they succeed, they will be returned to their own bodies in the Jade Gate, keeping any character points they have gained. See sidebar, p. 95, for more information about the tatsu.

## Seeking Wisdom

When Inoshiro and/or Yagamata realize that the wakizashi is enchanted, they will suggest that it be taken to Okada Tomonosuke. Tomonosuke will spend a day studying the sword, tell the new owners as much as he can, and then recommend that they take it to Sano Mihsue. This hermit mage is believed to live on (or maybe in) a mountain that lies somewhere near the border between Ise and Yamato provinces. The precise location, as far as Tomonosuke knows, is known only to Mihsue's former student, Nagai Kajiro, the abbot of a yamabushi monastery in the northwestern reaches of the province.

Inoshiro will volunteer to accompany the group (especially if the sword has bonded to his hand and no one has worked out how to release it), and will follow them if they refuse. Yagamata will return to the inn unless his debt to Ishii is paid off.

If the band stays at the Inn of Bounteous Fortune that night, they will encounter a party of four minor yakuza bosses and their yojimbo traveling to Tsu. The yakuza will spend most of the night gambling; any other guests who get involved are likely to be skinned. The ante is \$1 per contest, and the yakuza are all intimately familiar with the game being played (+5 to gambling rolls). If accused of cheating, they will flash their irezumi as a warning; if the challenger persists, the bosses will order their yojimbo to throw him out.

The road to Nagai Kajiro's monastery is mostly bad and occasionally very bad, over densely wooded and/or mountainous terrain – an eight-day walk for lightly-encumbered travelers. The GM should make a reaction roll at the end of every day; a Bad or worse result means that the band will have to sleep in the open; roll Survival (Mountains or Forest) or lose 1d-4 fatigue points. A Poor or Neutral result means that there is a woodcutter's hut or similar shelter available; a Good or better result indicates that there is a temple and/or inn where the travelers can get a good night's sleep, a meal and a bath, and possibly some entertainment or useful information (though no one will be able to talk with any authority about the monastery or the location of Sano Mihsue).

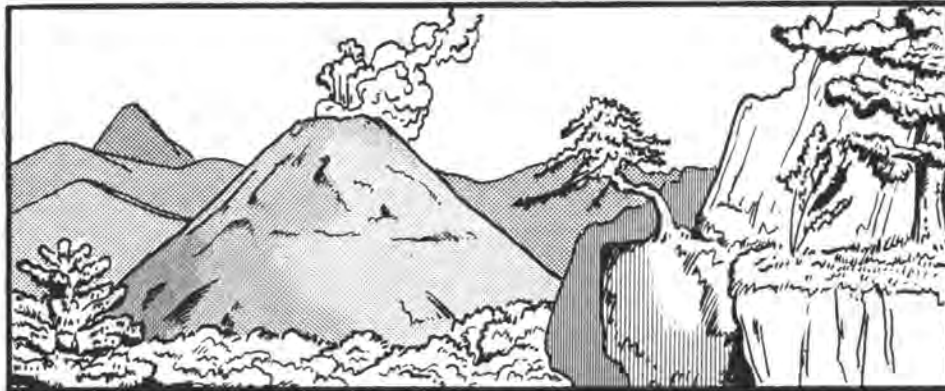
Of course, anyone entering an inn or temple is expected to check all weapons at the door. Any member of the party with the wakizashi bonded to his hand will need to make a Fast-Talk roll at -4 to be admitted, and will suffer a -4 to reaction rolls (cumulative with other penalties) except on a critical success. The unfortunate individual with the wakizashi may also try to keep his sword hand hidden

(using Invisibility Art +2, Sleight of Hand-4 or Holdout-6). On a critical failure, the entire party will be thrown out. (Inn: \$1 for a bed in a warm room, plus 5 coppers for a meal and bath; massage \$1; shampoo and hairdo \$4; courtesan \$8; geisha \$20. Temple: 1 copper.)

## The Badger Game

En route to the monastery, the questers will encounter (what seems to be) an old Buddhist monk wearing a faded black robe. If the travelers tell him that they are searching for Sano Mihsue, he will direct them to a mountain a few miles to the east. The mountain, he tells them, is an extinct volcano; Mihsue lives in the caldera (crater), occasionally creating some smoke to discourage visitors.

The "monk" is actually a tanuki (see p. 97) with a murderous idea of fun. He goes by the name of Sakurai Shugoro, and he knows that the volcano is active and about to erupt.



The climb up the gently sloping mountain is no problem, but the further the group proceeds into the caldera, the hotter it will become – 100° near the rim, increasing by 20-30 degrees every 1d hexes. The party should not be able even to approach the center of the volcano before it becomes much too hot. A few seconds after everyone realizes that they've been lied to and turn about, thin lava-filled cracks will start to appear beneath their feet. Anyone who makes a successful Light Walk roll will be able to reach the rim without taking damage; others will take 1d-3 per turn to their geta. The sandals have DR 1, HT 4 against fire; after taking four hits, they will catch fire, doing 1d-3 to the wearer's feet and legs until extinguished. To add to the band's woes, smoke will start to billow from the depths of the volcano and engulf them (see p. B132). The volcano will begin to erupt as soon as the last member is clear of the rim.

The flow of lava, ash and boiling mud has a Move of 1d-1 downhill, so unencumbered runners should be able to outrun it. The eruption will be brief, and the flow will stop just before it reaches the road at the bottom of the valley; treat this as 600 yards for purposes of determining running speed (see p. B88).

If the heroes – fatigued, scared, scorched, red-eyed and probably furious – return to the spot where they met the tanuki, they will find a large pile of manure; a Zoologist, Naturalist or Tracking-2 roll will identify the droppings of a badger.

## The Monastery

The path to the door of the monastery is very steep and very bad (treat as treacherous ground). The iron-bound door, in the middle of the west wall, is so thick that knocking on it produces no audible sound; there is a slot, nine inches wide and three high, in the middle of the door. The door is four inches thick (DR

## Yama hito (Mountain Goblins)

The Yama hito that haunt Koreyoshi's shrine are typical representatives of their species (see p. 97). All have ST 34 (Thrust 3d+2, Swing 6d) and Brawling-12, Throwing-9, Tracking-8 and Wrestling-9. They are unarmed, but may pick up handy objects – such as pieces of the fallen torii – and use them as clubs (DX-5). As well as the disadvantages listed in the general description, these Yama hito have Bad Temper and Odious Personal Habit (Foul smell, -3 to reaction rolls).

## Spell: Spirit Ward Regular, Area

This spell prevents ghosts and other spirits from entering the area of effect, or from casting spells or otherwise affecting creatures or objects within that area.

*Duration:* 1 day.

*Cost:* 5 to cast; 3 to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

*Prerequisite:* Sense Spirit.

*Items:* This spell, in conjunction with Enchant, may be used to create mamori, or wards. A paper mamori – a scroll inscribed with Buddhist scripture – is tacked to a door or window to make that portal impassable to spirits. Energy cost to create: 100. A statue mamori – created using a tiny statue of Buddha – will protect an area from spirits. Energy cost to create: 500.

## Vow: Devout Buddhist

A devout Buddhist layman is a strict vegetarian; he does not eat even fish. He never drinks alcohol and only has sex within marriage. He receives a +1 on reactions from other Buddhists.

A Buddhist priest takes strict vows of celibacy, poverty and pacifism (self-defense only). The status for a priest is partially canceled by the medieval Japanese contempt for pacifists – he still gets only +1 to reaction rolls.

All devout Buddhists resist spells of Illusion and Possession at +2 to effective IQ.

## Yamabushi

Yamabushi (literally "mountain warriors") are Buddhist priests who have combat skills and a pronounced militaristic bent. Most are from samurai families, often ronin or younger sons. They are usually armed with katana and wakizashi, yari or naginata, and dai-kyu. Appropriate martial arts styles are Kenjutsu and Kyudo.



### *Kami, Shinto and Shrines*

Kami are spirits, ranging in power from the Sun Goddess Amaterasu to the nushi (spirits of place such as Koreyoshi) that control small areas of wilderness, to living Emperors (but only after they retire and become Buddhist priests) and dead ancestors. All of them are fallible, and may be temperamental. Shinto is a code of traditions and rituals for pleasing (bribing) and placating the various kami. These include singing, dancing, playing music, and sacrificing food and sake. Shinto translates as "the Kami Way"; Shinto priests are known as *kannushi*, "kami masters."

Shinto is also a code of practices for avoiding "pollution." Shintoists can be polluted by contact with dead, sick or wounded individuals, houses where mourning is in process (there are no Shinto funeral services), or childbirth. Polluted individuals cannot enter Shinto shrines without angering the kami, so there is always a place to wash immediately outside (a stone vat for small shrines, a bathhouse for larger ones).

The path to a Shinto shrine goes under three red torii (wooden arches), which are supposed to purify the worshipper's soul. The shrine itself is built of undressed timbers with a thatched roof; it contains a naked altar, a wooden box for offerings and a locked room where the symbol of the kami is kept.

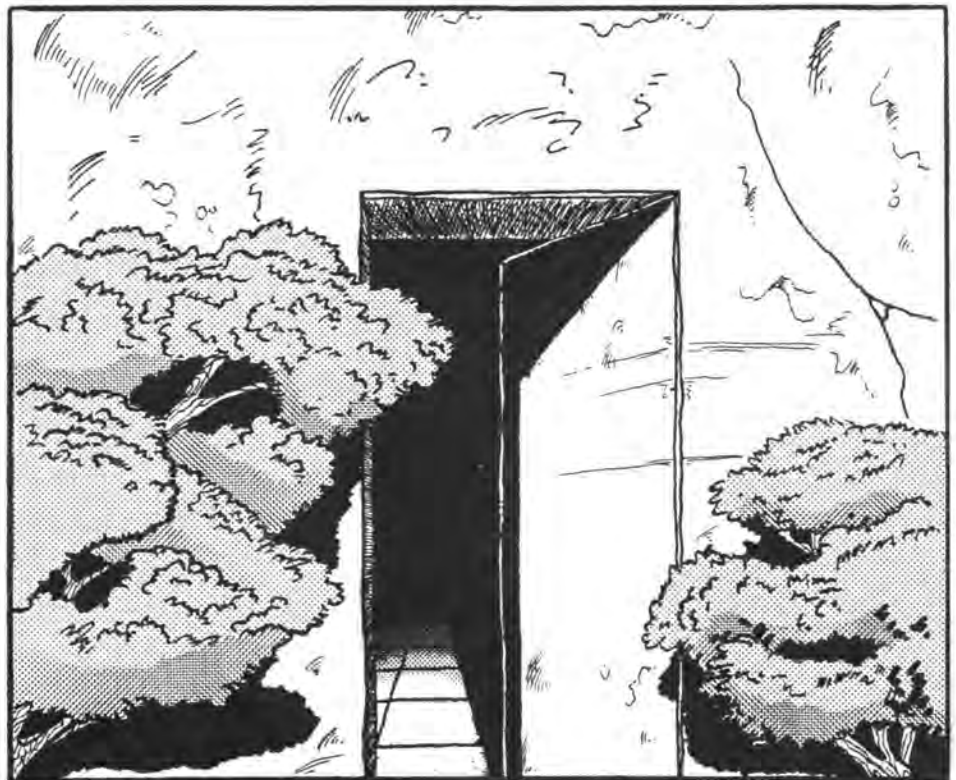
Ise (the city) is still known for its shrine to Amaterasu and Toyouke-no-okimi (kami of rice and harvests), established in 478 A.D. and rebuilt every 20 years. Every village and many houses contained a small shrine, usually in the spot with the most beautiful view. Shrines to Dosojin, Kami of Roads and Travelers, are frequently found beside major roads; shrines to Atago, Kami of Fire, exist in every town ward.

6, HT 64), and neither hinges nor lock are visible from the outside. Banging on the door, shouting, etc., will have no effect unless continued for more than an hour – in which case the monks will tip a cauldron of boiling water over them from the battlement (1d-3 damage). Dropping money through the slot will also be ineffective. If supplicants wait quietly at the door for nine days, a monk will ask them what they want. No matter what their response, they will be left to wait for at least another nine days before they are permitted to enter.

The dragon-and-tiger brands of a Shaolin monk will gain the bearer immediate entrance; they may be displayed by placing both arms through the slot in the door, wrists up. Non-Shaolin who try this will have their hands lightly rapped with a bo; if they don't remove them immediately, the bo will strike again, doing 2d crushing damage. The sentry can be hit with a long weapon (reach 2) and a roll against Blind Fighting; the sentry will probably parry or dodge, but will be sufficiently impressed to consider talking to the party.

The path around the building is only a few inches (1d+2) wide, and the finely-cut stone wall offers few handholds; roll vs. Acrobatics-3 or Climbing-2 every turn to walk it. A failed roll means a fall of 55+ yards (see p. B131), unless the faller makes a successful Breaking Blow roll, which will enable him to create a temporary handhold.

There are no windows apart from a few arrow slits, well away from the door and at least 10' up from the path.



In the middle of the east wall of the monastery is a normal-sized, camouflaged door (spotted on Vision-6). Reaching this will require either a walk half-way around the monastery's walls (150'), or a slower but possibly safer climb up a 660' cliff (treat as an ordinary mountain, p. B89). This door, fortunately, is unlocked, and opens inwards. The room on the other side is 6' wide and 18' long, unlit, and looks to be floored with tatami. However, there is nothing underneath the tatami but a very thin wooden floor (roll against Traps to detect; -1 to Light Walk). 6 yards below this is the stone floor of another 6'x18' corridor. This corridor leads



to a dark maze (-7 to Vision rolls), filled with life-sized dummies (see sidebar, p. MA75).

The dummies cannot parry or dodge, or make any attack more than once. Attacking their bodies or heads will provoke a counter-attack (unless the dummy has already attacked); the limbs are DR 4, HT 12. There are nine traps, each with 1d dummies, before the fighter reaches the sliding paper door (DR 1, HT 2) camouflaged to blend in with the stone wall (-3 to Vision if the combatant has Night Vision, -10 if he doesn't). Anyone without Night Vision or Absolute Direction will have to roll against IQ after every attack to re-orient himself; on a failed roll, he blunders back toward the last trap.

Roll 1d for each attack:

- 1: Spear thrust (1d+2 imp)
- 2-3: Staff swing (1d+4 cr)
- 4: Spin Kick (1d+1 cr)
- 5: Hand Strike (1d-1 cr)
- 6: Hook Kick (1d+2 cr)



Beyond the camouflaged sliding door is a 6' by 6' room, with no exit apart from a 3' hole in the ceiling, 36' above. Yu Wan (see p. 89) is sitting in the room above. She will talk with a fighter if he does not see her, but if he climbs or jumps through the hole, she will try to kill him to protect her secret.

If any members of the group manage to climb the 36' high walls of the monastery, they will be greeted at the top by 2d yamabushi (see p. 88) armed with naginata. The yamabushi will not attack immediately, but will ask the climbers what they want. If they ask the location of Sano Mihsue, the yamabushi will tell them that this information is known only to their abbot, who will only grant them an audience if they agree to being searched, disarmed and blindfolded. If the group does not agree, they will be requested to leave by the way they came. If they ask to be admitted to the temple as monks, they will be laughed at, insulted and then forcibly ejected.

### The Master's Voice

Nagai Kajiro has been dead for two years; most of his duties are being performed by the competent but uninspired new abbot, Shimonaga Shota. However, Kajiro's successor as sensei is Yu Wan, a refugee from a Shaolin temple. The yamabushi, most of them retired samurai or the younger sons of samurai clans, are embarrassed by the fact that they are learning martial arts from a non-Japanese woman who can out-fight any of them. For this reason, they have kept Kajiro's death a secret.

Yu Wan rarely speaks, for fear of revealing her gender and non-Japanese accent (listeners should roll against Hearing-4 to notice either). She will not speak first. If the questioners decide to wait for the sensei to speak, treat it as a Contest of Wills, rolling every hour (-4 for impulsive or bad-tempered adventurers); whoever loses speaks first.

If Yu Wan does speak, it will be to ask what the party wants, then (possibly) why, and lastly, an answer. If the questioners say they are looking for Sano Mihsue, she will answer only if she is impressed by the selflessness of their motives.

The PC speaking should make a Diplomacy, Savoir-Faire (Japanese) or Philosophy (Buddhist) roll, at +2 for Buddhist priests, with +1 each for Sense of Duty, Honesty, Truthfulness, Devout Buddhist, and an appropriate Vow or Code of Honor. Negative modifiers include -1 if the speaker has the Bad Temper disadvantage, -2 if he has Bloodlust, Bully, Greed or Megalomania, and -3 if he has Intolerance or Sadism.

### Koreyoshi

Koreyoshi, nushi of the mountains near the village, has lost power since the destruction of his shrine by an earthquake. Local legend has it that Koreyoshi was once a hermit mage and philosopher, a distant and rather misanthropic old man who sought peace and privacy in which to meditate, who was finally found sitting on the mountaintop in a lotus position, his face serene and his heartbeat stopped.



### Wilderness Encounters

Roll 1d twice daily: on a 1-5, no encounter occurs. On a 6, roll 3d on the following table:

- 3-5 Run across a wild boar.
- 6 1d Yama hito,
- 7 Woodcutter's hut or small shrine; 1/6 chance of being ninja arsenal or trap.
- 8 Brown bear or 1d wolves.
- 9 Woodcutter, with masakiri and nata.
- 10 1d yamabushi.
- 11 1d deer
- 12 Encounter fox or badger.
- 13 1d+1 bandits (as for road encounters).
- 14 1d ninja in disguise, armed with gimmicks and concealed weapons. They are trained in Ninjutsu; 1d+12 in Primary skills.
- 15 Snake (1-4 Viper, 5-6 Constrictor).
- 16 Earthquake. Everyone must roll DX-3 to keep their feet (very important on a high and narrow mountain path). In the mountains, an earthquake may cause a rockslide; dodge falling rocks, each 1d×10 lbs. falling 1d×10 yards.
- 17 Giant centipede (not the same one met later; use the stats on p. 98).
- 18 Shapeshifter (tanuki, oni or shi-ryo)

## Temple Guards

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 11.

Basic Speed 5.75, Move 5.

Dodge 6, Parry 11 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Clerical Investment; Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold; Style Familiarity (Jujutsu, Kobujutsu, Kyudo, Ninjutsu).

**Disadvantages:** Duty; Pacifism (Self-defense only); Secret (-5).

**Skills:** Acrobatics-14; Area Knowledge (Japan)-12; Bow-13; Breath Control-14; Calligraphy-14; Fast-Draw (Katana)-12; Jumping-14; Literature (Chinese)-14; Literature (Japanese)-14; Philosophy (Buddhist)-15; Savoir-Faire-11; Spear-14; Staff-15; Stealth-14; Tactics-12; Theology (Buddhist)-14; Throwing-14; Two-Handed Sword-14.

**Martial Arts Styles:** Kenjutsu; Shaolin Kung Fu.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Body Language-11; Judo-15; Karate-15; Katana-12; Katana Art-12; Meditation-15; Parry Missile Weapons-10; Yin-Yang Healing-14.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-16; Back Kick-14; Feint (Staff)-16; Hook Kick-15; Jump Kick-15; Kicking-15; Spin Kick-17.

If the trespassers become too aggressive, a few of the temple guards will also have the Trained by a Master advantage, with +1 to all Shaolin Kung Fu Primary and Secondary skills and maneuvers, plus the cinematic skills and maneuvers (1 point in each, prerequisites permitting). These yamabushi can be identified by the Shaolin tiger-and-dragon brands on their wrists.



If the speaker succeeds, Yu Wan will tell him, "Look for wisdom in the mountains, between Ise and Yamato, beneath the snow and behind the water." A successful roll against History (Japanese) at -3 will reveal that Yamato is (1) an old name for Japan and (2) a mountainous, totally land-locked province.

If Yu Wan is not convinced of the purity of the group's motives, she will promise to consider the request, and everyone will be escorted from the monastery by armed yamabushi. Yu Wan will "consider the request" one day for each point by which the questioner failed the roll; the party will have to return to the door every day, and rely on their Survival (Mountains) skill in the meantime.

If anyone has the skills and points to buy the Trained by a Master advantage (see p. MA25), they may choose to become beginner monks at the temple. If the GM wishes to disallow this, Yu Wan will tell the applicant that he must finish the quest before being accepted (when the quest ends, of course, everyone will immediately return to the Jade Gate). Even if someone stays, the GM might return him to the Jade Gate at the same time as the rest of the group – after experiencing 1d+1 years of training! Alternatively, his original body could mysteriously disappear for 1d+1 years, after which he just as mysteriously re-appears. Of course, he may be killed trying to graduate (see sidebar, p. MA75).

## The Wild Hunt

The border between Ise and Yamato provinces is approximately 30 miles of mountainous terrain, and the roads are bad or worse. The searchers can shorten their journey considerably by following the good roads as far as possible, and then heading for one of the two points at which rivers cross the borders.

If the group leaves the road to travel through a forest, they will walk a few minutes before passing a woodcutter carrying a large bundle of sticks. The woodcutter will glance at them suspiciously, and keep walking toward the road. A hundred yards further on, the group will stumble across the body of a young samurai in a red silk kimono, katana scabbarded, a yari still clutched in his hands. A roll against Physician or Forensics skill will show that the man was killed almost instantly by a long narrow blade thrust through the vitals, that he received abrasions consistent with a fall before death, and that he has been dead for less than a minute. Anyone trained in Ninjutsu, or with Poisons or Chemistry skill at 12+, should make a Smell roll (at -2) to detect the odor of a nageteppo and lacquer poison (see p. MA84-85). Investigators who roll against Tracking+5 will discover a set of hoofprints a few yards away, and deduce that the samurai was thrown from his horse when it bolted.

While the group is examining the scene, five mounted samurai come riding furiously toward them. If any weapons are drawn (or worse still, if the wakizashi is bonded to someone's hand), the group will immediately be attacked. Otherwise, the riders will surround them and ask what happened.

As it happens, the dead samurai, Fujiwara Ichiro, is the heir of the local daimyo, Fujiwara Tatsuya. The oldest – and obvious leader – of the riders is Fujiwara's hatamoto and advisor, Hasegawa Kenji; the others are hot-blooded young warriors (see sidebar, p. 90). The six were in the forest hunting wild boar without much success, and the impulsive Ichiro raced ahead – just as the ninja hired to kill him expected him to do. The ninja spooked Ichiro's horse with a hidama, and Ichiro was thrown; dazed, he managed to stand, and took a few steps toward the ninja without seeing him. The ninja stabbed Ichiro, hid his ninjato among his bundle of sticks, and then walked away disguised as a common woodcutter. This explanation can be arrived at with a little cooperation on both sides.

However, the latecomers to the scene will have to prove to Kenji's satisfaction that they had nothing to do with Ichiro's death. Fast-Talk rolls, etc., will be at -5; Kenji would rather kill a few innocent bystanders than appear before the bad-tem-



pered Tetsuya empty-handed, and the younger samurai, all friends of Ichiro's, want to see someone pay soon.

Unless at least one person gets a Very Good or better reaction from Kenji, the entire party will be searched; if the samurai find (and recognize) any ninja weapons or gimmicks, the party will have to flee, fight or die.

If the group convinces Kenji that they saw the ninja walking away from the scene, they will have to join in the hunt. The ninja (see sidebar, p. 90) has been using his Light Walk skill to avoid leaving tracks, and though encumbered, has several minutes head start. Kenji and one samurai will head up the road with half the party; the other two samurai will head down the road with the other half. Once on the road, the samurai will keep the PCs running ahead of them at Move 3 (see p. B88); anyone falling below this speed may be trampled or speared.

The ninja may be hiding in the woods near Ichiro's body, or plodding down the road in disguise (not necessarily as a woodcutter), or resting at a nearby inn, or waiting in ambush for Kenji. He will be an intelligent and crafty adversary.

If the ninja is caught, Kenji will brusquely thank the party for their help and start for home with his prize. If the ninja manages to evade his pursuers, the group may find they are still convenient scapegoats.

Any other time the party leaves the road, roll on the Wilderness Encounters table in the sidebar on p. 87 to make the trip more interesting.

## The Old Man of the Mountains

Sano Mihsue's cave lies barely a hundred yards east of the border between Ise and Yamato provinces, hidden (-10 to Vision rolls) by a waterfall which flows from the mountains into the Miya river. Sitting on a rock at the top of the waterfall is Isamu the Tiny, an Oni who has converted to Buddhism and acts as Mihsue's bodyguard, servant and doorkeeper. Isamu appears as a very old Buddhist monk, and is occasionally mistaken for the mage; this always pleases him enormously (+3 to reaction rolls), but he won't let Mihsue waste his time speaking to anyone

## Yu Wan, Shaolin "Master"

ST 9, DX 15, IQ 13, HT 13.

Basic Speed 7, Move 7.

Dodge 8, Parry 13 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Absolute Direction; Acute Hearing+3; Combat Reflexes; Danger Sense; High Pain Threshold; Strong Will+2; Style Familiarity (as for guards, plus An Ch'i, Chin Na, Pakua, and White Crane Kung Fu); Trained by a Master.

**Disadvantages:** Duty; Enemy (Pirates); Impulsive; Pacifism (Self-defense only); Phobia (Oceans); Secret; Social Stigma.

**Quirks:** Feminist; Dislikes edged weapons.

**Skills:** Acrobatics-16; Bow-14; Breath Control-16; Calligraphy-16; Detect Lies-13; Diplomacy-14; Disguise-13; History (Chinese)-16; Hypnotism-16; Jumping-16; Literature (Chinese)-16; Literature (Japanese)-16; Philosophy (Buddhist)-18; Savoir-Faire-12; Spear-16; Staff-17; Stealth-16; Teaching-13; Theology (Buddhist)-15; Throwing-16; Traps-14.

**Languages:** Chinese-13; Japanese-13.

**Martial Arts Style:** Shaolin Kung Fu (Cinematic).

**Martial Arts Skills:** Blind Fighting-15; Breaking Blow-16; Invisibility Art-15; Judo-18; Karate-18; Light Walk-17; Meditation-18; Parry Missile Weapons-10; Power Blow-16; Pressure Points-18; Pressure Secrets-17; Throwing Art-16; Throwing Art-16; Yin-Yang Healing-16.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-18; Back Kick-17; Feint (Staff)-18; Flying Jump Kick-16; Hook Kick-18; Jump Kick-18; Kicking-18; Roll with Blow-15; Spin Kick-20.

Yu Wan learned many of her skills from her father, a hot-blooded Shaolin monk unable to keep his vow of chastity for more than a few months at a time. When he died, she returned to the temple and became a nun (and later a respected teacher of unarmed combat), but her native restlessness led her outside on many unauthorized journeys.

During one of these excursions, Yu Wan saw a coastal village being attacked by Japanese pirates. By the time she was overpowered, seven pirates were crippled or unconscious, and the rest were far too angry to kill her quickly. Instead, they tied her to the mast and set sail for Japan, intending to keep her as a toy. When Yu Wan regained consciousness and realized what was happening, she kicked a hole in the hull, then snapped the mast and swam away from the sinking ship, leaving the pirates to fend for themselves.

After surviving for a few months as a beggar in Matsubara, communicating by writing ideograms in the sand, Yu Wan met Nagai Kajiro and accompanied him back to the yamabushi temple in Ise. She is now sensei there.

## Hasegawa Kenji

ST 12, DX 11, IQ 14, HT 8.

Basic Speed 4.75, Move 4.

Dodge 4, Parry 8 (Katana).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Night Vision; Status +3; Style Familiarity (Ninjutsu); Weapons Master (Bow).

*Disadvantages:* Appearance (Unattractive); Code of Honor (Samurai); Duty; Sense of Duty (Fujiwara clan).

*Skills:* Administration-15; Area Knowledge (Japan)-16; Breath Control-14; Bow-20; Detect Lies-13; Diplomacy-13; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-14; Fast-Draw (Katana)-13; Leadership-13; Philosophy (Zen Buddhist)-14; Poetry-15; Politics-15; Riding (Horse)-12; Savoir-Faire-15; Spear-12; Strategy-14; Tactics-13.

*Martial Arts Styles:* Kenjutsu; Kyudo.

*Martial Arts Skills:* Body Language-12; Katana-13; Katana Art-13; Meditation-14; Pressure Points (Bow)-16; Zen Archery-16.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Feint (Katana)-15; Hit Location (Katana)-14.

Hasegawa is chief retainer of the Fujiwara clan, an administrator-samurai rather than a warrior-samurai. A merely competent swordsman and rider, he is usually kept out of combat – though as a master archer, he is often given the duty of picking off a rival army's best generals, or preventing couriers from delivering vital messages.

## Samurai

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

*Advantages:* Appearance (Handsome); Combat Reflexes; Status +1.

*Disadvantages:* Bloodlust; Code of Honor (Samurai); Duty; Fanaticism (Clan); Impulsiveness; Overconfidence.

*Skills:* Area Knowledge (Ise province)-10; Breath Control-12; Bow-14; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-13; Fast-Draw (Katana)-15; Philosophy (Shinto)-13; Poetry-11; Riding (Horse)-16; Spear-14; Tactics-12; Tracking-11.

*Martial Arts Style:* Kenjutsu.

*Martial Arts Skills:* Body Language-13; Katana-15; Katana Art-12; Meditation-13;

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Feint (Katana)-17; Hit Location (Katana)-15.

## Ninja

Use the stats for O-Mitsu, with -2 to IQ and all mental skills, and Katana-16.

so easily fooled. Isamu only reveals the secret entrance to Mihsue's chamber to those who can defeat him in either a fair fight or a Contest of Zen Buddhist philosophy.

Isamu likes to fight in the swiftly-moving 2'-deep water (see p. B107), 1d yards from the edge of the waterfall's 60-yard drop, and feels that anyone who retreats into the shallower water doesn't really want to speak to Mihsue. If he takes more than three hits in one turn, Isamu will shapeshift into his true form (see sidebar, p. 91). If sent over the falls, he will shapeshift into a bird and fly back to his position on the rock – and then congratulate the victor, and tell him how to find Mihsue. A PC sent over the edge should make an Acrobatics or Dodge roll (whichever is better) to hit deep water rather than rock (see p. B131).



Mihsue's cave is 20' below Isamu's seat; treat as an ordinary mountain. The first chamber, with a 5' ceiling, contains an empty sword rack, an unlit brazier and a wooden pillow. The other, where Mihsue sits and meditates, is barely large enough for two visitors to confer with him, and far too small for using any but close combat weapons.

Awake or asleep, Mihsue sits lotus-style on a tatami, with an incense burner and a small statue of the Dainichi Buddha to his left, and a reliquary, old begging bowl and small library on his right. The GM should roll 3d when the questers enter; on 12 or less, Mihsue will be meditating; on a 13-15, he will be asleep. In either case, he will not be happy about being disturbed, and the visitors will need Diplomacy to enlist his aid – +2 for Buddhist priests, +1 for mages and priests of other religions, and +2 if the questioner has Poetry, Philosophy (Buddhist) or Literature (Chinese or Japanese) at 15+. He will react at -5 to any attempt at Fast-Talk, Intimidation or Sex Appeal. He will, however, be fascinated by any stories of the future, and a PC may use a Bard roll if his Diplomacy roll fails.

If Mihsue agrees to help, he will spend a day in his tiny chamber "studying" the sword. Being blind, he will need someone to read through his library for him. At 4 a.m. (in mild revenge for being disturbed), he will wake the group to divulge his findings.

The wakizashi, Mihsue tells them, is actually the tatsu Amakurikara (see sidebar, p. 95), imprisoned in the form of a tsuba by a powerful magician whose name has been forgotten. The wakizashi will disappear once blooded, and the tatsu will emerge, angry and hungry. "Blooded" is meant literally; the tatsu will not be released if used against supernatural beings that have temporarily assumed an appearance of flesh and blood.

Everyone may begin to think of various uses for such a weapon, but Mihsue will not have finished. The travelers, he says, were obviously brought here by one of their ancestors, or the ancestor of someone to whom they owed a debt of honor. (This statement should impress Mihsue's listeners with its accuracy.) Since he cannot tell who this ancestor was, it would be extremely dangerous for the party to kill any human being – it might even change the future so that they had never existed. The honorable and intelligent thing to do so that they may return to their world, and a fair repayment for his labors, would be to take the wakizashi and slay an enemy of the tatsu's. As it happens, he knows of a village downstream which is being terrorized by a giant centipede that emerges periodically from the river.

If Mihsue has an excellent reaction to any of the group, he will give that person a netsuke (a tiny carving tied onto the obi) which grants the power to see through illusions (as the Know Illusion spell). This will enable the recipient to see Sakurai Shugoro for what he is, when next they meet . . .

## Close to the Borderline

The village, on the southwest bank of the Miya, has a population of 92 and no temples, shrines or inns. The band of travelers may well be surprised by their reception; whatever the make-up of the group, one of the villagers will run into the village square and sound the alarm. Within a minute of arriving, everyone will find themselves surrounded by unfriendly and suspicious peasants.

Farmers are notoriously great worriers, and these are experts. Living within a dai-kyu's shot of both Yamato and Kii provinces, and more than a day's march from any city, they wake every morning in terror of being overrun by invading armies – as well as the traditional peasant farmer fears of marauding monsters, hostile spirits, bad weather, plague, brigands, earthquakes and rockslides. These fears have been successfully exploited by a wandering yamabushi, Sakurai Shugoro (see sidebar, p. 93), and the peasants have armed themselves in readiness for attack. Shugoro has even encouraged a young kobujutsuka whom he met on his travels to come to the village and become a sensei. The kobujutsuka, Matsui (see sidebar, p. 94), was fleeing the Yakuza and only intended to hide for a few weeks, but fell in love with one of the village girls, and has stayed long enough to teach most of the villagers some martial arts skill.

Nine of Matsui's best students (see sidebar, p. 94) will be in the forefront of the mob that surrounds the group, and will engage them if anyone draws a weapon or shows any signs of hostility. The students are armed with a variety of weapons, but prefer to disarm their opponents as soon as possible and fight empty-handed. Heroes with katana, wakizashi or knives will be attacked by students with kama; anyone with naginata, spears, bo or other two-handed weapons will find themselves up against bo; those with other one-handed weapons will be met with tonfa; unarmed combatants will be engaged by unarmed students. Where possible, a student will try to catch an opponent in an arm lock and present him to Shugoro.

If anyone defeats a student and is left unengaged, he will be (rather reluctantly) attacked by 1d villagers. The men have ST 10, DX 9, IQ 10 and HT 9; the women have ST 9, DX 10, IQ 10 and HT 9. Roll 1d for weapons: 1-3 kama, 4-5 nunchaku, 6 rochin. Skill level is 12, and all their weapons are cheap quality. Fighters should lose one character point for every peasant they kill in this fight.

If all of the students are defeated, the crowd will part (à la *Raiders of the Lost*

## Isamu the Tiny

ST 43, DX 17, IQ 10, HT 20/30.

Basic Speed 9.25, Move 9.

Dodge 9, Parry 10 (Brawling).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantage:* High Pain Threshold.

*Disadvantages:* Absent-Mindedness; Appearance (Hideous); Duty; Laziness.

*Skills:* Acting-13; Brawling-20; Fast-Talk-12; Fishing-12; Philosophy (Zen Buddhist)-13; Savoir-Faire-10; Staff-18; Stealth-16; Swimming-10; Wrestling-16.

Isamu is a young oni who converted to Buddhism after sneaking into a temple to cause mischief. Overhearing the abbot teaching Zen philosophy to the young monks, Isamu became fascinated and forgot to maintain his human disguise. The abbot kept talking without losing his composure. He declined Isamu's request to join the temple, but suggested that the oni might be accepted as a yamabushi. Isamu took his advice seriously, and later became one of Sano Mihsue's favorite and least successful students. When Mihsue-sama left the monastery, Isamu accompanied him as guide and yojimbo.

Isamu is utterly loyal to Mihsue. He tries to be a devout Buddhist, but is too fond of fish and violence.

Isamu's natural form is 8'4" tall (including horn), red-haired, blue-eyed and hideous (by human standards); -1 to Fright Check.



## Sano Mihsue

Age 121; 3', 76 lbs.; bald, blind, thin but pot-bellied, pale, leathery skin.

ST 7, DX 11, IQ 17, HT 9.

Basic Speed 5, Move 5,

Dodge 5.

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Acute Hearing+5; Clerical Investment; Eidetic Memory (60); Magery+2; Reputation (+3, always recognized).

**Disadvantages:** Blindness; Dwarfism; Pacifism; Sense of Duty (All life); Vow (Devout Buddhist).

**Skills:** Breath Control-21; Calligraphy-15; Diplomacy-17; Literature (Chinese)-17; Literature (Japanese)-17; Occultism-17; Philosophy (Zen Buddhist)-19; Poetry-17.

**Spells:** Ancient History-17; Create Air-17; Divination (I Ching)-19; Exorcism-17; History-17; Ignite Fire-17; Predict Earth Movement-17; Purify Air-17; Seek Ginseng-17; Seek Earth-17; Seek Metal-17; Seek Pass-17; Seeker-17; Sense Foes-17; Sense Spirit-17; Shape Air-17; Shape Earth-17; Shape Metal-17; Spirit Ward-17; Trace-17; Walk on Air-17.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Body Control-21; Meditation-20; Yin-Yang Healing-16.

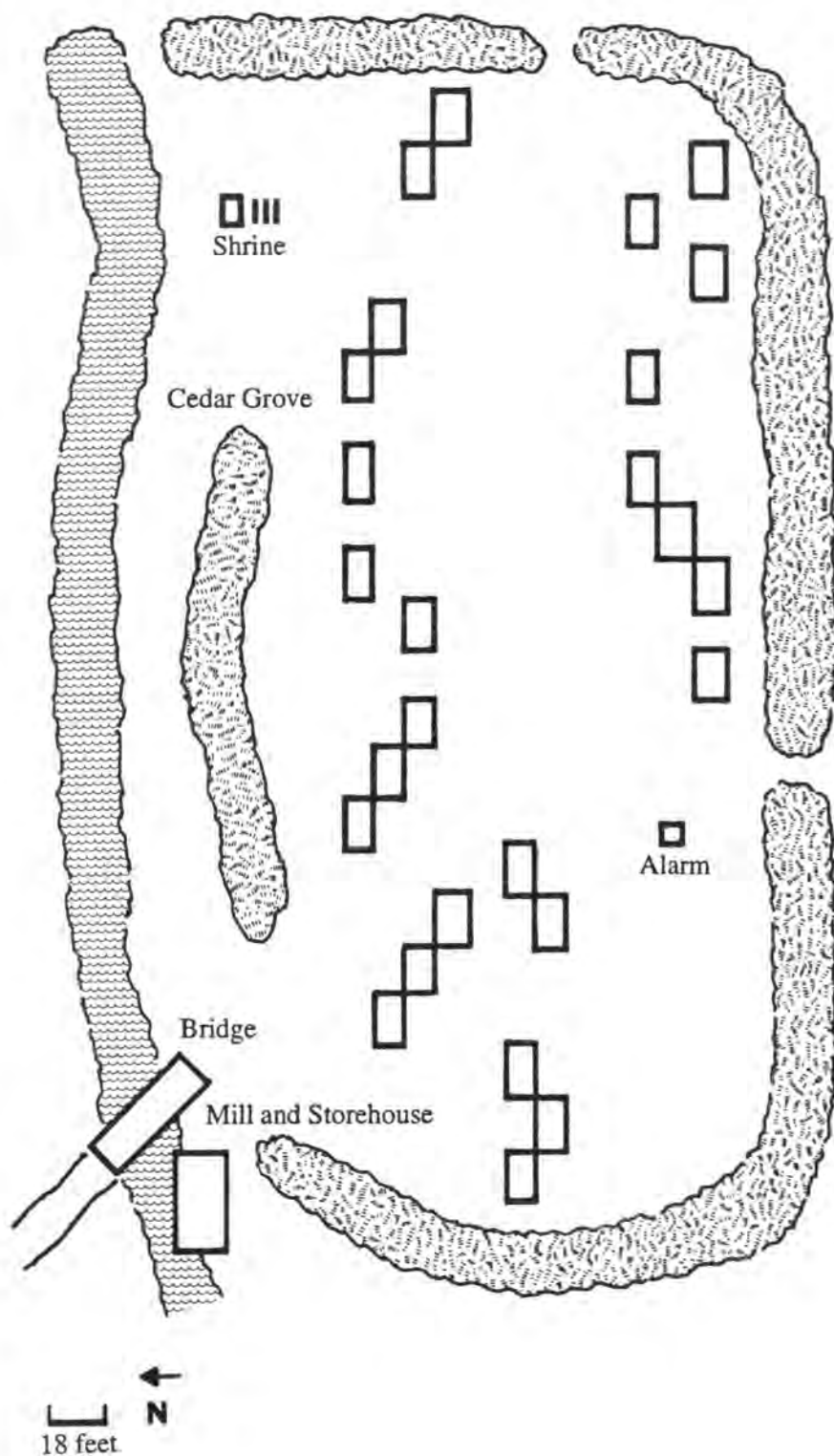
Sano Mihsue left his position as temple head in Tsu 19 years ago, after divining that he would somehow bring disaster to the city. He has spent the years since attempting to divine further details of this disaster, and his role in it, without much success. Only Yu Wan knows this secret.

Obsessed with his failure, Mihsue has become pessimistic and slightly irritable, in distinct contrast to the serenity and benevolence for which he is remembered. Despite the life-preserving powers of his yoga disciplines, he appears even older than his 121 years. He is completely bald, blinded by cataracts, thin but for a pot belly, his skin pale and leathery. When meditating or in a trance, Mihsue looks more like a small ivory carving than a living human.

Mihsue has devised several methods of compensating for his blindness. His memory is near-perfect, and he reads hexagrams with his fingers (his sense of touch, like his hearing, is extremely acute). His cataracts do not affect him while in a trance, or diminish his ability to perceive truth, and he will use these powers when he needs to "see." If anyone takes pity on his blindness, he will explain brusquely that seeing only the truth is the only true way of seeing.

Mihsue's mastery of Body Control, Breath Control and Meditation enables him to live without food, satisfying all his nutritional needs for days at a time with air and water.

## Shugoro's Village



Ark) to show Matsui performing tricks with his nunchaku, with Sakurai Shugoro standing behind him. Matsui will not advance unless a fighter attacks unarmed peasants, but will offer the group a chance to surrender and explain their purpose in invading the village.

If the group's spokesman admits that they have come to kill the giant centipede, the farmers will bristle visibly; Shugoro has convinced them that fear of the centipede has protected the village from brigands. Telling the farmers that Shugoro is a tanuki will provoke laughter and a -3 to reaction rolls. Shugoro will order that the "invaders" be held while he ties them hand and foot, and will then have them thrown into the river without their weapons. If Amakurikara is bonded to anyone's hand, and cannot be released by magic, Shugoro will order Matsui to kill the wielder outright, then dump the body in the river where the blood will attract the centipede sooner.

### Trial by Water

The river is chin-deep where it flows past the village; anyone who makes a Swimming roll at -6 on first being thrown in, and then every five minutes until he frees his limbs, will be able to keep his head above water. The slow current will take the group out of sight of the village in ten minutes; another roll will be required to get them onto the shore.

Fortunately, Shugoro was never a Boy Scout, and his knots are sloppy at best (+2 to escape rolls). The light ropes may also be snapped with Breaking Blow and/or Power Blow (treat as DR 3, HT 6 for non-cutting weapons), but a failed roll will mean 1d crushing damage to arms or legs.

The giant centipede will come swimming upstream an hour later, just after sunset, and will attack whoever is bleeding most profusely. If everyone has escaped by this time, the giant centipede will follow the heaviest trail of blood; if there isn't one, it will head straight for the village. It will not return to the water until it has eaten something at least child-sized. Fighters receive -2 to all attacks made underwater (if any are possible with their limbs tied); the centipede doesn't.

All the villagers hide in their houses at night, though Matsui and 1d+1 of his students will rush out to investigate any disturbance (the giant centipede moves silently, even if the fighters don't), and everyone will emerge if the alarm is sounded. Matsui and the villagers will continue to hinder the fighters (including trying to feed them to the centipede) until Shugoro is exposed as a Tanuki.

The group's weapons will be hidden in the storehouse, with a small cache of stolen treasure – a keg of sake, a scroll of inferior erotic ink-paintings (worth \$8, 1 lb.), a dai-kyu (see p. MA82) and quiver of arrows, and a TL3 doctor's black bag.

## Amakurikara

If the tatsu is released in or near the village, she will not listen to anyone until she has eaten her fill; an 18-foot, giant centipede would do nicely . . . but so would a sumotori, or two or three normal humans. If the centipede is not visible when she appears, Amakurikara's first victim will be Sakurai (because of his centipede mon); if Sakurai manages to dodge her jaws, he will shapeshift into a badger, scoot under a building and begin to dig a burrow. Amakurikara's next preferences would be ninja, then sumotori, then peasant. Anyone foolish enough to attack her (and one of Matsui's students will probably try, if no one else does) will also be on the menu.

Once she has eaten, Amakurikara will size up the situation. A quick look at the night sky will tell her that the battle for which she was transformed into the tsuba has long since passed, and she will be willing to consider returning to her island home if asked politely – the speaker may roll on Diplomacy, Bard or Poetry skill,

## Sakurai Shugoro

ST 10, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 13.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 6 (Staff).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Clerical Investment; Status +1.

*Disadvantages:* Appearance (Ugly); Fat (-10); Gluttony; Low Pain Threshold.

*Quirk:* Sadistic sense of humor.

*Skills:* Area Knowledge (Japan)-10; Carousing-14; Fast-Talk-15; Interrogation-8; Staff-11; Sumo Wrestling-9.

*Spells:* Beast-Soother-12; Beast Summoning-12; Persuasion-12; Sense Emotion-12; Sense Foes-12.

Shugoro *seems* to be a fat and rather ugly yamabushi with a sharp tongue and a taste for sake. He has been inciting the peasants to arm and rebel, predicting that their village will soon be the battlefield for a war between the Fujiwara of Ise Province and the Taka of Yamato Province. Actually, Shugoro is a tanuki (see p. 97) who enjoys seeing the chaos that peasant uprisings cause. His favorite joke to date was evacuating a village in Mikawa Province by "divining" a tsunami, then burning the empty houses and the rice crop before moving on.

Shugoro has been acting the role of village priest for nearly a year and, despite the adulation and easy lifestyle, is becoming bored with it. The arrival of the travelers on quest will appeal to his rather earthy sense of mischief, and he will cheerfully risk exposing himself simply to harass them.

Shugoro wears a tattered formal black kimono over his Buddhist robes, displaying what he claims is the mon of the Sakurai clan – a coiled centipede. (A roll against Heraldry (Japanese)-2 or History (Japanese)-5 will reveal that the mon of the Sakurai clan actually depicts a conch shell.) Shugoro will voluntarily change shape only if confronted by a tatsu or anything else fearsome with a known taste for badger or giant centipede.



## Matsui

Age 19.

ST 17; DX 15; IQ 11; HT 14.

Basic Speed 7.25. Move 7.

Dodge 8, Parry 13 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Appearance (Handsome); Combat Reflexes; High Pain Threshold; Toughness (DR 2); Trained by a Master (Kobujutsu).

**Disadvantages:** Dependent (O-Yumi); Enemy (Yakuza clan); Sense of Duty (Village).

**Skills:** Acrobatics-15; Agronomy-9; Axe/Mace-16; Dancing-14; Flail-18; Intimidation-14; Savoir-Faire-10; Sex-Appeal-14; Staff-17; Spear-16; Swimming-14.

**Martial Arts Styles:** Jujutsu; Kobujutsu (Cinematic).

**Martial Arts Skills:** Jitte/Sai-15; Judo-15; Judo Art-13; Karate-18; Karate Art-15; Tonfa-15.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-18; Back Kick-15; Disarming-17; Dual-Weapon Attack (Nunchaku)-16; Enhanced Parry (Nunchaku); Spin Kick-16.

**Weapons:** Two nunchaku, tekko.

Matsui is a farmer's son, hiding from the Yakuza and the moneylenders of Kotsuke Province. Taught the martial arts by a natural master, he left home at 15 in search of adventure, finally finding work as a bouncer in a gambling house in Nikko. He became an inveterate gambler, and was soon deeply in debt to the Yakuza. Hearing that the Yakuza was weak and disorganized in Ise Province, he fled south across the border. He arrived at the village a month after Sakurai Shugoro, who was eager to take him in as sensei.

Matsui suspects that Shugoro is a fraud, but his life is too comfortable for him to make too many waves. He is also in love with O-Yumi, one of the village girls, and is trying to save money for a wedding.

Matsui is handsome and muscular, though he often tries to conceal his features beneath a layer of dirt in case yakuza visit the village and recognize him.

### Matsui's Students

ST 13; DX 13; IQ 10; HT 13.

Basic Speed 6.5, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 10 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** High Pain Threshold; Toughness (DR 1).

**Disadvantage:** Sense of Duty (Village).

**Skills:** Agronomy-11; Axe/Mace-13; Dancing-11; Flail-15; Staff-15; Spear-13; Swimming-11.

**Martial Arts Styles:** Jujutsu; Kobujutsu.

**Martial Arts Skills:** Jitte/Sai-12; Judo-12; Judo Art-10; Karate-15; Karate Art-12; Tonfa-12.

**Martial Arts Maneuvers:** Arm Lock-18; Back Kick-15; Disarming-17; Spin Kick-16.



whichever is higher. Modifiers: +5 if Amakurikara has eaten the centipede, -2 if she has eaten a peasant, and -1 for every attack made on her by a PC or villager. If any attack actually damages her, she will not leave until the attacker is dead.

If attacked by a large group (e.g., all the adventurers, or all Matsui's students), she will leap into the clouds and create a powerful whirlwind which deflects missiles (-5 to Zen Archery; other ranged attacks only succeed on a critical hit), and knocks down people and wood-and-paper houses (ST-5 or Immovable Stance to remain standing). Anyone still standing after the first turn may be hit by flying debris, ranging from leaves and straw (no damage), to dropped kama and rochin (treat as ST 15, skill 6), to chunks of wood weighing up to 30 lbs. (treat as falling objects, p. B131). Any missiles that miss Amakurikara may be blown back; these can be dodged but not parried, unless the PC has Parry Missile Weapon.

As soon as Amakurikara turns and heads back to her island, or dies, the group will find themselves back in their own (uninjured) bodies in the Jade Gate.

## The Return

When the adventurers return to the Jade Gate, they find themselves sitting at their table, just as they were immediately before the shi-ryo entered. They will retain any memories, character points, skills and maneuvers acquired during their sojourn in Japan. If killed during the adventure, of course, they will also have acquired a new mental disadvantage (see p. 74). Anyone who stayed in Japan to be trained by Yu Wan may or may not have returned (see p. 88); if they don't return, no one in the restaurant will have noticed them disappear.

If Amakurikara returned to the Dragon Realm without eating anyone (except Shugoro), the world the heroes return to will be unchanged. Otherwise, the changes may be too subtle to notice immediately, but they will exist. Depending on the degree of slaughter, characters may have lost patrons, allies, or skills or maneuvers taught by senseis who ceased to exist. Alternatively, a group member may have been transformed completely by the change in ancestry; a quarter-Japanese female ninja sadist might become an epileptic quarter-Tibetan male Shaolin

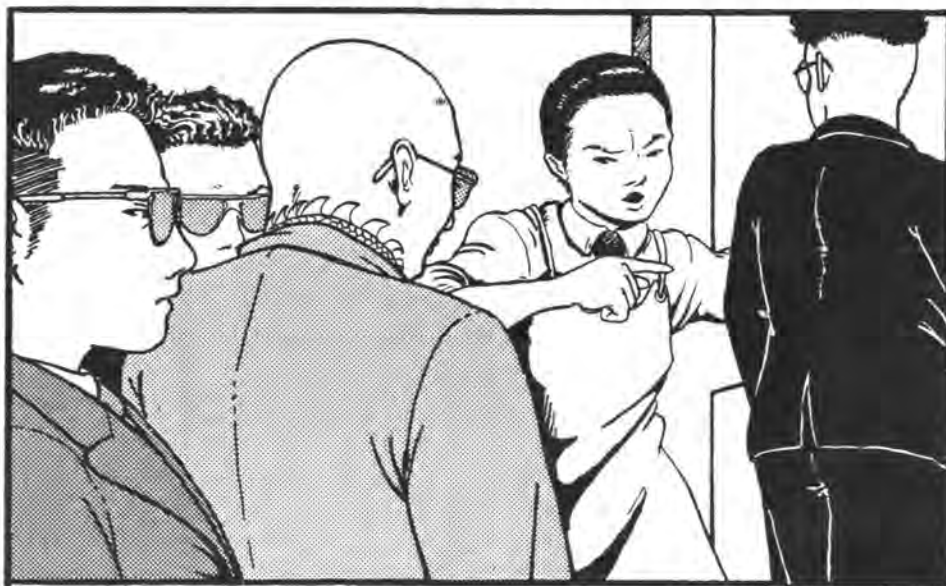


pacifist, and only her fellow adventurers would be aware of the difference. (The GM may be quite arbitrary about the changes, since they need not be permanent; see *Aftermath*, p. 96.)

## Last Rites

When the time comes to leave the restaurant, the group will notice Motogi talking in Japanese (-6 to eavesdrop) with four crew-cut, tough-looking Japanese men in three-piece suits. He will interrupt this discussion to accept payment for dinner, giving the group a chance to observe the four men. Like Teruo, Ishii and any other yakuza the band met in Japan, all these men have at least one finger-joint missing (roll Vision-5 to notice), and all carry guns in concealed holsters (Holdout 13).

If the heroes were successful in their quest and freed the dragon without killing her, Motogi will be telling the yakuza that he has no need of their services, and could they please get out of his restaurant now? If the adventurers wish to help him escort the four from the room to their car, Motogi will be much obliged.



If the group killed Amakurikara, Motogi will be apologizing profusely to the yakuza, telling them that the money will be ready tomorrow, first thing in the morning, plus another 10% – so sorry, 20%, of course . . . When the PCs – the last customers – leave the restaurant, Motogi will tell his staff to go home, and then take down his wakizashi and commit seppuku. Anyone who rolls on Psychology or Body Language will be able to predict Motogi's actions and may try to prevent the suicide. Beating up the yakuza won't actually help.

If everyone was killed during the adventure and Amakurikara was not released from the tsuba, the wakizashi that Motogi uses will transform into a tatsu as soon as the blade is blooded. Centuries have passed, so Amakurikara will be ravenous. Worse, when she emerges from the wreckage of the Jade Gate, she will see almost no Japanese. Amakurikara's knowledge of the world is restricted to Japan, Korea and China; all the people she has ever seen have pale golden skin, straight black hair and dark brown eyes. When she sees humans with blond or red hair, blue eyes or black skin, she will assume that Japan has been overrun by monsters and go berserk.

The heroes should be among the first people Amakurikara sees (and vice versa). Her windstorm will do only minor damage to modern brick and steel-frame buildings, but flying glass from broken windows will do 1d-4 cutting damage per turn to anyone in range.

## Amakurikara (Tatsu)

ST: 66	PD/DR: 4/6
DX: 14	Dmg: 3d imp
IQ: 19	Reach: R, C, 1, 2
HT: 15/81	Size: 12
Speed/Dodge: 22/10	Wt: 1.8 tons

*Advantage:* Appearance (Very Beautiful).

*Disadvantages:* No Sense of Humor; Pacifism (Self-defense only); Sense of Duty (Chiba clan); Unluckiness.

*Typical Skills:* Literacy, Poetry, Research, Swimming, Spells of Water, Geomancy and Shapeshifting.

Decades ago, the dragon Amakurikara was transformed into a wakizashi by the great mage Nakadai Tatsuya. The exquisite weapon was then given to Tatsuya's sponsor, the daimyo Chiba Masae, who was told its origin. Masae naturally let the rumor of the "curse" spread – it made an amusing story and increased the worth of his prized possession. Unfortunately, a kunoichi assassinated Masae while his wakizashi was out of reach. The beautiful wakizashi was passed down through the family along with the legend that the weapon was cursed, even though no one now understood that claim. Many generations later, the magnificent weapon was given to the leader of another family as the symbol of a debt of honor, with the careful admonition that the weapon not be drawn except in dire emergency, lest the wielder inherit the curse. The treasured heirloom was carefully guarded over the course of the next century and a half, both for its beauty and the clan ties it signified. Then the family lost their home and possessions to the Yakuza, and the sword finally came into the possession of Tosa no Teruo. (For details, see *Background*, p. 69, and Teruo's description on p. 73.)

Amakurikara will be ravenous when returned to her natural form. Once her hunger has been assuaged, she may be swayed by diplomacy and status into choosing what or who she eats – but not before. The mon of the Chiba clan, a cobra with its hood spread, is the only sure protection against her wrath.

Note that "Amakurikara" is an armorers' term, meaning "dragon wound around a sword" – Armoury/TL3 (Japanese) to recognize. It is not the tatsu's true name, which she prefers to keep secret.





### Modern Yakuza

Modern Japan's underworld is still dominated by Yakuza syndicates, some with thousands of members. Approximately half of their illegal income comes from the drug trade (especially amphetamines, extremely popular in workaholic Japan), and another quarter from gambling; they also deal in pornography, prostitution, counterfeit goods and money, and handguns, as well as their traditional rackets, and have also bought into many assorted legitimate businesses (including English schools, private hospitals, loan companies, real estate and construction, and private security firms). As criminal organizations go, they are extremely visible, often displaying their gang emblem on the front doors of their offices, wearing lapel pins or badges, publishing their own magazines, and even holding press conferences.

A Yakuza syndicate would be a particularly suitable 30-point Enemy for a martial artist. The Yakuza are firmly established in Asia, South America and Hawaii, and are expanding into the U.S. and Europe.

Modern yakuza pack pistols more often than swords (and use them with alarming frequency), but some clans insist on their kobun learning martial arts – usually Karate, Aikido and/or Kendo – and do much of their recruiting in dojos. Other appropriate styles include Jujutsu, Hapkido, Tae Kwon Do and Muay Thai.

While most real (and cinematic) modern yakuza wear sunglasses and three-piece suits, Japanese films are full of traditional "good" yakuza, who sport kimono and katana even in TL7 Tokyo, uphold the Code of Bushido and protect the rights of the *katagi no shu* ("citizens under the sun," i.e., innocent bystanders). A "good yakuza" PC should have the Patron advantage and the disadvantages Code of Honor (Tong), Duty (-15) and Enemy (Other Yakuza clans). Other appropriate disadvantages include Fanaticism (Pro-clan, Bushido, and/or ultra-right politics) and Sense of Duty (Japan or the *katagi no shu*). Appropriate martial arts styles would include anything Japanese.

**Recommended reading:** *A Japanese Mirror*, by Ian Buruma; *Yakuza*, by Alec Dubro and David E. Kaplan. **Recommended viewing:** *Black Rain*.

Attracting Amakurikara's attention over the noise of the wind will require a roll on Singing or Kiai. Explaining the situation and persuading her to return to the sea will require two rolls on Diplomacy or Bard and an appropriate language skill; failure will provoke an immediate personal attack.

Ironically, the best way to fight Amakurikara is with guns (-5 to hit because of wind). Anyone who makes a roll on Area Knowledge (City) will be able to find a pawnshop in 1d minutes. The pawnshop stocks a wide range of rifles and pistols, as well as at least one TL7 crossbow and compound bow.

## Aftermath

It is possible that the events in Japan during the adventure have changed history drastically. For example, the Japanese martial arts may have been abandoned and forgotten in favor of the gun, turning some fighters into masters of secret styles. Or murderous jujutsuka gangs may have sparked a severe legal backlash against the martial arts worldwide, with the use and teaching of all hard styles made strictly illegal. Alternatively, all empty-hand styles (except for sumo, wrestling, brawling and boxing) may be regarded as non-macho and suitable only for women. Or Japan's WWII biowar experiments may have been far more successful than intended, causing a worldwide plague – a seed for a *GURPS Survivors* campaign.

Perhaps Japan and Germany won World War II; Chinatown is a ghetto in a Japanese-occupied city where all non-Japanese are second-class citizens at best. Japanese PCs will have to choose which side they are on; others may be able to join the ghetto cops or the underground Shaolin temple. *GURPS Time Travel* contains several other suggestions for alternate worlds.

If the heroes rebel against such drastic changes to their lifestyle, or if they were unsuccessful in their quest but prevented Motogi from committing suicide, the shi-ryo may return and send them back to Japan for another attempt. Or, if the rules of psionic time travel prevent anyone traveling to the same time and place twice, the group may be sent to another period in Japanese history, or another game-world, to save the life of another ancestor – such as China, or the Old West, or even a Viking longboat or Roman amphitheater. In any case, the shi-ryo will be displeased if her descendant (and his comrades) failed. She will certainly expect him to be willing to undertake any task to atone for his failure.

If anyone attacked the yakuza loan shark, he may have gained an enemy for life. Hidemasa and O-Mitsu may also be reincarnated as enemies of the heroes.

Even if everything went well and the adventurers completed the quest, the shi-ryo may call upon them again if any member of her family or the House of the Lotus needs protection again . . .

## Character Points

The GM should award the characters each a bonus of 2 points upon returning to the Jade Gate, provided they completed the mission (those who were killed in the past and returned early receive no bonus). In addition, a character point bonus can be given for achieving any of the following:

- ◆ Exorcising Hidemasa (1 point for whoever thinks of it).
- ◆ Releasing the tatsu with little or no loss of life (1 point for the wielder of the wakizashi).
- ◆ Killing the centipede, with the tatsu or not (1 point for all party members).
- ◆ Dealing productively with Mihsue (1 point for all involved).
- ◆ Receiving training from Yu Wan (1 point for all involved).

If the adventurers altered history, this may be worth a penalty of -1 to -3 points depending on the severity of the change.

# Bestiary

## Shi-ryo

Shi-ryo are spirits of the dead who cannot rest. They may be driven by hatred, love, duty or the desire to clear their names of some slur. A person who dies with unfulfilled duties or strong passions may become a shi-ryo.

The shi-ryo appears only at night, unless it has been invited into a home. In ghostly form, it wears a white kimono and has long, tangled hair. It has no feet but floats in the air, gliding a little above the floor or ground (since a kimono normally covers the feet, this isn't very noticeable). The ghost may use Shapeshifting to take the form it had when alive. In this form, its attacks can do physical damage, but the shi-ryo will dissipate if any return attack succeeds in hitting it; later, it will reappear. The ghost can also possess an enemy or someone who owes him loyalty.

Some shi-ryo merely want to take care of their children, or to marry the object of their desire. In such cases, the ghost tries to convince people that it was all a misunderstanding; he isn't really dead. If the death is proven, the shi-ryo vanishes, just like a shapeshifter who has been found out.

Shi-ryo have attributes as when alive, except that ST is +5. On a critical hit at Brawling or Karate, a ghost will tear off a limb or a head.

Fighting a shi-ryo (or any Japanese spirit) is not like normal combat. A spirit's "body" isn't flesh or blood; it is a phantasm woven of magic. A successful attack always hits, but its only effect is to disintegrate the spirit for 1d hours. Spirits can be affected by social skills (at -4) such as Fast-Talk and Diplomacy, or by magic spells such as Exorcism and Spirit Ward. They are not affected by spells of Illusion, Mind Control, or Body Control.

*Typical advantage:* Night Vision. *Typical disadvantages:* Duty, Fanaticism and Jealousy. *Typical skills:* As in life, plus Brawling, Detect Lies, Fast-Talk, and some of the following spells, depending on the ghost's nature: Curse, Daze, Fatigue, Mass Daze, Permanent Possession, Pestilence, Shapeshifting, Steal Strength, Strike Blind, Strike Deaf and Strike Dumb.

## Yama hito

ST: 30-35	Speed/Dodge: 7/10	Size: 1
DX: 10	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 360 lbs.
IQ: 6	Damage: 2d-1 cut	
HT: 20/30	Reach: C	

Yama hito are large, repulsively hairy goblins, who live in the mountains. They wrestle and kill mountain boar for their meals. They are intelligent and wear loincloths made of boar hide.

*Typical advantage:* Toughness. *Typical disadvantages:* Appearance (Hideous), Impulsiveness and Overconfidence. *Typical skills:* Brawling, Wrestling, Throwing (usually rocks), Tracking and Veterinary.

## Tanuki (Badger)

ST: 3	Speed/Dodge: 6/6	Size: <1
DX: 11	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 20-45 lbs.
IQ: 8	Damage: 1d-3 cut	
HT: 13/3	Reach: C	

The chubby badger delights in disguising itself as a wandering Buddhist priest. It seldom chooses the form of a samurai or yamabushi, as it is not interested in fighting. It is fond of tasty food (particularly snacks and sweets), sake, tea and music. It is amused by humans' concern with money.

Like other Japanese shapeshifters, tanuki have to remember to act and look human. They must occasionally roll on DX to see if the human form is wavering, an IQ roll to see if their true form can be seen in a reflection, and a Savoir-Faire roll to override their instinctive reactions.

Like other animals, tanuki make attack and defense rolls at -1 when fighting humans with Animal Handling skill at 15 or better (-2 if the human's skill is 20+).

*Typical advantage:* Night Vision. *Typical disadvantages:* Cowardice, Gluttony, Laziness and Low IQ. *Typical skills:* Bard, Carousing, Fast-Talk, Animal Spells and Spells of Illusion.



## Kitsune (Fox)

ST: 8	Speed/Dodge: 6/6	Size: 1
DX: 12	PD/DR: 1/1	Weight: 20 lbs.
IQ: 8*	Damage: 1d-3 cut	
HT: 15	Reach: C	

\*IQ 12 when in human form.

The Japanese fox is clever and arrogant. White foxes are the messengers of Inari, the Kami of the five grains and the patron of swordsmiths. The fox thinks of itself as an aristocrat; its favorite human forms are the noble, the samurai and the geisha. It usually finds humans amusing, but will loyally repay any favor it receives.

The Japanese believed that a fox frequently assumed the form of a beautiful woman. In this guise, the fox would beguile a man who lived in a lonely spot, and would either steal his life and health little by little, or care for his needs as a mate, even to bearing his children. The fox would only leave when the man died, or when he discovered its true nature. It was also believed to be capable of possessing people at a distance. It could be driven out by beating or burning the possessed person, or by calling an exorcist to argue it into leaving. The latter course was accompanied by giving money to the local Inari shrine, and leaving a dish of sweet red beans and rice there for the foxes to eat.

*Typical advantages:* Acute Taste and Smell, Appearance (Attractive) or better, and Night Vision. *Typical disadvantages:* Impulsiveness and Sense of Duty. *Typical skills:* Armoury, Dancing, Fast-Talk, Sex Appeal, Two-Handed Sword, Spells of Illusion and the spells Permanent Possession (done from afar) and Steal Strength.

## Oni

**ST:** 40-45      **Speed/Dodge:** 8/10      **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 16-21      **PD/DR:** 1/1      **Weight:** 380 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10      **Damage:** \*  
**HT:** 20/30      **Reach:** C

\*Bite for 2d+1 cut, plus 1d-3 impaling from horn

Oni are tall ugly goblins with large horns and fangs, who live in the mountains. They are intelligent, and dress in loincloths made of tiger skins. The tetsubo is their weapon of choice.

Oni sometimes use Shapeshifting and Illusion to appear to travelers as normal human beings. At other times, they appear by choice in a form with one minor "mistake" (a Buddhist monk with a third eye atop his shaved head, or a traveler with no features at all – a "potato face").

*Typical advantage:* Alertness. *Typical disadvantage:* Appearance (Ugly). *Typical skills:* Brawling, Staff, Stealth and Illusion spells.

## Tatsu (Dragon)

**ST:** 55-70      **Speed/Dodge:** 22/10      **Size:** 12  
**DX:** 14      **PD/DR:** 4/6      **Weight:** ½-2 tons  
**IQ:** 20      **Damage:** 3d imp  
**HT:** 15/70-90      **Reach:** R, C, 1, 2

Tatsu are huge, snakelike creatures of cloud and water, two yards wide and 10 yards long. They lack wings, but can run across the sky on the tops of the clouds. They do not breathe fire, but are masters of water and weather. They resent humans who spoil the natural beauty of their home locality. Occasionally, the Dragon King banishes a tatsu



from his undersea realm to the lakes and rivers of Japan, and many tatsu have their own palaces at the bottom of mountain lakes.

A dragon may cooperate with humans for its own reasons; it can speak human languages, if it is inclined to do so. Its oath, once given, is never broken. Although a human army is one of the few things a dragon really fears, tatsu sometimes participate in wars. Tatsu are mortal enemies of the Giant Centipede. Humans make Fright Checks at -3 (at -7 if they suffer from Mild Aichmophobia, Ophiophobia or Teratophobia; -10 if the fear is severe).

*Typical advantages:* Appearance (Beautiful), Luck. *Typical disadvantages:* Pacifism (Self-defense only), Vow. *Typical skills:* Literacy, Poetry, Research, Swimming, Spells of Water, Geomancy and Shapeshifting.

## Giant Centipede

**ST:** 40-50      **Speed/Dodge:** 6/7      **Size:** 5-8  
**DX:** 14      **PD/DR:** ½      **Weight:** 100-500 lbs.  
**IQ:** 2      **Damage:** 1d+1 imp\*  
**HT:** 15/25-35      **Reach:** C

The Giant Centipede grows to be 25 feet in length, 3 feet in width and 1 foot in height. Humans make Fright Checks at -1 (at -5 if they suffer from Mild Entomophobia or Teratophobia; -8 if the phobia is severe). Its eyes are like glowing lanterns: anyone who looks at it must make a successful Will roll or become fascinated, unable to move for 1d turns (after which he may make another Will roll). Animal Handling aids in combat against it (see p. B46), but has no other effect.

Giant centipedes can breathe both air and water. They sometimes attack and eat young tatsu in their underwater homes.

Giant centipedes bite for 1d+1 impaling damage, as well as injecting a venom that necessitates an immediate roll against HT-6. A failed roll results in the victim taking an extra 1d damage and becoming nauseated and dizzy (-3 to all attribute checks and skill rolls) for 1d hours. If the HT-6 roll is made, no damage is taken, but the victim feels sick for 3d minutes (-3 to all attribute checks and skill rolls, as above). A critical failure means death.

# NEW MARTIAL ARTS RULES

# 4



*By C.J. Carella*

*Additional material by J.C. Connors, Geoffrey E. Fagan, Burnie Fox, Steffan O'Sullivan and Charles Wheatley*

*Illustrated by Ed Decker*

The following pages contain several new advantages, skills and maneuvers for *Martial Arts* campaigns, as well as several new styles. Many of the new skills and maneuvers are "cinematic" (see p. MA18); the GM has to decide whether they exist at all in his campaign world, and whether they are available to PCs.

## New Advantages

### Controlling Multiple Attacks

The optional Multiple Attack rules on p. MA48 lead to problems in some campaigns. Some players contrive to have their characters stretch the already unrealistic limits of those rules to their breaking point. Characters with half a dozen attacks per second or more become commonplace, and then are given some advantages from *GURPS Supers* to allegedly give them 12+ attacks per second! Outlined below are some ways for GMs to prevent abuses.

#### A Second's Still a Second

No matter how extraordinary the reaction times of a character are, there are limits to how much he can accomplish in a second. GMs should feel free to disallow any complex maneuver used with other attacks. Most of the multiple attacks should be straightforward kicks and punches. A Jump Kick should count as two attacks, for instance.

#### Super-Martial Artists

The Altered Time Rate advantage from p. SU35 allows a character to "live" two seconds for each real second that passes; additional levels increase this time accordingly. Some players have then gleefully designed a Chambara-style martial artist and given him that advantage, doubling or tripling his already numerous attacks. This is an abuse; the Chambara fighting rules already assume the character is moving faster than is humanly possible. Each level of Altered Time Rate should increase the number of attacks by *one*. So, a character with Karate-21 (normally giving him 4 attacks per second) and 2 levels of Altered Time Rate (which would give him 3 seconds of subjective time per turn) would *not* have 12 attacks per second, but only *six* attacks per second.

#### Circumstances

No matter how many attacks a character has, some situations will prevent him from using them. If the martial artist is dodging the full RoF of a submachine gun, he should probably be limited in the number of actions he can take – he has been literally dodging bullets for a full second!



### Harmony with the Tao

20 points

Flexible and spontaneous, one who understands the Way (see p. MA7) does not need training or preparation. He can simply do things, without knowing how. Someone in harmony with the Tao can attempt any one skill roll at his IQ or DX as appropriate, once per *game session*. The character does not incur any default penalties. Harmony with the Tao applies to skills which normally have no default, including any Cinematic skill or maneuver. It does not, however, allow one to perform a task without appropriate tools.



### Sharpshooter

45 points

This is the cinematic ability that supernaturally accurate shootists possess, the equivalent of Weapon Master (see p. MA25) but for handguns. To a sharpshooter, the gun is a natural extension of his hand, and he can make uncannily precise shots without aiming. Only handguns can be used in this manner. The character never takes a Snap Shot penalty, and he automatically gets the Accuracy bonus of his weapon, *without* a turn of aiming. Furthermore, he can use any handgun, from a flintlock pistol to a hand blaster, at a default value of DX, or his highest gun skill-2, whichever is greater. The sharpshooter also has an innate understanding of the workings of any handgun; he can make Armoury rolls for any handgun, even models he has never seen (apply the TL penalties for guns of different Tech Levels, as per p. B185, but the maximum penalty is -6 to skill).

This skill is utterly cinematic, and is available only during character creation; someone is either born a Sharpshooter, or he isn't. No amount of training will give another character this instinctual mastery of the gun.

## New Skills and Skill Changes

### Realistic Skills

#### Fencing

See p. B50

To use the various advanced fencing rules described in this section, fencers must specialize in a specific weapon, either rapier, smallsword or saber. Each defaults to the other at -4; it takes several hours of practice to become familiar with each weapon. One way to deal with this is to treat the other two sword types as Average Maneuvers defaulting to the primary skill at -4, and invest points as per the Maneuver Table on p. MA36. For 4 points, the -4 penalty would be completely eliminated for one other weapon.

### **Cloak (Physical/Average)**

This is the skill of using a cloak, both offensively and defensively. This was actually studied as a skill. Treat a cloak in close combat as if it were a shield (see sidebar, p. B114).

There are two types of cloak used in combat: a large, heavy, full-length cloak such as travelers wear, and the smaller, light-weight, torso-length dress cloak of a 17th-century gentleman. They are described on p. 124.

### **Intimidation (Mental/Average)**

This is a social "influence" skill, used for persuasion. The essence of intimidation is to convince the subject that you are able and willing, and perhaps eager, to hurt him. In many cases, a good Intimidation roll may prevent a fight.

Intimidation may be substituted for a reaction roll in any situation, though it is at a -3 penalty when used in a request for aid. A successful intimidation roll gives a Good (though not friendly) reaction. A failed roll gives a Bad reaction. Most people will remember an intimidation attempt whether successful or not, for a long time; it can permanently affect an NPC's attitude.

When Intimidation is used against a PC (or, at the GM's option, against an NPC), this can also be rolled as a contest of Intimidation vs. Will. See *Influence Rolls*, sidebar, p. B93.

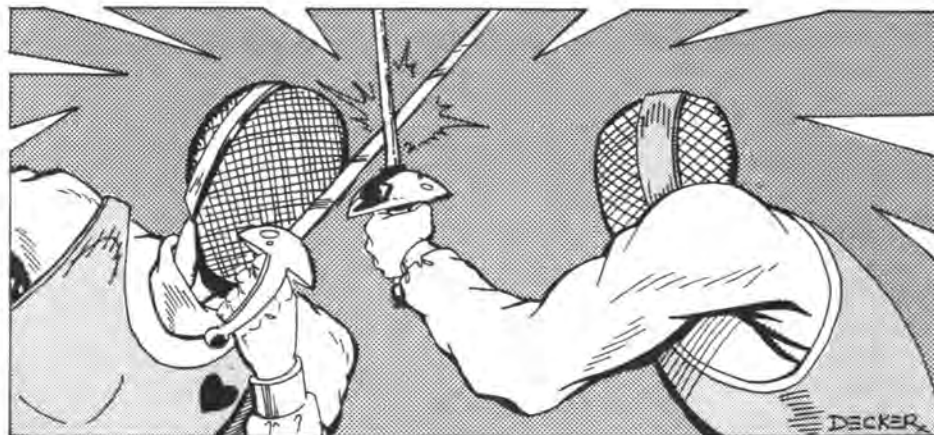
**Modifiers:** Up to +2 for displays of strength and bloodthirstiness. Appropriate Reputation modifiers will certainly count! +1 for every 6" of height you have over the subject, -1 if you are shorter (-2 if you are more than 6" shorter). +2 for hideous appearance. +2 for every level of Status over the subject. +2 if you have some sort of power over the subject.

### **Cinematic Skills**

All the skills listed below have the prerequisite Trained by a Master (see p. MA25).

### **Blinding Touch (Mental/Very Hard)**

This is an attack to a specific pressure point that blinds the target temporarily. To use the skill, the attacker first has to successfully hit the target's forehead in a particular spot, making a Karate-8 roll or Hit Location (Karate)-5 roll, whichever is higher. The attack does no damage, but the target has to win a Quick Contest between the attacker's Blinding Touch skill and his HT or be blinded for 2d seconds. During that time, all attacks will be at -10, and active defenses will be at -4 if the victim makes a Hearing-2 roll; otherwise he cannot defend at all!



**Defaults to DX-5  
Buckler-4 or Shield-4**

**Defaults to ST-5 or  
Acting-3**

**No Default;**

**Prerequisite: Pressure Points-15+**



### **Optional Combat Rules**

Described below are some options GMs can introduce into their *Martial Arts* campaigns. Some may help speed play along, and others may increase the power of martial artists. Some GMs and players may find them potentially unbalancing, at least in some settings.

#### **Only the Best Shall Win**

When two highly-skilled martial artists mix it up, fights can last almost endlessly because attacks on both sides are easily defended. One way to deal with this problem is to increase the chance for Critical Hits (see p. MA48). Another system is presented here. *Note:* this optional rule will give high-skilled characters an enormous advantage over inferior foes.

When an attack is rolled, keep track of by how much the modified skill roll succeeded; for every *two* points the attack succeeded by (rounded down), the defender is at -1 to his Active Defenses.

*Example:* Master Lung has Karate-24, and he is fighting the Skull (Karate-18, Kicking-18). Master Lung chops at the Skull's neck (Karate-5 roll), and rolls a 12, making his modified skill roll by 7. The Skull's normal Parry is 12, but he is at -3 (7 divided by 2, rounded down) for a total of 9. He rolls an 8 and defends. The Skull's counterattack is a kick to the body; he rolls a 9, beating his Kicking maneuver by 9. Master Lung's super-high Parry of 16 is at -4; he rolls a 13 and is hit!

This rule will tend to make characters aim at easy targets in combat with skilled opponents, since they will want to inflict the maximum penalty possible on their enemies' defenses. A huge difference in skill will usually spell doom for the lesser character (it usually does anyway, but with this method it happens more quickly).

*Continued on next page ...*



### Optional Combat Rules (Continued)

#### Reduced Concentration for Cinematic Skills

This option allows characters to use cinematic skills more quickly. If the GM uses this rule, Trained by a Master practitioners will have an enormous edge over normal martial artists, so he must consider it carefully.

This rule replaces "turns of concentration" with "attacks." For instance, Power Blow takes 20-Skill turns to ready; now it would take 20-Skill *attacks* to ready. Both the attack and an Active Defense are lost for every attack used in concentrating on the cinematic maneuver. Since Trained by a Master characters have several attacks every turn, this dramatically reduces the time to ready several cinematic abilities. If the character has more attacks than it takes to ready the skill, he can attack on that turn. Regardless of how many attacks he has on that turn, he can only make 1 attack (and has 1 Active Defense) that turn. Furthermore, his initiative goes down by 1 for every attack he spent concentrating.

*Example:* The Purple Mantis is Trained by a Master, and has Karate-24 and Power Blow-17. His Karate skill gives him 5 attacks per second; it takes him 3 attacks to ready his Power Blow skill. That means that he can perform 1 Power Blow every turn; he could only do 1 attack per turn in this way, however. His Move is 8, but it would be treated as 5 for initiative purposes for that turn.

The cinematic skills that would benefit the most from this rule would be Power Blow and Breaking Blow, which ordinarily take at least one full turn of concentration. As a result, martial artists could deliver devastating blows with ease. This rule might therefore be best left for highly cinematic or "four-color" campaigns.

*Continued on next page . . .*

#### Dislocating (Physical/Hard)

*No Default;*

*Prerequisite: Escape-15+*

This advanced escape technique is rumored to be taught to some ninja clans and other assassin cults. The user can temporarily dislocate limb joints in order to slip through bonds. For instance, by displacing certain hand bones, the character can easily slip out of handcuffs. To use this skill, the character has to concentrate for (20-Will minutes) and make a Dislocating roll, at *half* the penalties to the Escape roll; if successful, he receives a +3 bonus to his Escape skill, or can add  $\frac{1}{2}$  of his Dislocating skill to the Escape roll, *whichever is higher*. On a failure by 2 or less, nothing happens. On a failure by 3 or more, the character hurt himself, taking 1d damage if he was dislocating the hand or ankle, or 1d+1 if he was trying to dislocate an arm or leg joint, which may cripple the limb. On a critical failure, the character automatically takes enough damage to cripple the limb.

#### Flying Leap (Mental/Hard)

*Prerequisites:*

*Power Blow and Jumping*

This skill allows martial artists to make incredible leaps, covering 10+ yards in a single bound. The character must concentrate for 20-Skill seconds. For the following round, his strength will be *tripled* for jumping purposes (see p. B88). On a failure, jumping rolls will be at -5. A critical failure means the character falls down automatically.

Someone making a Drop Kick, Jump Kick, or Flying Jump Kick can use the ST multiplier given by the Flying Leap skill for damage purposes. All attacks done in this manner are at an additional -2 to hit, due to the increased difficulty in timing.



#### Flying Fists (Mental/Very Hard)

*Prerequisites:*

*Karate-20+, and Power Blow, Breaking Blow, Mental Strength, and Meditation at 16+*

This is the mythical skill that allows martial artists to strike enemies *from a distance*. No established martial art teaches it; to learn the skill, qualified students must search for a teacher that knows it. Only a handful of masters in any given game world know the secret of the Flying Fists – if it exists at all.

The attacker must be able to see the target and concentrate for (25-Skill) turns. At the end of the round, he can make a Flying Fist roll against the target, minus any distance/speed modifiers (see p. B201). If the roll is successful, the attacker



can then make a Karate punch or kick in the air, also minus all distance/speed modifiers, *and the target will take damage as if he had been hit*. No defense roll is possible, unless the target knows he is being attacked in this manner, in which case he can “project” his Chi to defend against the attack; this is resolved by rolling a Quick Contest, the defender’s Mental Strength or Will roll (whichever is higher) against the Flying Fist skill. If the defender wins or ties, he takes no damage.



***Hypnotic Hands (Mental/Hard)***

***No Default;***

***Prerequisite: Hypnotism-15+***

The character makes hypnotic motions with his hands, lulling the enemy into a trance-like state. To use the skill, the target must be within (Skill/2) yards, and he must be able to see the attacker. The martial artist then must spend at least 1 turn performing the hand motions; during that time he can not make any attacks, and all Active Defenses are at -2. At the end of this period, the martial artist projects his Chi at the (hopefully) now suggestible victim. A Quick Contest between Hypnotic Hands and Will or Mental Strength is rolled; if the target wins, he is unaffected. The victim is at -1 for every turn above 1 that the attacker spent making the motions – if performed long enough, the technique will wear down the strongest-willed character.

If the victim loses the contest, he is Mentally Stunned (see p. B127) for 1 turn for every point by which he lost the Contest (roll against IQ normally to recover after that). During that period, the character will also be vulnerable to hypnotic suggestions: all Hypnotism rolls made against the victim for that period are resisted at -5 to Will (this -5 penalty also applies to such Hypnotic-based skills as Invisibility Art).

***Precognitive Parry (Mental/Hard)***

***No Default; Prerequisites:***

***Danger Sense or ESP Power 3 and***

***Precognition-15+ and one weapon skill at 20+***

This is a combination of psionic and Chi skills that allows martial artists to parry attacks they could not possibly defend against, like bullets and beam weapons. This is done by sensing where the incoming attack will arrive, and intercepting it with one’s limb or weapon *before* the attack gets there. To use this skill, one must first be aware that he is about to be attacked (he spots a gunman aiming at him, for instance). A roll against Precognitive Parry is then made. On a success, the character can make a Parry roll normally.

This doesn’t mean the character can swat bullets away with impunity, however. All the martial artist is doing is interposing a weapon (or maybe a limb) between himself and the bullet or beam. The attack will do damage normally against the weapon (use the Breaking Weapons rules on p. B111) unless the character makes his Parry roll by 5 or more, or scores a critical success; any damage past the one necessary to break the weapon (or cripple the hand or arm parrying the attack) will affect the defender. The only weapon exempt from this rule is the Force Sword (see p. MA87), which either burns up the bullet or deflects the energy beam. In fact, the skill is almost useless without Force Swords, so it is best limited to space-opera campaigns (see the Force Swordsmanship martial art description on p. 123). When used against normal attacks, the skill gives the character a +1 bonus on any Active Defense.

***Optional Combat Rules  
(Continued)***

***Concentrated Defense***

In real combat, a fighter can protect one part of his body at the expense of others. For example, when fencing with a foil, a leg and arm are forward to protect the torso, which is the only valid target. When the whole body is fair game, as with the epee, the fencer must move the leg back to prevent it from being hit, making the torso an easier target. The following rule simulates the concentration of defense.

Before an attack is initiated, defender may decide to more-heavily defend a certain portion of his body. The defender should write down the area of the body where he wishes to concentrate his defense. He gains a +1 bonus to the defense of this one area for every -1 penalty he takes for *all other* body parts, up to a maximum of +5 bonus or a minimum effective defense of 4 after the penalty. For simplicity, the 11 body parts are divided into four areas:

- 1) Head (Brain, head, eyes)
- 2) Torso (including the vitals)
- 3) Arms (both hands and arms)
- 4) Legs (both feet and legs)

A defense of the vitals only may be attempted for a +2 bonus for each -1 penalty to all other body parts, up to a maximum +6 – e.g., if a defender takes a full +6 bonus to guard the vitals, the defense of the rest of his body would be at -3.

A skilled opponent will notice a concentrated defense. For an attacker to realize that his opponent is favoring a certain body location, he rolls vs.  $\frac{2}{3}$  his highest weapon skill, *plus* the amount of bonus the defender is attempting to gain. Roll once before each attack. Success means the attacker can predict where the concentrated defense will be, and a critical failure means that he misinterprets the defense.

**Example:** Jean-Luc wants to keep his sword arm safe, so he concentrates his defense to give himself a +2 bonus to defend against attacks to his right arm or hand. He now has a -2 to defend against attacks to any other body part. His attacker, Frederick, rolls to see if Jean-Luc is favoring a certain body part. His Fencing skill is 15, so he rolls against a 10 plus the +2 bonus Jean-Luc is attempting, or a 12. He rolls a 14, indicating failure, and attacks Jean-Luc’s sword arm. The defender rolls vs. a 12 to parry (his normal parry is 10, plus the concentrated defense bonus) and rolls an 11. He parries.



### Dirty Tricks in a Campaign

Some of the maneuvers described in this section are considered "fighting dirty" – Eye Gouging and Face Attacks being the most glaring examples, as are the Head Butt and Ear Clap from *Martial Arts*. These maneuvers are unsportsmanlike, brutal, and unseemly. They can win a fight quickly, however. This may lead to some PCs relying on them a lot. Using dirty tricks continually to win fights may derail the tone of a *Martial Arts* campaign, which is usually designed around flashy maneuvers and heroic fights. If the big tough brawler that you painstakingly design is going to get his eyes poked out and his groin smashed on the first round, the tone of the campaign is going to change.

There are ways to limit dirty tricks in a campaign. First, most typical martial arts PCs will not come from a background that teaches those tricks. Most traditional schools do not condone such behavior. This means that most characters trying dirty tricks would be doing them from a default, and may be better off trying a more conventional method.

Secondly, PCs who gain a reputation as dirty fighters will receive a different treatment from both friends and enemies. People they defeat by using such brutal tactics are a lot more likely to hold a grudge than those bested through "honorable" means. A failed attempt to dishonestly cripple an enemy will probably lead to a nastier fight than it would have been otherwise, with worse consequences for the brawler if he loses. The GM has several options open to him if he wishes to limit the use of these tricks, such as having the PCs' peers frown on them, increasing the default penalties for non-streetwise characters, etc.

This is, of course, assuming the GM wishes to limit dirty tricks in a campaign. The more gritty and realistic a campaign is, the less likely dirty tricks will get in the way. A low-point cyberpunk campaign where all the PCs are street-bred thugs should have plenty of room for dirty tricks – and the enemies will be using them too!

## New Maneuvers

### Realistic Maneuvers

#### *Axe-Kick (Hard)*

*Defaults to Karate-4 or Kicking-2*

*Prerequisite: Karate or Kicking. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill.*

This attack consists of lifting the leg over the target and then bringing it down in a chopping motion. The attack does more damage than a normal kick, but is difficult to execute, and can only be used on targets that are less than one yard in height (a kneeling man, for instance), unless it is executed like a jump kick, in which case the roll is at an additional -1 but the attack does +1 damage. Damage is thrust+2 (+3 if jumping), plus Karate bonuses.

#### *Cat Stance (Average)*

*Defaults to Karate-3*

*Prerequisite: Karate*

The *Neko-Ashi-Dachi*, or Cat Stance, was developed in Okinawa, and is used mostly by Okinawan styles and some Chinese forms (although it could be easily incorporated into fantasy and science-fiction styles). Almost all balance is shifted to the back leg as the slightly raised front leg comes perpendicular to the left foot. The result is a leg that is prepared to strike almost instantaneously. It takes 1 second to enter Cat Stance, or no time at all if a roll is made.

On a successful Cat Stance roll, anyone entering the fighter's front hex may be kicked, without that kick counting as an action – essentially a "free" attack. This allows a martial artist to attack and then be ready to counterattack or defend.

The kick is treated like an ordinary Karate kick. Roll at Cat Stance-2, or Karate-5 if the default has not been improved at all. A failed roll will unbalance the kicker; -2 to DX and active defenses that turn.

Going into a Cat Stance is also useful in breaking Grapples from the rear (as long as the Cat Stance is performed after being grappled). If the fighter is grappled from the rear, he may attack with an elbow strike *and attempt to Break Free on the same turn*.

A person performing a Cat Stance may either change facing (any direction) or move 1 hex forward on his turn.

#### *Choke Hold (Hard)*

*Defaults to Judo-2 or Wrestling-3*

*Prerequisite: Brawling, Judo or Wrestling. Cannot be improved.*

This special Grapple consist on locking one forearm around the target's windpipe. This hold shuts off all oxygen from the victim, and is very difficult to break; the more the target struggles the tighter the choke becomes. This maneuver can also result in permanent damage to the target's throat. It was used by police to control dangerous criminals until its potential lethality prompted the authorities to ban it.

To effect a Choke Hold, the attacker must have Grappled the victim with both hands *from behind*. After a successful grapple, a Judo-2 roll is necessary to place the victim in the hold. Once the Hold is in place, the victim starts to suffocate (see p. B122). Breaking Free is very difficult; the victim is at -5 to all rolls to do so (attacks like Elbow Strikes can be used without any additional penalties, however). Also, the Choke Hold can inflict damage as per Strangling (see p. B112), if the user so desires; it may happen accidentally, if the victim is struggling wildly. Against an uncontrolled victim, make a Choke Hold roll at an additional -2 (Judo-4 or Wrestling-5) to avoid inflicting damage; if the attacker intends to hurt a thrashing victim, add +3 to the ST of the attacker for damage purposes.

### **Close Combat (Average)**

**Defaults to any Close Combat Weapon Skill-2 or other Weapon Skill-6**

**Prerequisite: Any weapon skill. Must specialize.**

Improving this maneuver is useful if it is used in conjunction with the Corps-a-Corps maneuver (see below). Normally, weapon attacks are at -2 in close combat, even for those with a reach of C. If this maneuver is learned, longer weapons may attack 1 hex short of their normal range at -6; this involves holding the weapon as far away from the target as possible and requires at least 1 hex of clearance behind and to one side of the attacker. Characters can reduce the penalty with certain weapons, by learning to shift grips on their weapons, practicing attacks that maximize the available maneuvering space, etc. Even so, only weapons with a reach of C can be used at no penalty; the minimum penalty for longer weapons is skill-3. This maneuver must be learned for each weapon skill the character wishes to improve.

### **Corps-a-Corps (Hard)**

**Defaults to Fencing or Jitte/Sai;**

**Prerequisite: Fencing or Jitte/Sai. Cannot be improved beyond Skill+2.**

A fencer uses this maneuver to keep an enemy in Close Combat by locking blades. To do this, the attacker must begin his turn in a front hex of his opponent. He then steps into the opponent's hex and attempts to bind the opponent's blade. He must win a Quick Contest (Corps-a-Corps versus the enemy's Weapon Skill) to lock blades that turn – taking one action, successful or not. Modifiers: Corps-a-Corps is at -3 vs. a Stop Hit (see pp. 109-110).

If the attacker does not win the Quick Contest, treat it as a case of two characters in the same hex. Either a Stop Hit or a Riposte (see pp. 108-110) will give the opponent a chance to hit the attacker before this happens. If the attacker succeeds, the blades are locked, and the opponent is free to perform any normal action (at an additional -2) that doesn't involve his sword. However, if the opponent wishes to leave the hex, *with his weapon*, he must win or tie a subsequent contest between his weapon skill+2 and the attacker's Corps-a-Corps. Each attempt counts as an action. He may try each turn (stepping out of the hex the turn he succeeds), or perform some other legal action. Simply dropping the weapon will allow him to step back out of the hex that turn, but the opponent may flip the weapon to any adjacent hex with a weapon skill roll.

The fencer who initiated corps-a-corps does not need to do anything to keep the two blades locked together. He may release the bound blade at any time. He may perform any other close combat action *at an additional -2* (improving the Close Combat maneuver does not eliminate this penalty), such as stabbing with a dagger in the off-hand, attempting to grab with an empty off-hand, etc. In a locked-blades situation, apply a -2 to all actions (except an attempt to break free of the bind) by either opponent, above and beyond any close combat modifiers.

Any fencing weapon can bind any other fencing weapon or rapier. Jitte/Sai weapons can bind fencing weapons and light swords and knives. Knives, short swords, broadswords, katanas, etc., cannot bind other blades.

### **Eye-Gouging (Hard)**

**Defaults to Brawling-9 or Karate-9**

**Prerequisite: Brawling or Karate**

This is the basic eye-poke attack. Damage is thrust-4 plus Brawling or Karate bonuses. Any damage past 2 points is ignored; an eye gouge is very unlikely to go past the eyes into the brain. However, even if no damage is done, eye-gouging is extremely painful. Roll 1d for every point of damage rolled (maximum 2), or 1d-1 if no damage is rolled; that's the DX and IQ penalty for the next turn. Furthermore, the character must make a HT-3 roll (HT if he has High Pain Threshold) or be stunned; roll against HT or IQ (whichever is higher) to recover.



## Partial Injuries

A realistic fact of combat is that an injury that will not cripple a body part will still decrease the effectiveness of a fighter. Usually, adrenaline will compensate for pain and injury over the first furious seconds of a fight, so most normal *GURPS* combats need not bother with the pain in an arm or a leg. Long tournaments with fights lasting several minutes, or a long string of separate fights, however, will last long enough to make bruises and minor sprains tell on the characters. To simulate this, GMs may wish to use the optional rules below.

A fighter can ignore the effects of all non-crippling injuries for (2×HT) seconds. At the end of that time, he will start suffering some impairment. The severity of this will be determined by the amount and location of the damage. Characters with High Pain Threshold *halve* all penalties, rounding down (so, a -1 penalty is fully ignored); a Meditation roll will also halve all penalties.

**Arms:** A character that takes damage to that arm will lose some effectiveness in its use. If he has taken less than 1/5 HT damage, the limb is hurt but still fully functional; the character suffers pain when he uses the arm, but that is all. He is at -1 DX for any action that involves that arm; this includes using two-handed weapons. If he has taken more than 1/5 HT but less than 1/3 HT damage, the arm is severely damaged, and motor abilities are lost; he is at -3 DX, and using the arm for strenuous activities may require a Will roll (GM's decision). If the damage is more than 1/3 HT, and up to 1/2 HT (which automatically cripples the arm), the character is at -5 DX for actions involving the arm.

If any of the Multiple Action rules are being used, at least 1/3 of all the character's attacks will be at the penalties described above, because they will be using the damaged arm.

**Legs:** If less than 1/5 HT damage is taken to one leg, the fighter will be at -1 to kick with *either* leg (either he is using the injured leg to kick, or he is *supporting his body* with it!). Any action requiring the character to travel for his full Move will require a Will roll to overcome the pain. Damage between 1/5 HT and 1/3 HT will reduce Move by 1. Kicking with the injured leg will be done at -3 DX; using the good leg to kick is done at -1 DX, but the character must make a HT roll or he will aggravate his leg injury, taking 1 point of damage. Injuries between 1/3 HT and 1/2 HT reduce Move by 3, the fighter is at -5 to kick with the injured leg, and he cannot stand on the injured leg.

**Body:** Body injuries can hurt combat performance. Reduce Move and DX by 1 if someone takes more than 1/2 HT damage to the body, and by 2 if he takes more than 2/3 HT damage.

## Face Attacks (Hard)

Defaults to Brawling-5

Prerequisite: Brawling

This nasty attack consists of grabbing a facial feature (ears and lips are favorites) and *pulling* it until something gives! Damage is thrust-3 plus Brawling bonuses (maximum damage is 1d, no matter how strong the character is). Like eye-gouging, this will induce a lot of pain: the victim will be at -2 DX and IQ or *twice* the damage rolled, whichever is higher (halve the penalties if the victim has High Pain Threshold).

## Finger Lock (Hard)

Defaults to Arm Lock-3;

Prerequisite: Arm Lock

This Arm Lock variant allows the martial artist to grab fingers and twist them painfully, often snapping them. Use the rules for Arm Locks (p. MA38) but all rolls are at -3 (except damage rolls) and, if enough damage to cripple the hand is done, the finger or fingers grabbed have been broken and any extra damage is lost. This maneuver allows for a quick disabling attack; on the other hand, if the victim makes a Will roll to ignore the pain (no roll is necessary if he has High Pain Threshold); he can throw punches at -3 skill with the crippled hand (a failure inflicts an extra 1d of damage to the *arm*) or use Elbow Strikes at no penalty.



## Fleche (Average)

Defaults to Fencing-3

Prerequisite: Fencing. Cannot exceed unmodified Fencing skill.

This attack consists of a swift advance to close the distance with the enemy, ending with a thrusting attack with a fencing weapon. An attack in fleche allows the attacker to move 2 hexes for his Move and Attack maneuver. Attacks during this advance are at -3. The effective skill of the attacker to resist Feints, Ripostes and Stop Hits is also at -3: the swift advance opens the character up for counterattacks.

## Floor Lunge (Hard)

Defaults to Fencing-4;

Prerequisite: Fencing. May not exceed base Fencing skill.

The Fencing equivalent of a Jump Kick, this maneuver consists of a lunge so long and low that the fencer loses his balance and places his free hand on the floor

to support himself. Treat this as a crouch; he will have to spend a turn getting up, during which he will not be able to add the bonus of a retreat to his defenses. The floor lunge adds 1 hex of reach to the fencer's attack, and +2 damage; furthermore, it subtracts 2 from the defender's parry or block because it comes in so low. All active defenses by the attacker are also at -2 on the turn of the lunge. If the multiple attack rules are being used, the floor lunge takes the place of 2 normal attacks. This maneuver is illegal in modern fencing tournaments.



**Head Lock (Hard)**

*Defaults to Judo-4 or Wrestling-4*

*Prerequisite: Judo or Wrestling. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill.*

This attack consists of putting the target's head in a lock, similar in some ways to a Choke Hold, but holding it in such a way that the target can be thrown while using the neck as the axis of the throw – which will almost certainly break the target's neck. The attacker must first roll against Judo-4 or Wrestling-4 to grab the neck (the target can make any Active Defense against this; PD does not protect). On a success, the target's head has been put in a lock. The following round, the attacker can try to either Choke the victim (treat this as a normal Strangling roll), or he can throw him; the throw is resolved as a Quick Contest between the attacker's Judo or Wrestling skill and the defender's ST, DX, Wrestling or Judo, *whichever is higher*. If the attacker wins, the target takes swing damage (plus a bonus equal to 1/8 Wrestling or Judo skill) to the neck, which is multiplied by 1.5. On a tie or a defender's win, no damage is taken and the victim can try to Break Free.

**Jab (Average)**

*Defaults to Boxing-3 or Karate-3*

*Prerequisite: Boxing. Cannot exceed Boxing skill.*

This is a quick snapping blow which can either allow multiple light attacks or be as a feint for a more powerful attack. Using a jab allows one extra attack that round, but both attacks must be jabs. Jab damage is Thrust-3 plus Boxing bonuses. Also, a jab can be used instead of a Feint maneuver; the jab is counted as an attack, and if it hits can do damage normally, but the same to-hit roll is used as a Feint roll (see p. B105); the next attack will get the bonuses of the Feint (if any).

*Example:* Leon "the Drill" Martinez has Boxing-14 and Jab-13. He attacks an adversary with Boxing-12 with a Jab. He rolls a 9, making his Jab roll by 4; the other boxer rolls his Parry successfully. However, the boxer also has to roll against his Boxing skill; he rolls a 12, losing the Contest by 4 points. On the next round, Leon throws a punch; his enemy will be at -4 to defend.

**Martial Arts and Psionics:  
Optional Rules**

Cinematic martial artists and psis both channel internal energies that most people are not aware of. Many believe that the so-called Chi powers are nothing more than psionic abilities triggered by physical condition and meditation techniques. GMs wishing to combine cinematic martial arts with psionic powers should decide whether Chi and psi abilities are one and the same, or different types of energy.

The following theory could work well in a cinematic campaign: Chi (see p. MA73) is the root of both cinematic abilities and all psionic powers. Psis are adepts whose powerful Chi has been channeled into actions affecting the external world. Cinematic martial artists use their Chi to affect their own bodies. Both are two sides of the same coin. The two sets of abilities can interact and be combined, or can resist each other.

Using this theory as a base, outlined below are some possible ways in which psi powers and cinematic abilities can interact with each other. These rules will allow martial artists to stand off psionists, and will make psionic martial artist characters very powerful. This will work in some campaigns, but may unbalance others. GMs will have to decide whether these rules fit with the tone of their campaign.

*Continued on next page ...*





## Martial Arts and Psionics: Optional Rules (Continued)

### Chi Opposing Psi

Mental Strength (see p. MA33) can resist any telepathic ability, including Telereceive, Mental Blow, Mental Stab, etc. – but only if the martial artist is aware that he is being targeted by a psi. A psi attempting any of these skills must first win a Quick Contest of skill between his Telepathic skill and the subject's Mental Strength (plus Strong or Weak Will modifiers) before proceeding with the regular skill rolls. Mental Strength can also resist Psychic Vampirism powers (see p. P16).

Body Control (see p. MA31) can resist Direct Telekinetic Attacks (pp. B172 and P35); the martial artist is trying to undo the damage the psi is causing! Immovable Stance can resist being moved telekinetically, but at -3.

### Enhancing Martial Arts with Psi

A fighter Trained by a Master with psionic abilities can use psi to enhance some of his combat abilities. Telekinetic psi add half of their power to the Immovable Stance (p. MA32) and Push (p. MA34). A character can increase his punching strength by using telekinesis to reinforce his Chi; when using Breaking Blow, Power Blow and Flying Leap, the character can add ½ his Telekinesis Power (rounded down) to the final modified ST, the character must roll both against Telekinesis skill and Power Blow to achieve this.

*Example:* Psi-Fists has ST 11, Power Blow-15 and Telekinesis Power 15, Skill-14. When striking with a Power Blow, his effective ST is 22; by making a successful Telekinesis roll, this ST is raised to 29!

Telepaths can add ⅓ of their Telepathy power to the following cinematic skills: Blind Fighting, Hypnotic Hands, and Invisibility Art.

*Continued on next page . . .*

### Lunge (Average)

Defaults to Fencing-2 or Katana-2  
Prerequisite: Fencing or Katana

This is a full-extension thrust, with the fencer stepping as widely as possible to reach as far and as fast as he can. Lunges have more reach and do more damage, but the defensive capabilities of the attacker are reduced. Attacks do +1 damage, and the reach of the weapon is increased by 1, but all Active Defenses are at -2 that turn. This bonus applies to thrusting attacks only. Characters with the Katana skill can use the lunge, but only when holding the katana two-handed.

### Neck Snap (Hard)

Defaults to ST-4  
Prerequisite: None. Cannot exceed ST+3.

This brute-force attack consists of grabbing and suddenly twisting the victim's head, hoping to snap the neck. A very strong man can kill instantly with this maneuver.

First, the character must Grapple the victim by the head with both hands. On the following round, the attacker rolls a Quick Contest, his Neck Snap maneuver versus the victim's ST or HT (whichever is greater), plus Toughness, if any. If the attacker wins the contest, he does swing crushing damage, which is multiplied by 1.5 against the neck. On a tie, or if the victim wins, no damage is inflicted. Neck damage, even if not lethal, can be crippling; if the victim survives, he must roll against crippling, as per p. B129; a lasting injury will keep the character in a neck brace for the allotted period, and all crushing damage done to him during that time will be *doubled* (representing the chance that the injury will aggravate itself).

### Parrying Kick (Special)

Defaults to Karate/2 or Brawling/2;  
Prerequisite: Brawling or Karate. Cannot be improved.

This rarely-taught maneuver uses the defender's leg to parry a low attack. The difficulty in using the leg as a parrying tool makes the parry equal to half the character's Karate or Brawling skill instead of ⅔. Parrying Kicks also have an Aggressive Parry version (use the stats on p. MA37, but use Kicking damage instead) that can be improved normally.

### Rabbit Punch (Average)

Defaults to Brawling-3  
Prerequisite: Brawling. Cannot exceed Brawling skill.

This is a swinging blow that uses both hands like a mace. The blow does swing damage plus Brawling bonuses. With his hands locked together, however, the character cannot parry very well; parry is only half Brawling skill.





### **Riposte (Hard)**

*Defaults to Weapon Skill-4*

*Prerequisite: Fencing or any Martial Arts skill*

This maneuver is taught in fencing schools as well as martial arts *dojos*. It consists of a quick counter-attack after successfully parrying an enemy attack. It can only be employed with thrusting weapons and hand attacks.

The character can choose to use this maneuver if he has been successfully attacked by a thrusting or hand attack. He must Parry the attack; if successful, he can instantly attack at -4. The enemy is at -1 to defend (he is still recovering from the attack), and at an additional -1 for every point by which the Parry was successful (do not count Passive Defense bonuses). For instance, if the character has Parry-10 and PD 2, rolling an 11 means he parried successfully, but the enemy does not have any penalty to parry the riposte beyond the automatic -1; if the parry roll had been 7, on the other hand, the enemy's total defense penalty would be -4!

### **Roundhouse Punch (Average)**

*Defaults to Brawling-3 or Boxing-3*

*Prerequisite: Brawling or Boxing. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill.*

This heavy punch is a wide swing with the whole body behind it. It is often used in an All-Out Attack (see p. B105). Damage is swing-1, plus Brawling or Boxing bonuses. This attack is both slow and easy to defend against, however; by using it, the attacker automatically surrenders initiative (he is "readying" his punching hand) and the target gets a +2 on active defenses against the roundhouse. Experienced fighters usually reserve the attack for use against a stunned foe; it makes a good *coup de grace*.

### **Shuto (Hard)**

*Defaults to Karate-3*

*Prerequisite: Karate. Cannot exceed Karate skill.*

This attack is a hand strike designed to go under the defender's guard. Damage is as per the normal hand strike, but the attack is Parried at -2 (there is no modifier to Dodge it, though).

### **Spinning Punch (Hard)**

*Defaults to Karate-2*

*Prerequisite: Karate. Cannot exceed Karate skill.*

This is the hand-attack equivalent to the Spin Kick described on p. MA42. It uses the same game mechanics, but damage is equal to Punch damage.

### **Stop Hit (Hard)**

*Defaults to Fencing-4*

*Prerequisite: Fencing. Cannot exceed Fencing skill.*

This is a risky maneuver in real combat, although it is frequently used in sports fencing, where only the thrust that hits first counts for scoring purposes.

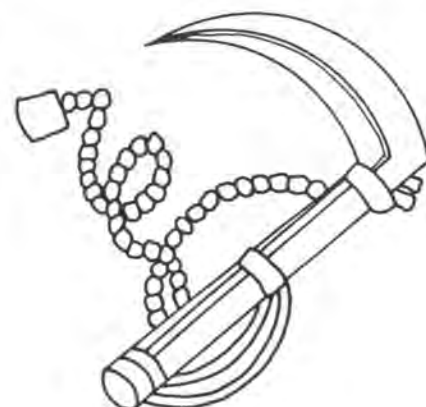
## **Martial Arts and Psionics: Optional Rules (Continued)**

### **Enhancing Psi Abilities with Chi**

The martial artist channels his internal Chi to strengthen the power of his psionic abilities. Power Blow can temporarily raise the Power of a psionic attack. For every *two* points a Power Blow roll is made by, raise the effective Power of the following psionic powers by 1: Mental Blow, Mental Stab (p. P21), Mind Sword (p. P23) or Telekinetic throw. Using Power Blow in this way costs 2 fatigue per use. A Kiai (p. MA33) roll (the character must shout at the enemy) will increase the effective skill of Mental Blow and Mental Stab by 1 for every point the roll is made by.

### **Other Interactions**

The list above is only the tip of the iceberg. Combining cinematic martial arts and psi abilities greatly increase the power of both. GMs must decide which of these combinations, if any, exist in the campaign.



## Old Styles, New Material

Several of the new maneuvers and cinematic skills listed in this pages could be incorporated in styles published in *Martial Arts*. Listed below are some suggested changes, and the modified point costs of those styles. These are only some of the possible changes; readers will probably figure out dozens or hundreds of others.

**Aikido: New Maneuvers:** Finger Lock. Cost: 6/13 points.

**Chin Na: New Maneuvers:** Choke Hold, Finger Lock, Head Lock, Neck Snap and Spinning Punch. Cost: 9/14 points.

**Capoeira: New Cinematic Maneuvers:** Acrobatic Kick, Springing Attack. Cost: 8/12 points

**Hapkido: New Maneuvers:** Riposte, Shuto. **New Cinematic Skills:** Flying Leap. Cost: 11/14 points.

**Jeet Kune Do: New Maneuvers:** Riposte, Jab, Spinning Punch. Cost: 17/23 points.

**Kendo/Kenjutsu: New Maneuvers:** Lunge, Riposte. Cost: 7/15 (Kendo), 9/17 (Kenjutsu).

**Kuntao: New Maneuvers:** Finger Lock, Head Lock, Lunge, Riposte. **New Cinematic Skills:** Blinding Touch. Cost: 14/24 points.

**Muay Thai: New Maneuvers:** Axe Kick, Jab, Riposte, Roundhouse Punch, Spin Punch. Cost: 18/20 points.

**Ninjutsu: New Optional Skills:** Hypnotism. **New Maneuvers:** Riposte. **New Cinematic Skills:** Blinding Touch, Dislocation, Hypnotic Hands. Cost: 22/38 points.

**Pancratium: New Maneuvers:** Jab, Riposte, Roundhouse Punch, Spinning Punch. Cost: 12/16 points.

**Pentjak Silat: New Maneuvers:** Close Combat, Finger Lock, Head Lock, Jab, Lunge, Neck Snap, Riposte. **New Cinematic Skills:** Hypnotic Hands. **New Cinematic Maneuvers:** Acrobatic Kick, Springing Attack. Cost: 26/35 points.

**Professional Boxing: New Maneuvers:** Jab, Riposte, Roundhouse Punch. Cost: 8/14 points.

**Professional Wrestling: New Maneuvers:** Choke Hold, Neck Snap, Piledriver. Cost: 11 points.

**Shaolin Kung Fu: New Maneuvers:** Axe Kick, Spinning Punch. **New Cinematic Skills:** Blinding Touch. **New Cinematic Maneuvers:** Hand-Clap Parry, Springing Attack. Cost: 16/32 points.

**Tae Kwon Do: New Maneuvers:** Axe Kick. **New Cinematic Skills:** Flying Leap. **New Cinematic Maneuvers:** Acrobatic Kick. Cost: 12/19 points.

**Wing Chun: New Maneuvers:** Close Combat. Cost: 11/29 points.

The Stop Hit is an attack launched at the same time an enemy attacks! The combatant using the Stop Hit is effectively surrendering his Active Defense. On the other hand, the original attacker cannot defend either, unless he abandons his attack and tries to use an Active Defense; if he does that, he is still at -1 to defend against the Stop Hit.

If both fighters press on with their attacks, roll a Quick Contest between the attacker's weapon or Fencing Skill and the defender's Stop Hit; the one with the highest Move gets a +1 on the contest. The winner rolls to hit first; if he hits and does damage, assess any shock and stunning penalties on the wounded character and halve them before applying them to his own attack. Even if the wound is enough to stun the enemy, he can still roll for his attack, at -4 or minus the damage taken, whichever is higher. On a tie, rolls to hit and damage are taken simultaneously, with effects taking place in the following turn.

This maneuver can result in both fighters being killed or incapacitated, so is rarely used in lethal combat. A character using a Stop Hit is very vulnerable to Ripostes and Feints; a common fencing tactic consists in inviting a Stop Hit with a Feint, and then attacking the off-balance character. If someone uses a Stop Hit in response to a Feint, he is at -3 skill to resist the feint.

## Cinematic Maneuvers

### Acrobatic Kick (Hard)

*Defaults to Acrobatics-4*

*Prerequisites: Acrobatics and Kicking*

This maneuver consists of an acrobatic tumble or somersault preceding a kick attack. The idea behind the unexpected movement is to confuse the opponent. The fighter must make an Acrobatics roll to perform the tumble; this counts as an attack. Then, roll a Quick Contest between Acrobatic Kick and the target's Karate or appropriate weapon skill; if the attacker wins, he can kick normally, and the defender is at -1 to defend for every point by which he lost the contest. If the target wins the contest, he is at +2 to defend.



### Hand-Clap Parry (Hard)

*Defaults to Parry (Judo or Karate)-5*

*Prerequisite: Karate or Judo. Cannot exceed normal Judo or Karate Parry.*

This cinematic maneuver was used by the most skilled (or foolhardy) samurai of old to defend against sword-strokes bare handed and then disarm the enemy. The maneuver consists of trapping the attacking blade between your hands! The precise timing this requires makes this all but impossible. On a missed Parry, the attacker can choose whether to hit a hand or his original target. On a success, the



defender can try to disarm the swordsman with his next attack by winning a contest between his Karate or Judo skill and the enemy's weapon skill-3. Alternatively, he can launch a kick attack; the swordsman cannot Parry unless he lets go of his sword and uses his bare hands. Dodging is possible, but at -2 for as long as he holds the sword.

### **Initial Carving (Average)**

*Default varies*

**Prerequisite: Fencing. Must specialize in each letter.  
Cannot exceed weapon skill.**

Swashbucklers who wish to carve an initial while fighting can attempt to do so. Determine where the initial is to be carved and the number of strokes necessary to carve the initial – a Z takes three, for example. The first cut of the initial is at no penalty beyond the normal penalty to hit that particular body part. Thus, an initial on the chest is at -0 for the first stroke, a letter on the forehead is at -5, and so on. If the first stroke does at least 1 point of cutting damage, anything but metal or a similarly hard material will be marked. *An impaling weapon may make a 0-HT scratch for initial-carving purposes.* This will cause a scar if made on skin, and will rip cloth but not armor.

The remaining strokes of the initial are more difficult to place accurately. They are at -4 (in addition to any body part modifiers) for an initial roughly 4 inches by 4 inches. This modifier is necessary to ensure that the strokes are aligned well with the first stroke. If a subsequent stroke attempt is failed by 4 or less, the slash is made, but is not properly connected to the previous lines – there is either a gap or an overlap – roll a die. This can be very bad form – it might even change the initial to another letter! it is possible to attempt to connect lines that are too far apart (try again, same modifier), or simply start over in another spot. The victim might object to the erasing process, however, which involves at least half a dozen criss-cross lines. Initial-carving should only be attempted in a combat situation by the very skilled, or those named Inigo, Ignatz or Irene.

The maneuver must be improved for each letter.

*Example:* Don Lorenzo Estrada wishes to leave the initials L.E. on the skin of several (unwilling) acquaintances, so he practices long and hard. He spends 2 character points on the L and 4 on the E (which takes 4 strokes, so he wants to get it right the first time). His Fencing skill is 14; he will make the first stroke of each letter on a 14 or less. The next part of the L is at Default+3, giving a net - 1 to his skill – he needs a 13. The E is at Default+4; he has no penalty to carve it at all.

### **Piledriver (Hard)**

*Defaults to Wrestling-4*

**Prerequisite: Wrestling**

This is a devastating elbow strike delivered by the attacker's whole body, which is slamming down on the foe. This attack can be used against a foe while he is kneeling, sitting or lying down; the piledriver is an ideal follow-up to a Take-down. The attack does swing damage plus 1/5 of the attacker's Wrestling skill. This also counts as a Slam. The victim can only Dodge; if the attacker misses and hits the ground, he takes 2d-2 damage unless he makes an Acrobatics or Breakfall roll.

### **Springing Attack (Average)**

*Defaults to Acrobatics-3*

**Prerequisites: Acrobatics and Karate**

The martial artist using this maneuver must first adopt a low, crouched position; this requires a Karate roll. The intention behind this crouch is to store energy and spring forward in an explosive, powerful attack. On the turn following the crouch, the martial artist can roll against his Springing Attack; on a success, his next attack will do +2 damage. An ordinary failure means the martial artist loses his balance and is at -2 DX and Active Defenses; a critical failure will cause the attacker to fall down!



### **Okinawan Ranks**

Most Okinawan styles (see Is Shin Ryu and Goju-Ryu) use a belt system similar to the one on p. MA58. These ranks have names as well as colors, with ten ranks before reaching the black belt. The names and belt-colors, as well as average skills, are described below. The skill level is the average of all Primary skill levels:

*Jukyu (White Belt): 10 or less.*

*Kyukyu (Yellow): 10.5.*

*Hachikyu (Orange): 11.*

*Shichikyu (Green): 11.5.*

*Rokkyu (Blue): 12.*

*Gokyu (Purple, First Level): 12.5.*

*Yonkyu (Purple, Second Level): 13.*

*Sankyu (Brown, First Level): 13.5.*

*Nikyu (Brown, Second Level): 14.*

*Ikkyu (Brown, Third Level): 14.5.*

## Styles

This section describes several new styles for use in a *Martial Arts* campaign. They are divided into two types:

historical real-world styles and fictional fantasy and science-fiction ones.

### Historical Styles



#### Bando Animal Forms

The Bando style described here is the Boar form of Bando. Each animal form has a different emphasis, with different maneuvers and skills. They are briefly described below. All the other skills of Bando remain unchanged.

**Bull Form:** Strong stances and powerful takedowns are used in this form. *Skills:* Wrestling. *Cinematic Skills:* Push.

**Cobra Form:** This form emphasizes attacks on the vital points. *Maneuvers:* Finger Lock, Hit Location (Karate). *Cinematic Skills:* Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

**Eagle Form:** Concentrates on double-handed parries and swift strikes. *Maneuvers:* Riposte.

**Panther Form:** Like their namesake, Panther practitioners circle around the victim, then pounce. *Skills:* Jumping. *Cinematic Skills:* Flying Leap. *Cinematic Maneuvers:* Springing Attack.

**Python Form:** Gripping and strangling maneuvers are the main focus. *Skills:* Judo becomes a Primary Skill, replacing Karate. *Maneuvers:* Choke Hold, Head Lock, Neck Snap. *Cinematic Skills:* Pressure Points.

**Scorpion Form:** Aping the stinger of the scorpion, practitioners seize and strike nerve clusters in painful ways. *Skills:* Judo. *Maneuvers:* Hit Location (Karate). *Cinematic Skills:* Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

### Bando (Burmese Martial Art) 13 points/17 points

Developed in the former British colony of Burma, Bando has long been valued by military men for its combat effectiveness. Among its better known practitioners are Britain's famed Gurkha soldiers. Because of its emphasis on practicality, it is sometimes referred to as "the jeep of the martial arts."

Bando was introduced in America in 1959 by Dr. Maung Gyí, whose father was instrumental in modernizing the system in his native Burma.

Developed by military men for training and conditioning, modern bando combines self-defense (thaing), unarmed combative sport (bando) and armed combative training (banshay). While thaing and bando weren't fused into one system until the 1930s, the roots of the system reach back to ancient Burma where *bama lethway*, or Burmese boxing, was once the national sport of nobility.

The primary targets for the Bando fighter are the legs, followed by the torso and finally the head. Training in the art is not picked up overnight; the mental and physical aspects of the art are ingrained over a period of several years. Advanced students then can train in one of the advanced "animal forms" that the style offers. The basic combat philosophy behind Bando calls for speed, deception and a continuous attacks: the enemy is to be defeated quickly and decisively. The targeting of limbs means that the attack needs not be lethal, as long as the enemy is rendered incapable of further aggression. That quest for a fierce and decisive victory has gained Bando practitioners a reputation as formidable opponents.

Bando may not be the flashiest of the martial arts, but it is certainly one of the most explosive. This is particularly true of the boar system of Bando (for other animal varieties, see the box). This little known animal style emphasizes hard locks, explosive power and close-in techniques designed to steamroll and opponent. In keeping with the animal itself, the bando boarman prefers to fight in close combat. The elemental philosophy of the system is quite simple: no enemy should be able to survive a close-in encounter with a trained practitioner.

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Philosophy (Buddhism), Savoir-Faire (dojo).

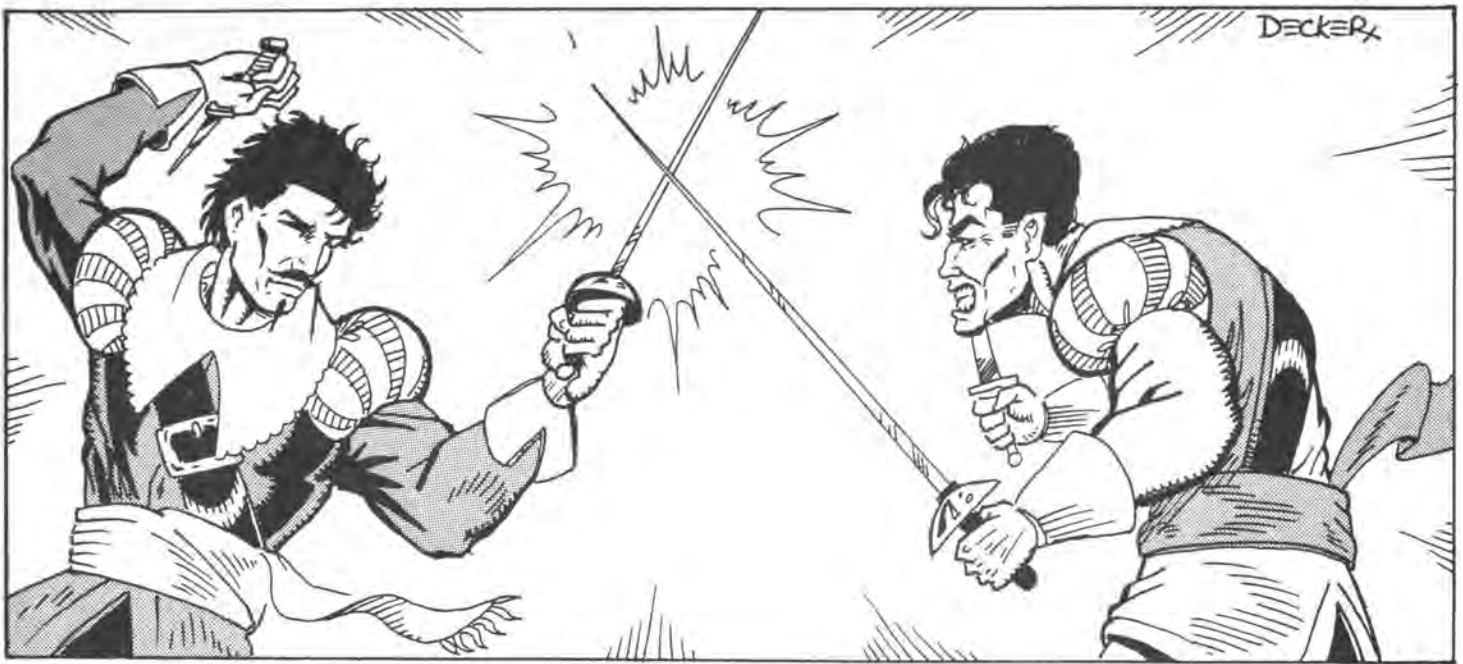
*Secondary Skills:* Judo, Knife, Short Staff, Whip.

*Optional Skills:* Karate Sport, Tournament Law, Body Language, Malay.

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Aggressive Parry, Close Combat, Elbow Strike, Head Butt, Head Lock, Jab, Knee Strike, Riposte, Shin Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Breaking Blow, Mental Strength, Power Blow.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Roll with Blow.



## French Fencing

**9 points/16 points**

This fencing style was developed in France during the late 17th century. A change in fashion prompted its creation. The French court had introduced the smallsword as the sidearm of choice; the long rapier was seen as too cumbersome and inelegant. This light weapon soon proved to be ideal for complicated and fast maneuvers, and a practiced wielder could use it to attack and defend without the problems of the rapier. The resulting fighting techniques that were developed were the direct precursors of modern fencing. Fencing schools (*salles*) were opened throughout France, and then throughout the world.

The smallsword is not a very powerful weapon; a person can be stabbed multiple times with it without being disabled, unless a vital organ is pierced. On the other hand, its lightness made it ideal for complex maneuvers, swift attacks and carefully-aimed hits. Fencing became a complex art.

Shortly afterwards, the first set of rules that turned fencing into a sport rather than a combat skill were also devised. Foil fencing restricted the number of targets that could be struck as well as the permissible maneuvers. This greatly reduced the usefulness of fencing in real life. Eventually, however, a separate style of fencing, epee fencing, was designed to prepare duellists for real combat.

In either form, French style fencers are taught several maneuvers designed to overcome the target's defenses. Feint and counter feint, strikes and counterattacks are all tried in an attempt to find weaknesses in an adversary. In a cinematic campaign, dedicated swordsmen can enjoy the benefits of the Weapon Master advantage and can perform several cinematic maneuvers.

*Primary Skills:* Fencing (Swords), Fencing Art.

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Savoir-Faire (*Salle*), Tactics.

*Optional Skills:* Black Powder Weapons, Body Language, Cloak, Main-Gauche, Riding (Horse), Off-Hand Weapon training (Fencing), Wrestling.

*Maneuvers:* Close Combat, Corps-a-Corps, Fleche, Feint (Fencing), Lunge, Riposte, Stop Hit.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Initial Carving, Enhanced Parry (Fencing).

## Goju-Ryu Karate

**14 points/22 points**

Goju-Ryu was created by Kanryo Higashionna during the late 19th century in Okinawa. Many other modern Karate styles have traces of Goju-Ryu in them. It was later brought to the United States during the mid-20th century.

The spiritual foundation of Goju-Ryu is deeply rooted in Taoism (see p. MA7). This inner calmness is apparent in many of the style's katas. Taosim, however, is not as apparent in modern dojos as it was in years past. Traditional Goju-ryu tends to be more "internal" (see p. MA72) than most other forms of Karate.

Goju-Ryu's main principle is to never meet the enemy with the same strength that he is using. In Chinese, Goju means hard-soft. If the enemy attacks full force, never use an equally strong block. The style, however, teaches powerful techniques designed to down a foe in one blow, and counterattacks that can break the attacker's limbs (the Aggressive Parry maneuver). Timing and reaction speed are the key to Goju-Ryu. In addition, dramatic breathing techniques are emphasized, and considered as important to master as any attack or defense.

In addition to empty-hand techniques, this style teaches a variety of Okinawan weapon skills, with emphasis on the staff and the sai. This makes Goju-Ryu a well-balanced art, combining several aspects from spiritual martial arts and combative, external styles.

*Primary Skills:* Breath Control, Karate, Karate Art, Savoir-Faire (Dojo), Staff, Jitte/Sai.

*Secondary Skills:* Flail, Tonfa, Tournament Law.

*Optional Skills:* Katana, Shuriken, Theology (Taoism), Yin-Yang Healing.

*Maneuvers:* Aggressive Parry, Back Kick, Cat Stance,

Elbow Strike, Ground Fighting, Jump Kick, Knee Strike, Sweeping Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Breaking Blow, Immovable Stance, Meditation, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Flying Jump Kick, Roll with Blow.



### Hashishin Style

**7 points**  
**(No Cinematic Abilities)**

This style comprises the skills of the dreaded Hashishins – the secretive Islamic cult that plagued the Middle East during the Middle Ages. The word assassin comes from their nickname *hashishin*, (hashish-eaters) which originates from the rumored custom the cultists had of using drugs before their killings. The order was founded in the early 11th-century in Persia, and was an offshoot of the Shiite muslims. The sect was divided into several groups, including the *Dais* (“Initiated”), *Refiks* (“Students”) and *Fedavis* (“Devoted Ones”). The *Fedavis* were the actual assassins. The leader of the Hashishin was known as the Old Man of the Mountain. The Hashishin were supposedly destroyed centuries ago, but it might have survived in secret to this day (for more information on the possibility of modern Hashishin, see *GURPS Illuminati*).

The Order of Assassins’ preferred weapon was the knife, although strangulation and poisoning were also employed.

A common tactic involved following the target at night until he reached a relatively deserted street. The Hashishin would move in, grab the victim and stab him to death. They were also known for sending their assassins to kill their targets in crowded public places. The Hashishin fully expected to be cut down in the ensuing chaos, believing that their place in Heaven was assured. The cold-bloodedness of such acts struck terror into the hearts of both the common populace and political and religious leaders.

In a Cinematic Campaign, the Hashishin might have access to magic spells. Perhaps some of their drugs were actually alchemical potions!

*Primary Skills:* Holdout, Knife, Shadowing, Stealth, Wrestling.

*Secondary Skills:* Broadsword, Brawling, Disguise, Knife Throwing, Poisons, Theology (Islamic).

*Optional Skills:* Shield, Spear, Riding (Horse).

*Maneuvers:* Feint (Knife) [2 points].

*Cinematic Skills and Maneuvers:* None, but may have access to magic.

### Hsing-Yi Chuan

**12 points/26 points**

This internal Chinese style has its origins in the Hunan province. The secrecy among the users of Hsing-Yi (the art was outlawed many times) has placed the style in obscurity for many centuries. After the Chinese Revolution, the style was taught to several students, and it has recently been exported to the United States.

Hsing-Yi espouses several principles common to internal styles like T'ai-Chi (p. MA77) and Pakua (p. MA70). Unlike both of those styles, however, Hsing-Yi is a militant, aggressive martial art with the goal of incapacitating opponents as quickly as possible. It develops Chi, but channels it in destructive ways; practitioners of other internal styles might take a dim view of Hsing-Yi's goals, which led to several rivalries and blood feuds between the competing styles.

The art uses several different animal movements for grappling, striking and throwing. The style combines solid stances with sudden changes of direction and devastating one-kill attacks. Body conditioning is achieved by having students strike each other repeatedly, and by hardening fists, elbows, knees and feet through practice blows (the cinematic advantage Iron Hand from p. MA25 would be common among masters of this style). Beginning students were taught several external techniques, which made them efficient fighters very quickly. As they advanced, they were taught Chi-enhancing techniques along the lines of T'ai Chi.

Hsing-Yi is very useful both in a realistic and a cinematic setting. The style is hard-hitting and devastating, and it also has several cinematic skills and maneuvers. The style teaches mostly empty-hand techniques, but some weapons, including the nunchaku and the spear, are also taught.

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Judo, Jumping.

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Breath Control, Meditation, Savoir-Faire (Dojo), one weapon skill from the following: Broadsword, Flail, Shortsword, Spear, Staff.

*Optional Skills:* Other weapon skills, Philosophy (Taoist).

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Axe Kick, Back Kick, Cat Stance, Jump Kick, Hook Kick, Kicking, Spin Kick, Spin Punch.

*Cinematic Skills:* Breaking Blow, Flying Leap, Immovable Stance, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, Push.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Parry (Bare Hands), Springing Attack.

### **Is Shin Ryu Karate** **13 points/20 points**

Is Shin Ryu was created by Tatsuo Shimabaku in 1954, and brought to the United States in the 1960s. Is Shin Ryu was derived from many different Okinawan karate styles, including Goju-Ryu (see p. 113), Shorin-Ryu, and Naha-Te.

As a new technique, Is Shin Ryu is not as spiritually developed as some karate arts. Still, many traditional teachings have been passed down and are imparted in Is Shin Ryu. Shimabaku himself taught eight ideals:

1. A person's heart is the same as Heaven and Earth.
2. The blood circulating is similar to the motion of the moon and the sun.
3. A manner of drinking and spitting is either hard or soft.
4. A person's unbalance is the same as his weight.
5. The body should be able to change directions at any time.
6. Strike when opportunity presents itself.
7. The eye must see all sides.
8. The head must see in all directions.

Is Shin Ryu is unlike many other karate styles. Both hard and soft techniques are taught equally, including Judo-like techniques. There are 11 major principles that distinguish Is Shin Ryu from other Okinawan martial arts:

1. All fancy techniques are eliminated.
2. Most kicks are low-line, aimed below the waist.
3. The fighting stances are usually short and natural with no wasted body motion.
4. Hand and foot techniques are emphasized equally, especially in katas.
5. There are many close ranged attacks.
6. Snap kicks and punches are taught with the limb extending only about 90%.
7. Both hard and soft (open-handed) blocking techniques are taught.
8. Attacks are blocked with the forearm muscle, not the bone.
9. The fist is formed with the thumb on top of the hand, rather than alongside the first two fingers.
10. Vertical punches are taught to increase speed and focus.
11. All techniques are multi-purpose.

In a cinematic campaign, the newness of the style might disqualify it from having any special techniques. However, it is possible that Is Shin Ryu practitioners have been passing down secret skills that were developed by older styles. True to the teaching of its founder, this style teaches how to see from all sides (Blind Fighting).

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Karate Art, Savoir-Faire (Dojo).  
*Secondary Skills:* Jitte/Sai, Judo, Flail, Staff, Tonfa, Tournament Law.

*Optional Skills:* Body Language, Katana, Philosophy (Taoism), Yin-Yang Healing.

*Maneuvers:* Back Kick, Breakfall, Cat Stance, Elbow Strike, Hook Kick, Jab, Jump Kick, Knee Strike, Shuto, Spin Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Blind Fighting, Immovable Stance, Kiai, Power Blow, Pressure Points.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Flying Jump Kick, Roll with Blow.

### **Italian Rapier Fencing** **8 points/23 points**

This is one of the oldest fencing styles adopted in the West, and was fully developed in the 16th century. The Italian rapier, or "slashing rapier" (see p. 126), was a long, well-balanced weapon designed primarily for thrusting. The rapier tended to be too long for adequate parrying, however (when using a slashing rapier, parry is  $\frac{2}{3}$  Skill, but only one parry is allowed per turn), so it was supplemented by a dagger or a cloak, which was used for parrying purposes; some of the older versions also taught parrying with the off-hand, protected by a gauntlet. Dodging was also a commonly-used move to avoid the enemy's thrusts (use the Dodge and Retreat rules on p. B109).

The original fencing techniques also used a lot of wrestling moves, with the fencers often moving into close quarters. The secondary combat mode of the Italian fencer consisted of fighting with the dagger alone, using wrestling moves to grapple the target and then stabbing him repeatedly with the dagger.

In a cinematic campaign, Weapon Master characters can be allowed. They would be able to perform incredible feats, like making multiple attacks in a second, making amazing dodges, etc.

*Primary Skills:* Cloak, Fencing (Rapier), Main Gauche.  
*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Off-Hand Weapon Training (Main Gauche), Wrestling.

*Optional Skills:* Black Powder Weapons, Broadsword, Two-Handed Sword, Riding (Horse), Savoir-Faire (16th-century Italian).

*Maneuvers:* Feint (Rapier), Feint (Main Gauche), Fleche, Hit Location (Rapier), Lunge.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Dodge.

### **Pao Chuan** **(Leopard Fist Kung Fu)** **13 points/32 points**

Pao chuan, or "leopard fist," was one of the several animal techniques taught at the Shaolin Temple (see p. MA7); each of these techniques developed various skills. The leopard style teaches the kung-fu student how to be proficient at low quarters from the solar plexus down. Ground encounters teach him various leg takedowns, sweeps, rolling strategies, clinch tactics and ground-level kicks. Practitioners attack with clenched foreknuckle strikes delivered at high speeds while sometimes using powerful uppercuts and punches. Low stances combined with eva-

sive movements are the basic principles observed by a confronting opponent. Crawling techniques are also taught in an upright posture, although they account for only 25% of all moves. In the upright posture, the leopard stylist makes use of an imaginary triangle pattern for his footwork movement. In all directions, the practitioner uses the triangle as a base instrument for offensive or defensive maneuvers.

The opposition, when making an advance, will enter into the top or 90-degree mark of the leopard stylist's triangle, thus falling prey to the numerous awaiting routines.

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Karate Art.

*Secondary Skills:* Judo, Body Language, Jumping, Chinese, Philosophy (Taoism), any two of the following weapon skills: Broadsword, Spear, Staff, Shortsword.

*Optional Skills:* Acrobatics, Climbing, any weapon skills not chosen as secondary skills.

*Maneuvers:* Cat Stance, Feint (Karate), Ground Fighting

[2 points], Hit Location (Karate), Jab, Jump Kick, Kicking, Riposte, Spin Kick, Sweeping Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Blind Fighting, Light Walk, Meditation.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Dodge, Roll with Blow.

### Praying Mantis Kung Fu 10 points/23 points

There are many versions of this animal style. The praying mantis has been long admired in the martial arts world for its speed and fierce attacks. The Shaolin Temple developed several mantis techniques, many of which have become styles in their own right. The version described below is known as the "southern" version of Praying Mantis Kung Fu. It has a very distinct stance, with the elbows kept close to the body and the forearms extended, hands open in imitation of the mantis' claws. It combines soft movements for the defense and hard, explosive counterattacks. Like the



mantis, a practitioner waits until the attacker starts to move, then flows around him and devours him with swift attacks.

Praying Mantis Kung Fu emphasizes balanced stances that allow for swift changes in position to let enemy attacks fly by unimpeded. From the same stance, the martial artist then springs forward on the attacker, hitting vital points with devastating force. Sticking techniques are also taught by this style; combined with its forceful attacks, they make this a very effective form. In a cinematic campaign, the unusual stance of the Praying Mantis can be used to attempt to daze enemies (the Hypnotic Hands skill).

*Primary Skills:* Judo, Karate, Savoir Faire (Dojo).

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Jumping, Philosophy (Taoism), Stealth.

*Optional Skills:* Any weapon skills as per the Shaolin style (see p. MA75), Hypnotism.

*Maneuvers:* Elbow Strike, Hit Location (Karate), Jump Kick, Kicking, Knee Strike, Riposte, Spin Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Hypnotic Hands, Light Walk, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, Push.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Parry (Bare Hands), Sticking.

### **Streetfighting 15 points (No Cinematic Abilities)**

This is not a style you can learn in a *dojo*. Its lessons are hard, and many students are crippled or killed by learning them. Streetfighting is undisciplined, unorthodox and brutal. It consists mostly of a repertoire of dirty tricks leavened with ruthlessness. The objective is to stop the fight as soon as possible. Most street toughs only know the barest rudiments of streetfighting (Brawling skill). Only the most bloodthirsty master it. The introduction of martial arts to the general public has added elements of Asian fighting arts to the combat skills of the streets, but here they have been stripped down to their barest essentials, and used in the most direct manner possible.

The techniques described below represent the skills of the toughest street-bred fighters. They combine a host of nasty maneuvers and some weapon skills. A Streetfighter will use whatever he has available to win the fight, be it his fists, sticks, knives or guns. Many will not be done if their opponent is on the ground – that is when the stomping starts. The goal is not only to defeat the opponent, but to either hurt him so badly he will never be able to come after you, or to hurt him so badly he is *afraid* to come after you.

Besides fighting skills, the other lesson in the street involves making a quick getaway. Sometimes to stay and fight will mean arrest, a beating or death. The ability to lose oneself in back streets, jumping over obstacles and climbing chain-link fences can keep a streetfighter alive where fighting skills will not. Knowing one's way around the streets is also very helpful.

*Primary Skills:* Brawling, Running, Stealth, Streetwise, and one of the following skills: Knife, Broadsword (baseball bat or two-by-four), Shortsword (billy club or stick).

*Secondary Skills:* Climbing, Holdout, Jumping, Karate, Survival (Urban), another weapon skill.

*Optional Skills:* Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Guns.

*Maneuvers:* Eye-Gouging, Face Attacks, Feint (Brawling), Head Butt, Hit Location (Karate), Kicking, Knee Strike, Neck Snap, Rabbit Punch, Roundhouse Punch.

*Cinematic Maneuvers and Skills:* None.

### **Uechi-Ryu Karate 10 points/20 points**

This Karate variant was originally taught by Kanbun Uechi (1877-1948), an Okinawan who studied in Fukien around the turn of the century. Uechi became one of the few Okinawans to actually teach in China. Though he escaped by being drafted into the Japanese army by leaving Okinawa, Uechi returned, but refused to teach for years. Eventually, Uechi taught some Okinawans in Japan during the 1920's but resettled in Okinawa some years later. Uechi called his style the *pangainoon* system. It uses very few kata, and all kata reflect the same lineage as the kata of naha-te, except that it employs a lighter breathing technique than in Goju-Ryu. The style was renamed by Uechi's son, Kanei, in 1948 after his father's death. The principles of the tiger, dragon and crane, as taught by Kanbun Uechi, are central. In a cinematic campaign, this style develops Chi in a number of ways, allowing the practitioner to use several devastating skills.

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Karate Art, Savoir Faire (Dojo), Breath Control.

*Secondary Skills:* Jitte/Sai, Tonfa, Staff.

*Optional Skills:* Karate Sport, Tournament Law, Philosophy (Buddhism), any Kobujutsu weapon (see p. MA64).

*Maneuvers:* Back Kick, Shin Kick, Knee Strike, Elbow Strike, Aggressive Parry, Hook Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Breaking Blow, Immovable Stance, Meditation, Power Blow.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Parry (Karate).

### **Wudong 12 points/29 points**

Wudong is a Taoist style that was created and taught in the Wudong mountains in Central China. The style concentrates on low-to-the-ground, seemingly unbalanced postures, and quick springing attacks from the low positions. This style has had relatively little public exposure; most Wudong teachers were hermits who would accept no more than a handful of students. This secrecy makes Wudong an ideal style for cinematic campaigns, as the ancient Taoist lore of Wudong includes many techniques to develop and channel Chi in all its different forms.

Most Wudong stances feature a crouching posture, which is used to launch explosive attacks. Training is done slowly, in positions that seem deceptively heavy and not well-balanced. Most of the initial training resembles "external" Kung Fu (see p. MA72), with emphasis on striking power and physical conditioning. Grappling techniques are also used, using pressure points to inflict disabling locks and holds. Kicks, elbow blows, and open-hand strikes are the main attacks of the style, with the addition of "soft" defensive maneuvers, which allow enemy attacks to flow by unimpeded.

In a cinematic campaign, Wudong offers several skills and maneuvers. The deceptive balance of Wudong stances



are equivalent to Drunken Fighting (see p. MA32), although the movements are not the same; Wudong-trained characters use the skill for the same game effect, although the moves will not be recognizable as traditional drunk-fighting techniques. Chi mastery gives the Wudong practitioner a wide choice of other abilities, including (in some cases) the dreaded Hand of Death.

*Primary Skills:* Karate, Karate Art, Breath Control, Acrobatics.

*Secondary Skills:* Jumping, Judo, Philosophy (Taoism).

*Optional Skills:* Meditation, Yin-Yang Healing.

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Back Kick, Elbow Strike, Hook Kick, Jump Kick, Kicking, Knee Strike, Spin Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Body Control, Breaking Blow, Drunken Fighting, Hand of Death, Immovable Stance, Mental Strength, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Acrobatic Kick, Enhanced Parry (Bare Hand), Springing Attack.

## Fantasy/Science Fiction Styles

Described below are some fictional styles that can be introduced in fantasy or science fiction campaigns. Some of these styles refer to other *GURPS* game worlds or non-human races, allowing GMs to combine *Martial Arts* with other sourcebooks. The styles can also serve as inspiration for other alien or fantastic fighting arts.

### Aerie Fighting

9 points/24 points

#### (Winged Folk Martial Art)

The Winged Folk (see p. FF124) are a race of flying humans that live in remote areas. Most Winged Folk avoid hand-to-hand combat, since their wings become a liability at close quarters and their bone structure is more fragile

than a human's. There are, however, some techniques that allow Winged Folk to successfully defend themselves while in Close Combat. Some warrior societies (including the Brides of Arrai, an all-female fighting order) have developed a hard-hitting style that concentrates on ranged attacks and devastating kicks. An Aerie Fighting combatant knows how to throw any weapon with deadly effect, and is also an accomplished archer.

Flying acrobatics are also developed by this style; practitioners of Aerie Fighting learn Flight, a Physical/Average skill (defaults to DX-4) that helps the character to make tighter turns in the air. Turning radius calculations are described on p. B139; most flyers can pull a number of Gs



equal to HT/2. By making a HT roll and a Flight-4 roll, the character can increase the number of Gs by 1; for each additional Gs beyond the first, subtract 2 from each roll. On a failed HT roll, he blacks out for 2d turns. On a failed skill roll, he loses control. Most hand-to-hand combat while on the air will require Flight rolls to stay aloft. Failures will indicate the character falls for a turn, after which he may attempt Flight rolls to regain control.

In a Cinematic campaign, some Aerie Fighting secret teachings are available, including master bowmanship techniques which allow them to make incredible shots at enormous ranges.

*Primary Skills:* Bolas, Bow, Flight, Karate, Throwing.

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Fast-Draw (Arrow), Fast-Draw (Throwing Knife).

*Optional Skills:* Net, Spear, Theology (Winged Folk).

*Maneuvers:* Jump Kick, Kicking, Knee Strike, Swooping Kick (see below).

*Cinematic Skills:* Power Blow, Throwing Art, Zen Archery.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Dodge (Only When Flying, for a total cost of 12 points).

### **Swooping Kick (Hard)**

*Defaults to Kicking-4*  
*Prerequisite: Flight-15+*

This maneuver is unique to Aerie Fighting. The attacker dives from a minimum altitude of 6 yards (requiring a Flight-2 roll), and delivers the kick as he sweeps past the enemy. This attack does swing+1 damage plus Karate bonuses, and is at -1 to Parry in addition to normal height penalties (see p. B123).

### **Cyberninjutsu 15 points (No Cinematic Abilities)**

This is a combat technique designed for assassins with cybernetic augmentations in TL8+ worlds, especially those with a cyberpunk flavor. Cyberninjutsu is taught secretly, sometimes by ancient ninja clans who have adapted to modern times, and by the rare megacorp that specializes in the use of bionically-augmented agents. Its moves are designed to make the most out of bionic implants like claws, ripsnakes (see p. 126) and other hidden weapons. Like their predecessors, cyber-ninja are masters of covert operations and deceptive moves. They specialize in subtle, inconspicuous killings; the best cyber-ninja can commit a murder in the middle of a crowded room and leave the scene before anyone (maybe even the victim!) realizes what has happened.

The typical cyber-ninja will have the following bionics: Claws, Ripsnake or Stinger, and a Poison Reservoir (see p. 125). They may also have a Weapon Implant or Mount (see p. CY33), or a Hidden Compartment (p. CY32). His skills mirror those of the ancient ninja. The cyber-ninja's ideal is to achieve total surprise; for that purpose he (or she) will often attempt to gain the target's trust by befriending or seducing him.

There is no Cinematic point cost for Cyberninjutsu. This assumes that ninjas with cinematic abilities eschew cybernetics in favor of traditional techniques; use normal

Ninjutsu as described in p. MA69. Interesting rivalries might develop between the original shadow assassins and the ultra-tech newcomers.

*Primary Skills:* Acting, Holdout, Judo, Karate, Poisons, Stealth.

*Secondary Skills:* Climbing, Fast-Draw (Claws), Fast-Talk, Jumping, Sex Appeal, Shadowing and two weapon skills, ancient or modern, including Guns.



*Optional Skills:* Any weapon skills, Demolitions, Armoury (Cybernetic weapons).

*Maneuvers:* Aggressive Parry, Arm Lock, Eye Gouge, Elbow Strike, Feint (Karate), Finger Lock, Head Butt, Knee Strike, Neck Snap.

*Cinematic Maneuvers and Skills:* None.



## Dragon-Man Kung Fu

11 points/20 points

*In the fastness of the Gryll'Eriad Mountains, well-protected from the elements and the evil men do, lies the Dragon Temple. Behind the jade-facade doors of the Temple lies the secret of the Flame Breath. How it is that men and women with no mystical ability can exhale fire at will is not known. It is indeed fortunate that the Dragon Temple monks only venture outside to serve on the holiest quests and that the few wandering Dragon-Men are knights of the noblest rank, warriors who never stray from the path of righteousness that their teachers set for them. But what if the secrets of the Dragon Temple were turned over to evil and greedy men? I shudder at the very thought.*

*— the Writings of Mi-Long the Traveler*

This style of combat is unique to fantasy backgrounds. High-ranking practitioners of Dragon-Man Kung Fu gain the ability to breathe flame! Very few people outside the acolytes of the Dragon Temple know how this power is acquired, but many a warrior and mage has traveled to the remote monastery and pleaded, demanded or otherwise tried to cajole or steal the secret out of the reclusive monks. All have failed; most paid with their prides or their lives for the offense. A few have joined the Temple and learned the secret, and are now part of the forces protecting it.

Most Dragon-Men are inducted into the Temple when they are children or teenagers. Only the most extraordinary applicants will be admitted to the Temple after age 20; Trained-by-a-Master martial artists from other schools *might* pass muster. Initiates must go through several grueling physical and mental ordeals and master all the basic skills of the style before the Gift of Flame is bestowed (in game terms, the character must have the Trained by a Master advantage and pay the full cost of the cinematic version of the style, and must have the prerequisites for Trained by a Master, including a minimum Primary skill level of 16).

The Dragon Temple is a strict (almost fanatical) upholder of Good; its monks are living weapons to be used against evil sorcerers, demons and the undead. The emperors of the land cheerfully accept the monks' aid in times of trouble, but are fearful and suspicious of the Dragon-Men; occasionally a government army has been raised against the Temple – and been destroyed.

There is a legend that claims that deep within the bowels of the Temple lies its founder, an ancient dragon who has endured for millennia. This dragon, it is rumored, is the one that taught the secret of flame breath to the monks. The Gift of Flame is not a Chi power, but a magically-granted power. It is bestowed through a special version of Knack Tattoos (see p. M162); the tattoos that are given the acolytes of the Temple give them the power to breathe fire. The power works as per the spell on p. M34; the breath does 1d+1 to 4d+4 flame damage per use, and its range is equal to 1 hex per die of damage. Three types of tattoo are available. The first one, given to Green Dragon Acolytes, allows the wearer to breathe flame; this takes 1 second of concentration and costs 1 Fatigue per 1d+1 of damage. The second type, given to Red Dragon Acolytes, allows the monk to

Breathe Fire *immediately*, without concentration. The last one, reserved only for the top-masters, the Golden Dragon Acolytes, casts the spell without concentration and the first 1d+1 of damage is *free* – enabling the monk to emit a 1d+1 jet of flame from their mouths continuously! These tattoos must be purchased with character points, using the Knacks rules on p. M86: the Green Dragon tattoo costs 20 points, the Red Dragon tattoo costs 30 points, and the Golden Dragon tattoo costs 40 points. This is in addition to the other prerequisites.

**Primary Skills:** Judo, Karate, Magic Breath (P/E, used to aim flame jet; see p. M94), Philosophy (Dragon Temple) and one weapon skill from the following: Katana, Shortsword, Spear, Staff.

**Secondary Skills:** Acrobatics, Breath Control, Meditation, Yin/Yang Healing, Jumping, Stealth, one more weapon skill.

**Optional Skills:** any other weapon skills,

**Maneuvers:** Arm Lock, Axe Kick, Back Kick, Jump Kick, Spin Kick, Spin Punch.

**Cinematic Skills:** Blinding Touch, Breaking Blow, Flying Leap, Mental Strength, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

**Cinematic Maneuvers:** Flying Jump Kick, Roll with Blow.

## Engaijutsu 14 points/29 points

The Engai are an ancient race of advanced but decadent beings described in *GURPS Aliens*, p. 108. These beautiful elfin creatures achieved immortality through biochemical advances and the channeling of their inner energies through meditation and breathing techniques, developed through a very powerful martial arts style. In effect, the Engai have achieved the Taoist ideal – the perfect balancing of Chi that ensures eternal life (see p. MA73). The Engai also developed and then voluntarily discarded powerful psionic abilities. Currently, most Engai content themselves with pursuing pleasurable activities, enjoying their eternal lives to the fullest. They are generally lazy and apathetic toward worldly concerns (in some ways, representing an extreme form of the *wu-wei* component of Taoist philosophy, as described on p. MA8). All Engai still practice the meditation techniques and a simple form of their martial art; these techniques allow Engai to control their metabolism to an incredible degree, and even to walk over liquid!

Even the most “ascetic” Engaijutsu master will show a surprising love for enjoying the finer things in life; part of Engaijutsu training consists of drinking and celebrating (leading to the development of the Carousing skill).

The origins of the Engai’s martial art are lost in the distant past. It is rumored, however, that a handful of ancient Engai teachers still exist, and worthy humanoids may learn these secret techniques. Although all Engai have some knowledge of the style, only a few of them actually bother learning the full techniques of this art. The few extraordinarily dedicated aliens who do master it may be unusual enough to deal with non-Engai who wish to learn these Chi-channeling abilities. Human characters who become

Engaijutsu masters may actually achieve immortality themselves. In a highly cinematic campaign, a character with the Trained by a Master (Engaijutsu) advantage and a high level of mastery in the style may purchase the Unaging advantage, which costs 15 points. Those with at least skill 21 in Light Walk can purchase the Walk on Liquid advantage, costing 20 points.

Engaijutsu is ideal for cinematic campaigns in space settings. Engai practitioners are the deadliest hand-to-hand combatants in the universe; non-Engai students will gain access to an impressive array of abilities. Keep in mind, however, that fewer than one in a thousand Engai is dedicated enough to master their ancient style, which means there are less than a hundred Engai martial artists in the whole universe! Finding a teacher and convincing him to pass on his knowledge will be an epic achievement by itself.





*Primary Skills:* Breath Control, Karate, Meditation.

*Secondary Skills:* Acrobatics, Carousing, Hypnotism, Judo, Jumping, Yin-Yang Healing.

*Optional Skills:* Any athletic skill, Staff, Stealth, Philosophy (Engai) (very similar to some forms of Taoism).

*Maneuvers:* Arm Lock, Back Kick, Choke Hold, Elbow Strike, Feint, Finger Lock, Head Lock, Jump Kick, Kicking, Knee Strike, Spin Kick.

*Cinematic Skills:* Blinding Touch, Body Control, Breaking Blow, Flying Leap, Hypnotic Hands, Immovable Stance, Light Walk, Mental Strength, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, Push.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Acrobatic Kick, Flying Jump Kick, Roll with Blow.

### **Smasha (Orc Combat Style) 11 points/16 points**

"Smasha, eh?" The old guardsman leaned backwards on his chair, his eyes twinkling, his smile distant. "I'm sure yer awready heard the tales – y'know, the one where them Orc gods gave this one tribe some secret tricks an' all that nice stuff. . . . But lemme tell ya something I know.

'Bout six, seven years ago, it was. . . we had this reg'lar right at this here tavern. He was an Ugglie – pardon me, Your Sageness; you'd be callin' 'im a Half-Orc, but we simple folk got our own names. Krelkin, he was called. Quiet sort of fellow, got along well with everyone but Trash. And that was bad enough; Trash was an Ogre, a tame 'un, left out of the arena on account of killin' so many people.

Trash gave ol' Krelkin a trashin' I never seen a man come out alive from – 'course, Krelkin weren't human, so in two or three weeks he can walk again. An' he left for th Mountains out North, and the one word he says, when someone or other asks him what he's lookin' for, is "Smasha."

"Well, I'd almost plain forgotten ol' Krelkin when he came back, two years later. Trash was head bouncer at the tavern now, and he remembers Krelkin fine. So Trash smiles and I figure Krelkin won't be walking outta this one. I mighta said somethin', but it's no business of the Guard what happens betwixt an Ogre and an Ugglie. Trash reaches for Krelkin with a hand the size of a Delbury ham.

"Only Krelkin, he ain't there no more. He ducks under Trash's arm, grabs his face, an' next thing I see, Trash is screamin' like a wounded pig, an' one of his eyes is runnin' down his face. Krelkin kicks him where it hurts, twice, and Trash bends over like he's payin' his respects. But then I notice Trash is gropin' fer his dagger.

"Krelkin notices, too. He stands there for a moment, and Trash jus' cleared his dagger out when the Ugglie hits 'im with both hands together. I hear a crack, an' I figger that's the ogre's neck breakin'. I was right, 'cause Trash went down and never got up.

"Krelkin? He just smiled a little, then bought drinks for ev'ryone. Nobody paid 'im no mind after that; some wise mouths made some jokes about takin' out the Trash. Krelkin's now the Fire Mage General's chief bodyguard. An' there's none that calls 'im Ugglie any more."

The origins of Smasha are a mystery. All its practitioners show a degree of refined brutality that is disturbing at best. Some of them can even perform superhuman feats. Fortunately, very few Orcs have the dedication to progress that far in the study of Smasha; most practitioners are mundane fighters. Only cream-of-the-crop Orcs master the intricacies of this style, but among some tribes it is common to find some brawler-wrestlers with more skill than the average Orc.

*Primary Skills:* Brawling, Wrestling.

*Secondary Skills:* Jumping, Knife, Stealth, Any Weapon Skills.

*Optional Skills:* Acrobatics, Holdout.

*Maneuvers:* Aggressive Parry, Arm Lock, Eye Gouging, Face Attacks, Headbutt, Jab, Kicking, Rabbit Punch, Roundhouse Punch.

*Cinematic Skills:* Kiai, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Roll with Blow.

### **Force-Swordsmanship**      **6 points/19 points**

This style revolves around the use of the Force Sword (see p. MA87). Practitioners devote their lives to the mastery of the weapon, becoming ultra-tech versions of the Japanese “sword saints” of old. Conventional wisdom holds that most force-swordsmen are foolish fanatics obsessed with a weapon system of limited usefulness, but there are rumors that the true masters of the style are capable of superhuman feats. The style is taught in some planetary cultures where duelling is fashionable; young members of galactic noble houses often walk around with richly-decorated force swords hanging from their belts. These weapons often become badges of aristocracy, and their use is forbidden to commoners. Force-swordsmanship is also a well-regarded spectator sport, using either training blades (see p. 126) or actual swords in to-the-death gladiatorial events.

The average swordsman uses a one- or two-handed grip on his weapon and a fencing style similar to Japanese Kenjutsu. Special care is taken to keep the energy blade away from the body when attacking, since even a glancing blow can hurt the user of the sword. Jumping and tumbling techniques are taught to allow the swordsman to outmaneuver enemies. Optionally, some grappling moves are added but rarely used, since the risks of using bare hands against force swords are enough to make anybody quiver.

Beneath this well-known sport and combat technique lies a shadowy sub-culture of swordsmen who claim that extraordinary individuals can forge a supernatural link with their blades. This link, they claim, allows true masters to do more damage with their weapon, and to use them in amazing ways. There are centuries-old myths (some which seem to predate the actual invention of force-swords!) that tell of force-swordsmen parrying beam weapons with their shining blades. In a cinematic or “four-color” campaign, characters with the Weapon Master and Danger Sense advantages have managed to link their Chi with their



swords. To do so, they have to build the sword themselves (requiring an Armoury (Force Swords) roll at -5). As a result of this link, they not only get the damage bonuses for the Weapon Master advantage (see p. MA25), but can use Power Blow with the sword, which *doubles* the sword's damage (i.e., if the sword did 8d+3 damage, it will do 16d+6 if a Power Blow roll is made!). Additionally, they can perform other feats like the Precognitive Parry described on p. 103.

*Primary Skill:* Acrobatics, Katana (Force Sword), Katana Art (Force Sword).

*Secondary Skills:* Jumping, Savoir-Faire (Dojo), Wrestling.

*Optional Skills:* Karate, Off-Hand Weapon Training (Force Sword).

*Maneuvers:* Feint (Force Sword) [2 points], Hit Location (Force Sword).

*Cinematic Skills:* Blind Fighting, Flying Jump, Kiai, Mental Strength, Power Blow, Parry Missile Weapons, Precognitive Parry.

*Cinematic Maneuvers:* Enhanced Parry (Force Sword).

# Weapons and Equipment

## Basket Hilts

A basket hilt is a metal guard on the hilt of a sword, wrapping around the swordsman's hand. It is intended to protect the hand from blows, and can itself be used as a weapon. They can be used on any weapon, including two-handed weapons (note that very few Asian weapons used basket hilts). A basket hilt weighs one pound, has PD 3 and DR 5 and adds 25% of the cost of a good weapon. This PD applies only to the sword hand and only when the weapon is in hand. The basket hilt gives a PD 1 to the entire body when used against melee weapons (counting as a very small shield), but does not count against missile weapons and does not protect against attacks from behind. This PD also applies only when the weapon is in hand, not when it is sheathed. DR only applies to the covered hand. A basket hilt costs the same, no matter what the quality of the weapon.

A normal basket hilt will not allow wearing a gauntlet on the sword hand. One could be custom built so that a hand wearing a gauntlet would fit; this would double the cost of the hilt. A hand inside a gauntlet that is inside the basket has the DR of both but only the PD of the basket.

A basket hilt changes the balance and grip characteristics of a weapon. There is a -2 penalty for unfamiliarity unless the user has spent one day familiarizing himself with the different feel of the hilt.

Using the basket hilt in close combat is at -2, and uses DX or Brawling, Karate or Boxing skill (this penalty can be eliminated with the Close Combat maneuver on p. 105). The basket acts as brass knuckles, giving +2 to punching damage.

## Heavy Cloak

The *heavy cloak* is used as a shield; treat the defensive maneuver as a Block, figured at ½ Cloak skill (see p. 101). It has PD 2 DR 1. It takes 5 points of cutting damage to render a heavy cloak useless. An impaling attack of 2 points of damage is necessary to penetrate a heavy cloak – damage over that amount gets through to the cloak wielder. Crushing damage has no effect on it. Note that the cloak is damaged (and impaling attacks get through) *only* if the defense roll was made by only the number of points of its PD.

The cloak can also be used offensively. The offensive maneuver with a heavy cloak is to attempt to envelop the opponent. The cloak is treated as a thrown weapon at Cloak skill (SS 12 Acc 1, Max 2, half-damage doesn't apply). The maximum aiming bonus is +1. A thrown heavy cloak may be dodged or blocked. It may be only parried by a weapon of 2 lbs. or more. A heavy cloak weighs 5 lbs.

At a 1-yard range, the user may hold onto the heavy cloak while throwing it. If the throw misses or the defender is successful, one turn is needed to ready it again for offensive or defensive use. If the throw is successful, the attacker may attempt to pull his opponent off-balance. Roll a Quick Contest of ST; the attacker is at +2, and add Wrestling bonuses (+1 ST for every 8 points of Wrestling skill) for both characters. If the defender loses the contest, he is at -2 DX the next turn. If he loses by five or more, he is pulled off his

feet to his knees. On a critical failure, the defender falls down. It takes a successful DX roll and one turn to remove the cloak. In the meantime, the cloak blinds the defender and prevents any attack or active defenses.

## Light Cloak

The *light cloak* uses the same Cloak skill described on p. 101, but is more versatile. It has PD 1 DR 1 for Blocking purposes, but it can be used more creatively as an attack weapon. A light cloak weighs 2 lbs. It takes 3 points of cutting damage to render a light cloak useless. Any impaling damage over 1 gets through to the attacker.

Throwing the light cloak is similar to throwing the heavy cloak (same range modifiers), but it cannot be held onto, can be parried by any ready weapon, and requires no DX roll to remove. The opponent is blinded until he takes an action to remove the cloak.

*Entangling the opponent's weapon* allows the cloak wielder to retain his hold on the cloak. Roll a Quick Contest of the attacker's Cloak skill (minus any modifiers to hit – see *Striking at Weapons*, pp. B110-111) and the defender's Weapon Skill (or DX if carrying a ranged weapon). It counts as an attack. If a melee weapon is entangled, the defender must win or tie a Contest of Weapon Skills before he can use his weapon again. Each attempt counts as an action. If the cloak user wishes to attack with another weapon the next turn, he is at -2 if he retains his hold on an entangling cloak. A Contest of DX versus Cloak Skill is needed to free a missile weapon from a cloak.

*Entangling the arm* is a Quick Contest of the attacker's Cloak skill -2 for hit location and the defender's DX (or Judo or Wrestling). If the defender is holding a weapon in either hand, he has the opportunity to parry the cloak before the Quick Contest. The defender must win a Contest of ST to free the entangled arm. A weapon in a tangled arm may be used at -6 but any aim is spoiled.

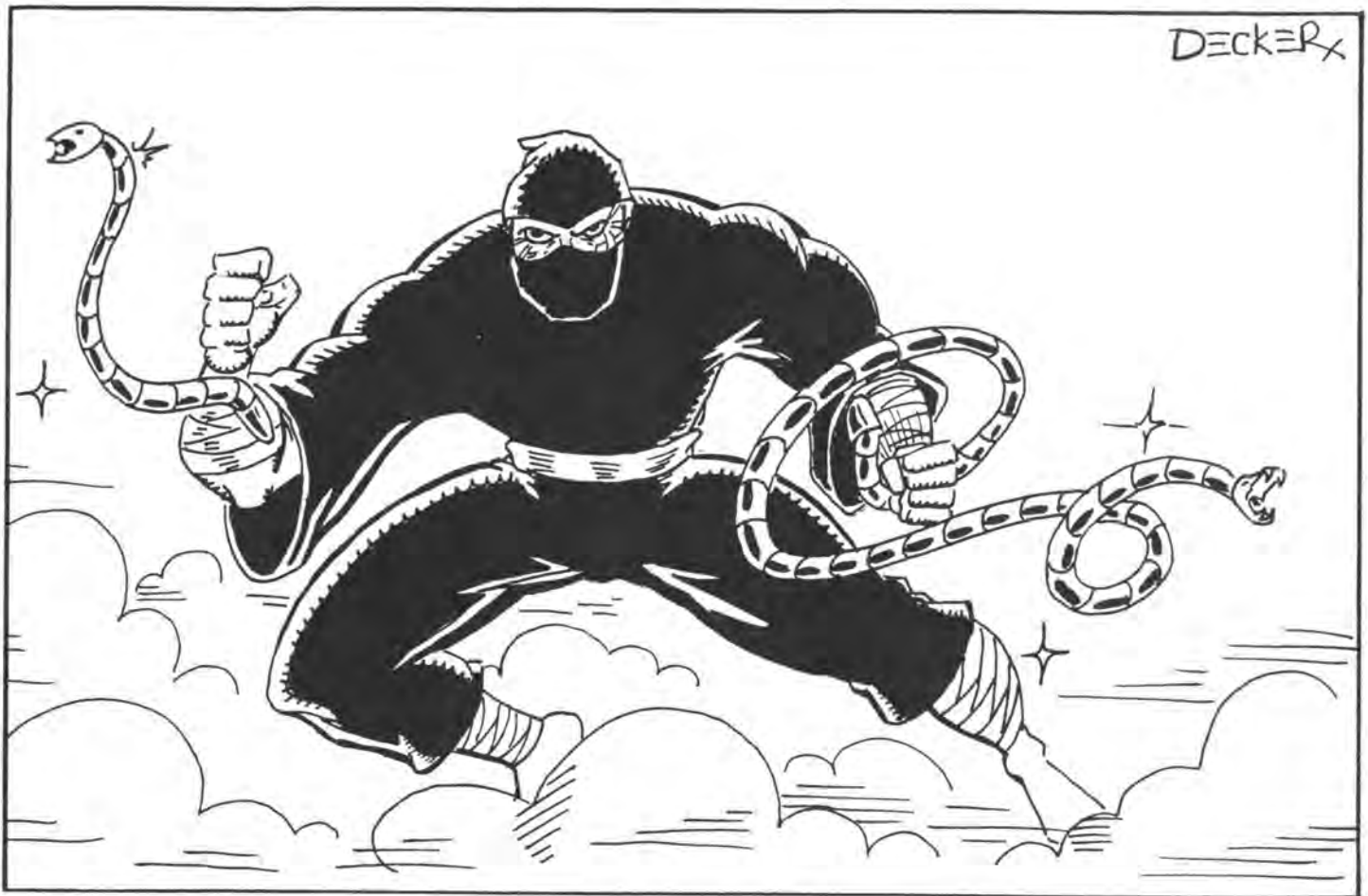
*Snapping the cloak in an opponent's face* is done at Cloak-5. If the attack is successful, the attacker *may* be blinded for a turn. Any defense may be used against this attack. Critical success on the Cloak skill does 1 point of damage to one eye (roll randomly for which one), blinds the opponent for one second and mentally stuns him. Otherwise, making the attack roll by 5 or more will blind the opponent for one second (with no damage to the eyes). If the attacker makes the attack roll by less than 5 and the defender fails the defense roll, the defender's DX is reduced by 1 for the next turn only.

## Collapsible Nunchaku

These 20th-century models are concealed in a belt-case (+1 to Holdout) and are opened with a fling of the wrist (1 turn to ready unless a Fast-Draw (Collapsible Nunchaku) roll is made). Damage and other stats are the same.

## Cybernetic Claws

These TL8 cybernetic implants are fully described in *GURPS Cyberpunk*. They are razor claws on the user's



hands. They can be completely retracted or extended at will. The claws are also useful for climbing, adding +1 to Climbing skill.

The less expensive version is fairly short and does an extra +2 points of damage in any form of "unarmed" combat. \$4,000.

The more expensive claws are 6" to 8" long, and emerge from the knuckles or wrist rather than the fingertips. They change the wearer's damage to thrust/impaling or swing/cutting damage. Karate bonuses, if any, add to final damage. \$8,000.

#### **Poison Reservoir**

This TL8 cybernetic implant is a reservoir of poisons (or other chemicals – hallucinogens are a perennial favorite) compatible with claws or blades. A poison reservoir in a clawless hand comes with little "scratchers" under the fingernails, which do no extra damage but allow the poison to be applied more readily. The poison reservoir can be used to coat ammunition of weapons located in the arm.

A poison reservoir holds 50 doses of poison and can be refilled. It can be split into two parts, allowing the cyborg to switch between two liquids; a poison and its antidote are common choices, in case of a mistake. A packet of 50 doses of synthetic cobra venom (see p. B139) costs \$5,000; the "standard pack" has 45 doses of venom and 5 doses of antidote. A poison reservoir costs \$1,000.

#### **Ripsnake**

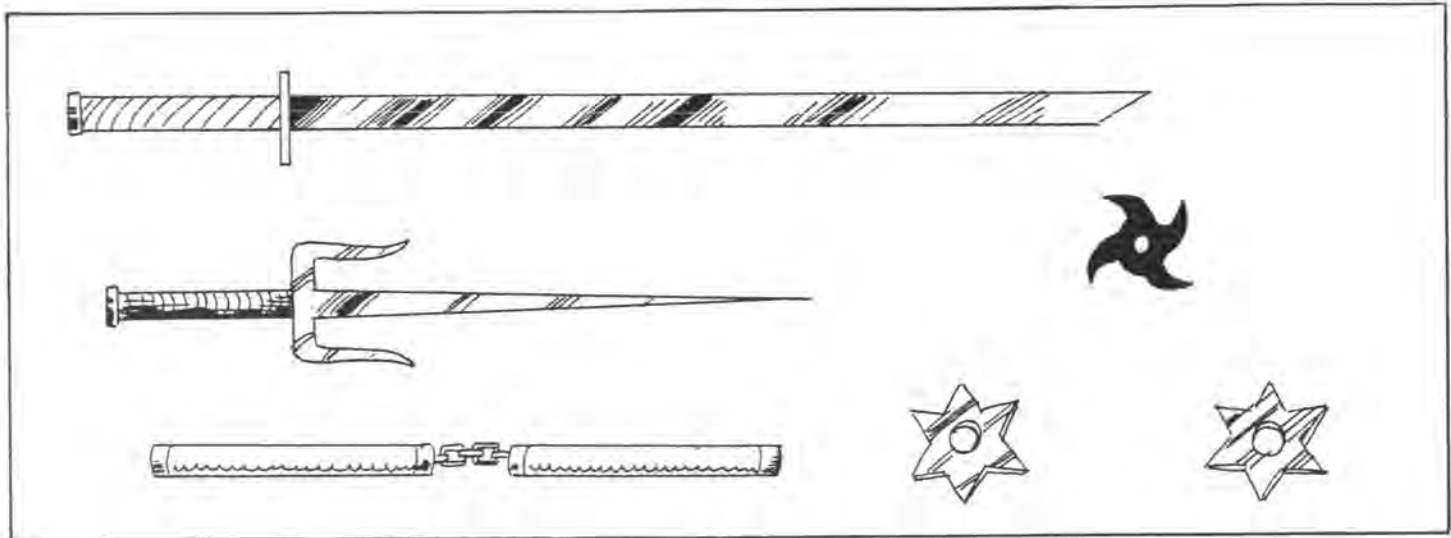
This is a bionic assassin's weapon available at TL8+. It consists of a cyberlinked, polymer worm-like bionic limb that can be concealed anywhere in the body. It is usually kept behind a natural body opening (the mouth is the most common area). The cyborg can activate the ripsnake at will; it extends out of his body (it has a 1-hex reach) and can bite or sting, doing 1d+1 cutting damage; it can have a poison reservoir (see below) containing up to 5 doses. It is most dangerous if it can somehow enter the body of a victim (this is often done by *kissing* the victim on the mouth). If the ripsnake enters the body, it will start doing 1d+1 impaling damage, and neither DR nor Toughness will protect! Poisons injected in this way are at -3 HT to resist. Cost is \$5,000.

#### **Slashing Rapier**

This is a long rapier with a cutting edge. This weapon was popular with Italian fencers (see p. 115). Thrusting damage is still thrust+1 impaling, but it can also do swing-cutting damage; it takes 1 turn to ready after a cut, because the long blade overbalances the hilt. A slashing rapier can only parry once per turn. \$1,000.

#### **Slashing Wheels**

These Chinese weapons are metal circles with several cutting protrusions on its outer edge. One section of the circle has a leather- or cloth-covered hand-grip. These weapons are often used in pairs, and users will train with the



Off-Hand Weapon skill. They are used with Knife or Main-Gauche skill, but an unfamiliar user is at -4 until he spends a day practicing with them.

Some common slashing wheels include the 5-Fires Wind-Fire Wheel, which has five pointed extensions, the Gold-Coin Wheel, which resembles ancient Chinese coins, and the 9-Fires Wind-Fire Wheel, that has three three-pronged points. Used defensively, slashing wheels provide PD 1 for parrying purposes only. Damage is thrust+1 cutting; reach is C. Weight is 1 lbs. Cost is \$30 for a pair in a historical campaign, \$120 in the 20th century.

There are also combination knife-wheel weapons, which have two knife points and a half-wheel with three slashing points as a hand-guard. Combinations do the same damage as a dagger with the point, and cutting wheel damage with the guard. Reach is C, 1. Weight 1.5 lbs. \$60 for pair, \$150 in the 20th century.

## Training Equipment

Training is an important part of martial arts. Much of the equipment listed below will be found in *dojos* and training centers of the appropriate tech level.

### Rubber Weapons

At TL7, any blunt weapon or short cutting weapon can be made of soft rubber with a hard core. The weapons are very similar in balance to the real thing, but they do very little damage. Divide any swinging damage rolled by 3 before applying to DR and hit points; thrusting damage is divided by 2, but the weapon will break if it delivers more than 4 points of damage. \$5-\$30. Weight is the same as the real weapon.

### Electronic Foils

Electrical fencing equipment was introduced during the 1960s, and is now used to judge fencing competitions. Sensors are built into the fencing weapon, and wires are run

### Tokushu Keibo

This is a modern martial arts weapon, a collapsible stainless steel baton that easily fits in a pocket when closed (+1 to Holdout). It can be used with the Shortsword or Short Staff skills. The weapon also has jitte-like hand guards, and it can be used as a Jitte (see p. MA29), but at -3 skill – the guards are very small. Weight 1. \$20 for a manual model (takes 1 turn to ready or a Fast-Draw (Tokushu Keibo) roll to ready it on the same turn), \$50 for a spring-action one (no rolls to ready it in the same turn).

### Changes to Ultra-Tech Weapons

There have been some rule changes involving the TL8+ weapons described on pp. MA87-88. Most of these weapons now have a higher armor divisor. Force Swords and Vibroblades do the same damage, but divide the armor by 5. Monomolecular blades, whips and garrotes divide the target's DR by 10!

from its hilt through the user's sleeve and then run to the judging apparatus. In a competition, there is a small chance of tripping on the wires (on a Critical Failure, the GM may rule that the character has gotten entangled in the wires, which is not serious but embarrassing). The judging machine determines whether a hit has reached a legal area and can also time "simultaneous" hits to  $\frac{1}{25}$  of a second; if the second hit arrives more than  $\frac{1}{25}$  of a second after the first hit, only the first attack counts for scoring purposes. \$2,000, 70 lbs.

### Digital Weapons

At TL8+, these dummy weapons have built-in computer chips that measure swing and thrust strength, angle of attack, etc. The weapons have internal springs and collapsible shafts; they are flexible enough to allow full-force attacks (divide all damage rolled by 4 before applying it to DR and hit points). The weapon chip can either record the effectiveness of a hit in its memory, or transmit it to a judging com-



puter within 100 yards. The chip is programmed with the enemy's armor capabilities, and so can judge whether an attack penetrated the armor and with how much remaining force. With this equipment, characters fighting training or sporting bouts can roll attacks and damage as if they were in a real fight; keep track of actual damage on a separate sheet. When the weapon chip determines it has crippled or killed an opponent, it emits a loud beep, leaving no doubts that the combat is over. \$500 per weapon chipped, \$1,000 for judging computer; weight is the same as the real weapon.

### Digital Sparring Armor

This TL8 invention uses the same technology as the digital weapons (see above) to build a safe suit of sparring armor that can accurately simulate combat conditions. The suit provides DR 16 versus crushing attacks and DR 2 versus cutting and impaling attacks. The suit is flexible but slightly bulky; wearers are at -1 skill until they spend 10 hours training with it. Built through the suit is a network of fiber-optic sensors that detect hit location, strength of the hit, likely damage taken from the attack, etc. A computer chip judges this information and can transmit it to a judging computer within 100 yards.

The advanced set of armor has a built-in exoskeleton that will stiffen any body part that has taken too much damage to function, as judged by the computer chips built into the suit. A limb that takes enough "damage" to be crippled will go rigid, and the fighter will not be able to use it. When a combatant takes a disabling or killing blow, the whole suit will stiffen up, causing the wearer to topple helplessly. A verbal command can reset the suit, eliminating the paralysis. If for some reason the wearer wants to fight on after the suit has been disabled (say, for example, that a group of assassins walks into a sparring match, and the PCs cannot reset their suits), he has to overcome the suit's ST of 15 (roll a Quick Contest of ST per *attempted action*), and even then he will be at -6 DX (reduce this penalty by 1 for every point the character beats the suit's ST).

A standard suit of armor, which only emits beeps and

chirrup to announce damage, costs \$3,000, and weighs 18 lbs. An Advanced Sparring Suit, with self-disabling capabilities, costs \$8,000, and weighs 25 lbs. Halve cost at TL9, and halve again at TL11.

### Virtual Reality Sparring Armor

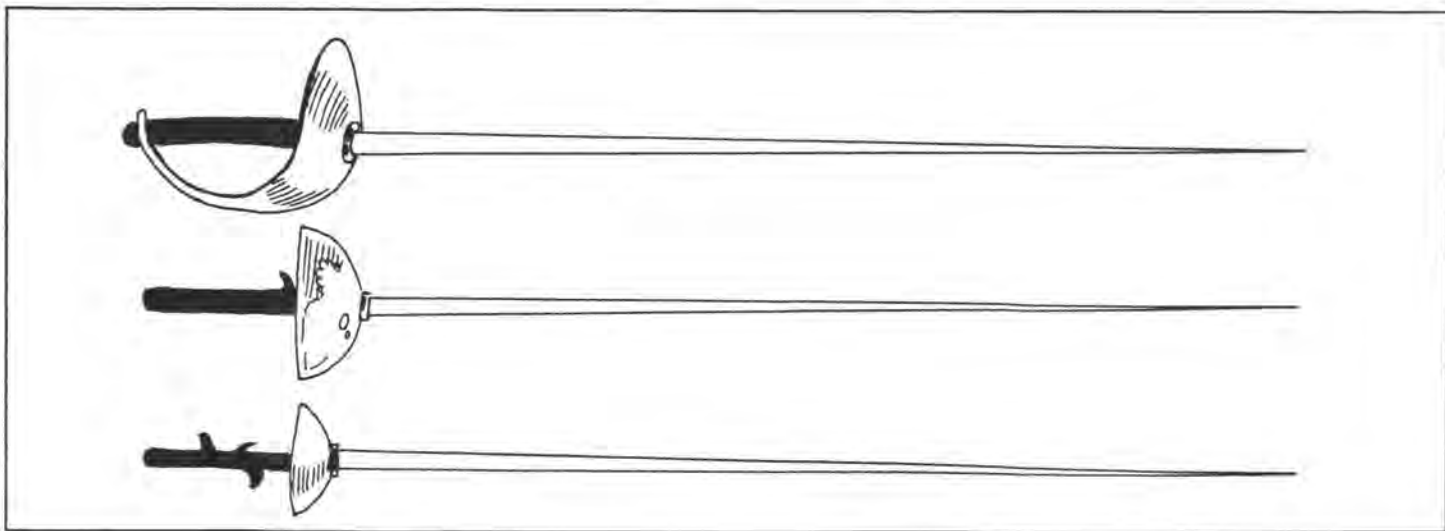
This is an Advanced Sparring Suit, described above, with a Virtual Reality helmet, electronic sensors and a built-in taser. The helmet projects a fictional scene into the wearer's visor; the scene is a computerized projection that moves and interacts with the character's actions, which are "read" by the suit's sensors. This can allow for solo sparring; a virtual reality program creates a simulated opponent. Every time the projection hits the wearer, the suit gives him a painful electronic jolt with the taser, causing almost as much pain as a real injury (in game terms, apply *half* "assumed" damage for Shock penalties). As per the advanced suit, crippling or killing blows will paralyze the suit.

VR Sparring Programs are very popular, especially the ones that use famous characters. Martial artists can now battle Bruce Lee in the Hall of Mirrors from *Enter the Dragon*, or square off with Muhammed Ali for the world's heavyweight championship!

A full VR Sparring set costs \$12,000. Weight: 30 lbs. The VR helmet has DR 10 and can take 7 hit points before being disabled and 15 before being destroyed. Martial art parlors will rent a self-adjusting suit by the hour, at \$50 an hour or more. This suit will not fit as well as a custom-made one; he is at -1 DX with it. Furthermore, characters with Gigantism or Fat disadvantages will need *special* custom-made suits, which cost an additional \$2,000.

### Wing Chun Wooden Dummy

This Wing Chun (see p. MA78) training tool consists of a man-sized wooden trunk with several arm-length sticks protruding from its sides. The wooden dummy is good to train students to launch attacks while keeping ready to parry or dodge counter-attacks. On a critical failure, however, the martial artist takes 1d+1 crushing damage!



## Adventure Seeds

The adventure seeds described below include both straight *Martial Arts* adventures and crossovers.

### *Deadly Secret*

The PCs meet a well-traveled mercenary and martial artist who claims he met an old man who kills foes at a distance, with a gesture. This ancient master lives on the outskirts of a remote village, in a country wracked by civil war; the merc's unit was obliterated and he left the country in a hurry, but he wants to meet the old man again. He asks the PCs for help to return. He thinks that they might convince the old man to pass on his secret techniques.

Traveling to the troubled area and finding the old man should be an adventure in itself. On arrival, however, the PCs discover that the old man is being hunted by a secret assassin cult. Apparently he was a former member, and the cult wishes to silence him. The assassins have connections with the forces controlling the area. If the PCs wish to help the old man, they must outwit an army as well as the team of killers combing the countryside. How well the heroes acquit themselves will be the key to whether the old man will consider them worthy pupils.

### *Rogue Dragon*

An evil necromancer has captured a Golden Dragon Man (pp. 120-121) of legendary skill (at least twice the point total of the average PC). He controls the hero with a Geas spell. So far, the Dragon Man has helped torch a village, nearly killing several locals.

The PCs can be other Dragon Men sent to take care of their own, local officials or warriors trying to stop the necromancer, or mages confronting their rival. They have to stop not only the renegade monk, but the necromancer's minions. To make matters worse, unless the PCs can prove that the Dragon Man is an unwilling accomplice, the local government will use the incident as an excuse to persecute all members of the Dragon Temple!

### *Sword of Musashi*

In a modern-day setting, a string of "Katana Murders" has plagued the campaign city. Most of the victims, who are both American and Japanese, are businessmen involved with a multinational chemical corporation. If the PCs become entangled, they will eventually confront the murderer – a ghostly samurai in armor, wielding a Katana with unearthly skill, who identifies himself as Miyamoto Musashi (see p. MA10)!

The specter is not interested in killing the PCs – at least at first. Further investigation reveals that the accidental poisoning of a reservoir, and the death or maiming of dozens of people in a small Japanese inlet, involved the corporation. The company's Yakuza ties are sending enforcers to protect the surviving executives – and to deal with anyone who knows too much.

Who controls the ghost of Musashi? The heroes will have to find out before they confront the spirit again.



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